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Wrestling Takes Down Old Dominion in First MAC Dual, 21-19

Head Coach Derek DelPorto picks up 100th career win

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NORFOLK, Va. (EMUEagles.com) – The Eastern Michigan University wrestling squad grabbed its sixth win of the season as the Eagles defeated Old Dominion University in its first Mid-American Conference dual, 21-19, Dec. 6. The deciding win over the preseason No. 2 team in the MAC came in the final bout as the Eagles trailed by one heading into the heavyweight division.

Head Coach Derek DelPorto clinched his 100th career victory as a head coach and is just two wins shy of grabbing the all-time EMU record, holding a mark of 78-69-2. Former Head Coach John Eisley currently holds the record as he posted an 80-74-4 record in his 12-year tenure. If DelPorto picks up just three more wins this season, he will take the all-time wins record in just eight seasons at the helm.

Redshirt-senior Jared Germaine (Saginaw, Mich.-Saginaw Valley) garnered his seventh straight victory of the season as he remains perfect, earning a 4-2 decision over Old Dominion's Jerome Robinson to give the Eagles a quick 3-0 lead.

The Green and White took a 9-0 advantage over the Monarchs when Vincent Pizzuto (North Jackson, Ohio-Jackson Milton) picked up his first pin of the season in 6:05. Old Dominion started its comeback in the 141 lb. weight
class as the Monarchs picked up two-straight pins and a decision to take a 15-9 lead over EMU.

No. 12 Chris Mecate pinned Nicholas Barber (Cleveland, Ohio-St. Edward) in 2:44 before Matthew VanCuren (Chargin Falls, Ohio-St. Edward) was pinned by No. 20 Alexander Richardson in 1:29. ODU extended its lead to 15-9 when No. 17 Tristan Warner grabbed a 9-2 over Brandon Zeerip (Fremont, Mich.-Hesperia) in the 157 lb. weight class.

Eastern Michigan brought the score to 15-12 when Jacob Davis (Northridge, Ohio-St. Edward) clinched a 4-1 decision at 165 lbs.; however, the Monarchs kept the lead as Billy Curling secured a 12-4 major decision over Mike Curby (Osseo, Mich.-Hillsdale) to extend their lead to 19-12 over EMU.

The Eagles used their second straight come-from-behind victory of the season as the Green and White clinched three straight decisions to earn their first MAC victory of 2013-14. Redshirt-seniors Phillip Joseph (Lapeer, Mich.-Lapeer East) and Nick Whitenburg (Temperance, Mich.-Bedford) each nabbed decisions in their respective weight classes to bring EMU within one of Old Dominion.

With the match on the line, redshirt-senior Khodor Hoballah (Dearborn, Mich.-Dearborn) came up with a thrilling 7-2 decision in the heavyweight decision. After being tied through two periods, Hoballah used a takedown in the final seconds to secure the decision and earn the 21-19 victory for the Eagles.

"I am really proud of this team. It is a great way to start our conference dual season", stated DelPorto. "Tonight was a great win! It was probably one of the most fun duals I have been a part of. We had some guys really step it up for us when things weren't going our way. The ending was phenomenal and Khodor really came through for us. Every match that we won tonight our backs were kind of against the wall and we found a way to win. Except for Phillip's, we were actually losing then we came back to win."

Eastern will take a short break from duals when it travels to Cleveland, Ohio, Saturday, Dec. 14 for the Cleveland State Open.

**Results**

125- No. 26 Jared Germaine (EMU) dec. Jerome Robinson (ODU) 4-2. EMU leads 3-0.

133- Vincent Pizzuto (EMU) Fall Scott Festejo (ODU) 6:05. EMU leads 9-0.

141- No. 12 Chris Mecate (ODU) Fall Nicholas Barber (EMU) 2:44. EMU leads 9-6.

149- No. 20 Alexander Richardson (ODU) Fall Matthew VanCuren (EMU) 1:29. ODU leads 12-9.


165- Jacob Davis (EMU) maj. dec. Devin Geoghegan (ODU) 4-1. ODU leads 15-12.

174- Billy Curling (ODU) maj. dec. Mike Curby (EMU) 12-4. ODU leads 19-12.


**Bout-By-Bout**

125: Germaine dec. Robinson, 4-2

Robinson took an early 2-0 lead with a takedown in the first period before Germaine grabbed an escape to come within one. Germaine grabbed his first takedown in the second period to take a 4-2 lead. Neither wrestler was able to
score in the final period as Germaine remains undefeated and improves to 6-0 on the season.

**133: Pizzuto Fall Festejo, 6:05**
Pizzuto grabbed an early 2-0 lead in the first period with a takedown before Festejo used a reversal to tie the bout at 2-2 to close out the first two minutes. After Festejo almost grabbed a near fall, ODU used an escape to take his first lead of the bout, but Pizzuto battled back using a near fall and a takedown to grab a 6-3 lead heading into the third period. With just a minute left in the third period, Pizzuto pinned Festejo to give the Eagles a 9-0 lead over Old Dominion.

**141: Mecate Fall Barber, 2:44**
Mecate came out of the gate strong for the Monarchs as he used a takedown and three back points to grab the early 5-0 lead over Barber. ODU came within three of the Eagles as Mecate pinned Barber just 2:44 into the bout for the Monarchs.

**149: Richardson Fall VanCuren, 1:29**
Richardson used an early takedown and pinned VanCuren just 1:29 into the bout as VanCuren was unable to gain any momentum over Richardson. Old Dominion took a 12-9 lead over the Eagles, as the pin gave ODU its first lead of the dual.

**157: Warner dec. Zeerip, 9-2**
Warner used a takedown and a near fall in the first period to grab a quick 4-0 lead over Zeerip, before the redshirt-senior grabbed his first point on an escape to close out the first period trailing 4-1. Warner picked up an escape point before a near fall extended his lead to 8-1 over Zeerip. Zeerip came within five using his second escape of the bout, but Warner clinched one more escape to earn the 9-2 decision and extend the ODU advantage to 15-9 halfway through the dual.

**165: Davis dec. Geoghegan, 4-1**
After a scoreless first period, Davis used two quick escapes to take a 2-0 lead over Geoghegan to close out the second period. Davis extended his lead to 4-0 in the second period on a takedown before Geoghegan earned his only point of the bout on an escape late in the third period.

**174: Curling Maj. Dec. Curby, 12-4**
ODU’s Curling grabbed an early 2-0 lead over Curby with a takedown in the first period before Curby used an escape to come within one to close out the first two minutes. Curling started down in the second period and garnered his third point on an escape and then secured a takedown to extend his lead to 5-1. Curby used an escape to get his second point of the bout, but Curling had his second-straight takedown to take a 7-2 lead. Curby grabbed his third escape of the bout to start the third period before Curling used a third takedown for the 9-3 advantage. Curby grabbed his final point of the match on an escape but would lose by a 12-4 major decision.

**184: Joseph dec. Coburn, 8-3**
Joseph got the comeback started for the Eagles as he got an early takedown in the first and a takedown in the second to lead 4-1. Coburn came within two of Joseph with an escape in the second but Joseph used his third take down to go up by four. Back-to-back escapes by both wrestlers brought the score to 7-3 before Joseph used one last escape to take the 9-3 decision and bring Eastern within four of ODU.

**197: Whitenburg dec. Beazley, 5-2**
The first period saw lots of action as Beazley used a takedown to get the early 2-0 lead, but Whitenburg used an escape and a takedown to gain a 3-2 advantage to end the first period. The second period saw little action as the
Whitenburg maintained his 3-2 lead and started down to start the third. Whitenburg used an escape to start the third period and an escape within the last 20 seconds of the match to take home the 5-2 victory and leave EMU trialing by just one with one bout left in the dual.

**HWT: Hoballah dec. Tourdot, 7-2**

With the match on the line in the final bout of the night for the second dual in a row, Hoballah was able to come up with a big 7-2 decision over Tourdot to give EMU the 21-19 victory in its first MAC dual. The first period was back-and-forth as Hoballah used an escape to take the 1-0 advantage before Tourdot had a takedown to take the 2-1 lead. Hoballah answered back with an escape to knot the match at 2-2. The scored remained at 2-2 through the entire second period as Tourdot chose to be neutral heading into the final two minutes of action. Hoballah secured five points in the final period with one takedown to earn the 7-2 decision and give the Eagles their second-straight win.