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Wrestling Returns to Ypsilanti to Host Olivet College

Eagles play host to the Comets on Wrestlers Night in Bowen Field House at 7 p.m.

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMU Eagles.com) -- The Eastern Michigan University wrestling squad returns to Ypsilanti to take on Olivet College in a non-conference match-up at Bowen Field House, Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. The Eagles boast a perfect 6-0 record against the Comets as they have not allowed Olivet to score in double-digits in dual history. Tuesday's dual will also serve as Wrestler's Night at Bowen Field House where wrestlers of all ages will get into the dual free of charge if they RSVP to Head Coach Derek DelPorto at ddelport@emich.edu.

SCOUTING OLIVET: The Comets have had strong showings in their last two invitationals as they took home the first-place finish at the Ohio Northern Invitational, Dec. 7, before grabbing a third-place spot at the North Central (Ill.) Invitational, Dec. 14. Olivet College posted a 4-1 record in dual meets this season as it as defeated Heidelberg (Ohio), Muskegon Community College, Ohio Northern and Wisconsin-Whitewater. The Comets' only loss of the season came against Indiana Tech at the Comet Duals, Nov. 23.

Six of Olivet's 10 starters have recorded double-digit wins on the season as senior Gage Pederson leads Olivet posting a 14-5 record on the season at 149 lbs., while the brother duo of Justin Holm and Jeff Holm have a combined record of 23-11 in their respective weight classes. Senior Henry McKeown (125 lbs.) has earned 11 wins on the young season, while Kyle Witgen (157 lbs.) has secured a 10-5 record and Nick Allen (174 lbs.) posts a 10-2 record this year. Olivet has two non-starters who have also reached double-digits as Kyle Gilbies (125 lbs.) posts a 12-5 record and Seth Manshum (184 lbs.) has a 11-5 record for the Comets.
SERIES HISTORY: The Eagles have dominated the series against the Comets as they post a perfect 6-0 record since the 2005-06 season heading into the seventh meeting between the two squads. The Green and White has never allowed Olivet to score more than nine points in each of its meetings with its biggest win coming Dec. 20, 2007 when the Eagles shut out the Comets, 42-0.

Last season, EMU used four major decisions, two decisions, one pin and one forfeit to secure the 34-6 victory over Olivet. The Eagles got on the scoreboard early as the Comets did not send a competitor to the mat at 125 lbs. to give Eastern a 6-0 lead due to forfeit. The Green and White used two-straight major decisions at 133 lbs. and 141 lbs. as Jake Byers shut out Michael Gancer, 9-0 and Michael Shaw secured an 11-2 victory to allow EMU to take the 14-0 advantage. Olivet saw its first of two victories at 149 lbs. as Gage Pederson earned a narrow 5-3 decision over Chris Rau, but the Eagles answered back as then-senior Aaron Sulzer pinned Kyle Witgen in just 1:49. Olivet's final win of the day came at 165 lbs, but the Eagles grabbed momentum and won six-straight to secure its 34-6 victory over the Comets and its sixth victory in the history between the two squads.

HOBALLAH PICKS UP MAC WRESTLER OF THE WEEK: Redshirt-senior Khodor Hoballah earned MAC Wrestler of the Week honors, Thursday, Dec. 12. The accolade marks the first of Hoballah's career and is the first conference honor given to the Eastern Michigan University wrestling team for the 2013-14 season.

Hoballah had the deciding win when he came up with a 7-2 decision to give Eastern Michigan a 21-19 victory in its first MAC dual over Old Dominion. The first period was back-and-forth as the senior used an escape to take the 1-0 advantage before Matt Tourdot had a takedown to take the 2-1 lead. Hoballah answered back with an escape to knot the match at 2-2. The score remained at 2-2 through the entire second period as Tourdot chose to be neutral heading into the final two minutes of action. The Dearborn, Mich. native secured five points in the final period with one takedown to earn the 7-2 decision and give the Eagles their second-straight win.

THREE EAGLES RANKED IN MAC DECEMBER POLLS: Three EMU redshirt-seniors are currently ranked in the Mid-American Conference December Polls as Jared Germaine (125 lbs.) and Nick Whitenburg (194 lbs.) rank third in their respective weight classes and Phillip Joseph ranks fourth at 184 lbs.

Germaine boasts a perfect 6-0 record for the Eagles at the 125 lb. weight class as he has yet to be beaten in his final season, while Whitenburg holds a 4-2 record, falling only to Drexel's Brandon Palik and Michigan State's Nick McDiarmid. Phillip Joseph has proven to be a steady competitor after moving up to 184 lbs. in his senior season as he holds a 9-2 overall record and a 6-1 dual record. The Lapeer, Mich. native clinched the deciding pin over Stanford to allow the Eagles to beat the then-No. 23 Cardinal 18-16 at the Convocation Center, Nov. 24.

EAGLES PLACE EIGHT AT CLEVELAND STATE OPEN: Eastern had a strong day at the Cleveland State Open, Saturday, Dec. 14 as they placed eight wrestlers in their respective weight classes.

Freshman Shayne Wireman placed for the third time in as many tournament showings as he picked up a third-place spot in the 125 lb. weight class. The Lansing, Mich. native grabbed a 12-1 major decision in his first bout of the night before falling in 2:57 in his second bout to Virginia's Will Mason. The "true" freshman went on to win six-straight bouts en route to placing in his third tournament of the season. Wireman defeated Michigan's Sean Boyle in the deciding match as he grabbed a 2-0 decision.

Both James Klosz and Anthony Abro claimed second-place finishes for the Eagles in their respective weight classes. After earning a bye in the first round, Klosz went on to win four-straight bouts in the championship bracket at 157 lbs. before falling in a 6-4 decision in the finals to Old Dominion's Jordan Marshall.

Abro also earned a bye in the first round and went on to win three-straight bouts using two decisions and one major decision to get to the finals. Abro was unable to hold off Matt Sliga from Northwestern as he fell in a 7-4 decision in the finals at 184 lbs.

TAKING DOWN RANKED OPPONENTS: The Green and White has taken down two ranked opponents in two-straight duals as the Eagles defeated No. 23 Stanford, 18-16 in the Convocation Center before traveling to Norfolk,
Va. and securing a 21-19 victory over No. 24 Old Dominion, Dec. 6. Since EMU defeated both teams, the Cardinal has moved up as high as No. 18 in the NCAA rankings, while the Monarchs dropped out of Wrestlingreport.com’s top-25. The wins mark the first time in Eagle history that Eastern has defeated two ranked teams in a season. Prior to beating Stanford and Old Dominion, EMU last beat a ranked opponent in the 2012-13 campaign when it defeated then-No. 24 North Dakota State, 18-17, Nov. 24, 2012.

Individually, seven wrestlers have taken on ranked opponents as the team posts a 2-9 record this season against ranked opposition. Vincent Pizzuto and Nicholas Barber each have 1-1 records against ranked opponents as Pizzuto defeated No. 19 Sam Sherlock of Clarion in a 10-1 major decision before falling to Stanford’s No. 3 Ryan Mango, 12-5. Barber first earned a 10-5 decision over Clarion’s No. 31 Tyler Bedeyon before suffering a fall in 2:44 to No. 12 Chris Mecate of Old Dominion.

DELPORTE CAPTURES 100th CAREER VICTORY: Head Coach Derek DelPorto clinched his 100th career victory as a head coach when the Eagles grabbed a 21-19 victory over Old Dominion. 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.

The Erie, Pa. native posts a 100-90-2 all-time record after spending two years at Slippery Rock before coming to Eastern in 2006.

DELPORTE NEARING ALL-TIME EMU COACHING RECORD: Head Coach Derek DelPorto currently holds a 78-69-2 record at EMU, which is two wins shy of tying former head coach John Eisley. While at Eastern, Eisley 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.

GERMAINE REMAINS PERFECT: Redshirt-senior Jared Germaine has come out strong in his final season as an Eagle. The Saginaw, Mich. native boasts a perfect 6-0 overall and dual record on the season as he has notched big wins in each of his bouts.

Germaine posted two decisions and a major decision at the EMU Duals before taking a 13-7 decision over Michigan State’s Hermilo Esquivel and a 9-3 decision over Stanford’s Tommy Pawelski.

Germaine’s sixth win of the season got the Green and White off to a quick 3-0 lead over Old Dominion as he captured a 4-2 decision over Jerome Robinson in the opening bout. 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 remained undefeated and improved to 6-0 on the season.

COVERAGE OF THE OLIVET DUAL: Fans can follow the team on www.EMUeagles.com and Twitter (@EMUWrestling). Fans can join in on the conversation by using #FlyingHigher.

UP NEXT?: The Eagles hit the road for the fifth time this season as they travel to Evanston, Ill. to compete in the Midland Championships, Saturday Dec. 28 - Sunday, Dec. 29.