EMU Women's Gymnastics: EMU Hosts Three Teams for Annual Eagle Invitational

Eastern Michigan University
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Gymnastics squares off with Air Force, Northern Illinois and Temple in Bowen Field House, Saturday March 8, at 7 p.m.

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) -- Following a pair of losses to the Air Force Academy, the Eastern Michigan University gymnastics team (3-8, 1-3 MAC) will have one more crack at the Falcons as Air Force visits Ypsilanti as part of the Eagle Invitational, March 8. Eastern will also host Northern Illinois University and Temple University for the annual quad meet held at Bowen Field House. Competition is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m.

Willette Leads the Way Out West: Junior Anna Willette led the Eagles in four of her six events in a pair of dual meets against Air Force, Feb. 26 and March 1. The Pylesville, Md. native won the vault on both nights, including a 9.8 in the final meet that tied her season-high. Willette recorded a 9.775 in all three events in the first meet to earn a victory and two runner-up finishes. She also tallied scores of 9.700 or higher in five-of-six routines throughout the week.

Loehner Chalks Up Floor Victories: Redshirt-junior Chantelle Loehner claimed the floor titles in both meets against Air Force this past week, Feb. 26 and March 1, tying the top mark with a score of 9.800 on each routine. The score is just .025 off of a career-high for Loehner, and her 9.800 in the final meet led the Eagles to a team-best score of 48.775 in the dual.

Focus on the Falcons: Air Force enters the week with a 5-6 record after defeating EMU in two dual meets last week,
Feb. 26 and March 1. The Falcons have seen improvements throughout the season, earning higher scores than the previous meet leading up to a season-high 193.825 against the Eagles. Air Force is led by senior Linnaea Hance, who is the only gymnast to compete in all four events as she earned an all-around total of 37.950 versus Eastern, March 1. Hance tied for the top score of bars with a 9.725 while placing second on vault.

Scouting Northern Illinois: While the Eagles and Huskies will be competing against two other teams to make up the quad meet, the two programs will score the meet as a Mid-American Conference matchup. NIU is 2-3 in the MAC as part of its overall record of 5-7. The Huskies are coming off a 194.675-194.050 setback to No. 16 Central Michigan University, but the team score was a season best. Senior Megan Melendez posted an impressive 9.900 on beam, the seventh best beam score in school history, while senior Kim Gotlund tallied a 9.800 in the event. Gotlund claimed the all-around title with a score of 38.925.

Outlook on the Owls: Temple has been on a hot streak in its last four meets, posting a record of 13-2 that includes three meet victories with three-or-more opponents. The Owls are coming off a 192.325-187.425 dual meet win over Ursinus, March 2, as Temple had the two highest scores in each event. Brittanie DeMeno and Briana Odom competed on all four apparatuses, earning all-around scores of 38.150 and 38.025, respectively. Senior Heather Zaniewski tallied the highest score of the meet on bars with a 9.750.

Battle of the Birds in Muncie: Eastern will compete in one final tune-up, March 14, before hosting the MAC Gymnastics Championships, March 22. Head Coach Steve Wilce and his squad will head to Muncie, Ind. for a dual meet against the Ball State University Cardinals. The MAC foes will take the mats the 7 p.m. for a Friday night affair in Irving Gymnasium.