Summer 8-11-2014

EMU Women's Soccer: EMU Soccer Set to Defend MAC Regular Season Crown

Eastern Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.emich.edu/sports_scr

Recommended Citation

Eastern Michigan University, "EMU Women's Soccer: EMU Soccer Set to Defend MAC Regular Season Crown" (2014). Eastern Michigan University, Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. EMU Archives, Digital Commons @ EMU (http://commons.emich.edu/sports_scr/621)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at DigitalCommons@EMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sports Scores by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@EMU. For more information, please contact lib-ir@emich.edu.
EMU Soccer Set to Defend MAC Regular Season Crown

An in-depth look at the 2014 EMU Soccer team

8/11/2014 2:59:00 PM

YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) – With nearly the entire team returning from a season ago, the Eastern Michigan University women’s soccer team came into the 2013 season with high expectations that included a Mid-American Conference championship. The Eagles accomplished that goal with a 12-7-2 (8-2-1 MAC) record for the program’s third regular season conference crown and first since 2003. The Green and White lost five seniors to last year’s team but return a plethora of talent that hopes to defend the team’s MAC regular season title.

The Eagles will once again be led by 16th-year Head Coach Scott Hall, who has taken the squad to the conference postseason 12 times, along with winning the MAC Tournament in 1999. Hall's 2014 group features 19 returning letter winners along with eight starters and six newcomers.

EMU soccer fans will have plenty of opportunity to see the 2014 Eagles in action at Scicluna Field, as the squad plays a total of nine home games which begin with exhibitions against the University of Detroit Mercy, Aug. 14, and Butler University, Aug. 16, as well as the regular season opener versus Fordham University, Aug. 22.

Defense

On the defensive side of the pitch, the Green and White return MAC Co-Defensive Player of the Year Emily Dzik (Troy, Mich.-Troy) to lead a backline that helped pitch five shutouts and finished in the middle of the conference
in goals allowed, giving up 1.10 goals per game. Not only is Dzik the anchor of the EMU backline, but she also has proven to be a threat to score on set pieces, tallying three goals during 2013.

Alongside Dzik, fellow teammate Marisa Kozikowski (Troy, Mich.-Athens) returns for her senior season after collecting All-MAC Second Team accolades in 2013, and Jennifer Bentley (London, Ontario-London Secondary) is back after starting all 21 games a season ago. The EMU defense will also welcome back redshirt-junior Hallee Kansman (Farmington Hills, Mich.-North Farmington), who missed the entire 2013 campaign due to injury.

Coach Hall will put the remainder of the defensive duties on returners Julia Lombardi (Oakville, Ontario-Abbey Park) and Rachel Washburn (Hartland, Mich.-Hartland), as well as a group of newcomers which includes: Olivia Kitz (Livonia, Mich.-Stevenson), Chanel Vani (Brampton, Ontario-Cardinal Leger) and Alex Wilbanks (Ypsilanti, Mich.-Lincoln).

Goalkeeping

In goal, two keepers will battle for the primary job in 2012 starter Jenna O'Dell (Troy, Mich.-Athens (Iowa State)) and last season's mainstay Megan McCabe (Arlington Heights, Ill.-Prospect). O'Dell missed the 2013 season with an injury, but McCabe was fantastic throughout the year to serve as a focal point in the Eagles' regular season MAC crown.

In her first full season in net for the Green and White, McCabe held down the defensive side of the pitch, stopping 93 shots in 21 games between the posts, leading to four individual shutouts. Overall, the Arlington Heights, Ill. native tallied a 1.06 goals against average and an 80.2 save percentage while helping pitch five EMU shutouts as a sophomore. She also set an EMU single-season record facing 303 shots, breaking Maggie Manville's previous school record of 277, set back in 2011.

O'Dell last saw action as the Eagles' starter in 2012, starting 16 games and compiling a record of 8-6-2 that included five shutouts. During that season, she ranked second in the MAC in save percentage (.811), saves (90) and saves per game (5.62).

Forwards

Despite losing All-MAC First Team honoree Stephanie Clarke to graduation, plenty of offense returns from a team that stood atop the MAC in several categories: points (137), goals (45), goals per game (2.14), assists (47) and assists per game (2.24), while also ranking as the 33rd-most potent offense in the nation. Leading the charge on the offensive side of the field will be reigning MAC Offensive Player of the Year Angela Vultaggio (Chesterfield, Mich.-L'Anse Creuse North), who scored 13 goals and a MAC-best 34 points, the second-highest totals of both categories in EMU history. Vultaggio showed her versatility as well, sharing the ball by leading the team and conference in assists with eight. She will look to end her career with a strong senior season to place her near the top of multiple EMU records.

Bianca Rossi (Mississauga, Ontario-St. Marcellinus), the leading goal-scorer for the Eagles and all-conference performer in 2012, recorded six goals throughout 2013 and will be back for her final season donning the Green and White. Another returning forward is Megan Trapp (Plymouth, Mich.-Canton), who appeared in all 21 games last year primarily off the bench. She scored one goal and added two assists while providing quality minutes for Coach Hall's squad.

Also contributing to the EMU attack this season will be a pair of sophomores in Madison Hirsch (Troy, Mich.-
Midfield

The biggest losses for the Eagles come in the midfield with 2013 All-MAC First team honorees Clarke and Cara Cutaia earning their bachelor's degrees. Nonetheless, a variety of experience is still around for the 2014 campaign.

EMU played the entire 2013 season without Chelsie Oddan (Calgary, Alberta-Central Memorial), but the redshirt senior is back after suffering a season-ending injury at the beginning of last year. Joining Oddan on the pitch after being sidelined in 2013 is redshirt-sophomore Ellie Tillar (Cincinnati, Ohio-Turpin). The redshirt sophomore started the first game of the season before a knee injury brought an early end to her season.

Martha Stevens (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.-Marian) who had a breakout 2013 season in which she scored three goals, including the game-winner in the season-opening contest versus Detroit, Aug. 23, is another starter in the midfield that returns for the Green and White. Senior Molli Krick (Novi, Mich.-Novi) will provide veteran experience in the midfield as well after she started 20 games in 2013. Rounding out the returnees are sophomores Stef Barcelos (Mississauga, Ontario-St. Marcellinus) and Gabriella Mancini (Troy, Mich.-Athens). The duo combined to appear in 17 games in their first seasons donning the Green and White, and Barcelos scored her first collegiate goal of her career in the Eagles' victory over Stetson, Sept. 20.

Three freshmen will split time on the offensive side of the pitch with the ability to play both midfield and forward positions: Emma Camp (Garden City, Mich.-Salem), Irena Dedivani (Farmington Hills, Mich.-Farmington) and Kristin Nason (Brooklin, Ontario-Donald A. Wilson).

Schedule

The Green and White will take Scicluna Field against Detroit in an exhibition match, Aug. 14, at 5 p.m., kicking off the 2014-15 EMU sports season before hosting Butler for a weekend exhibition, Aug. 16. The exhibitions are two-of-nine matches set to take place on the home pitch this season. EMU also begins the regular season portion of the schedule at home, battling Fordham Friday, Aug. 22, at 4 p.m. The Eagles will close out the first weekend of the season, Aug. 24, as Indiana comes to town for a non-conference matchup beginning at 1 p.m.

Following the season-opening weekend at home, the Eagles hit the road for six-straight matches, including three against schools west of the Mississippi River. Eastern will play in-state foe Michigan State, Aug. 29, in its first trip away from Ypsilanti. EMU will remain on the road two days later, squaring off against Texas Tech in a neutral site affair in South Bend, Ind., Aug. 31. Coach Hall's squad will then head to the West Coast to face Oregon, Sept. 5, and Oregon State, Sept. 7. Following a two-week layoff, the Eagles travel to the Windy City for a contest at Illinois-Chicago, Sept. 21, before ending the road trip with the first MAC matchup of the season against reigning MAC East Division champion Miami, Sept. 26.

EMU returns to the friendly confines of Scicluna Field, Sept. 28, for a Sunday matinee with Ball State; however, the comfort of home won't last long as the Eagles return to conference road play with games at Akron, Oct. 3, and Buffalo, Oct. 5. After a weekend away, the Green and White will finish out the home portion of the schedule with two weekends consisting of four games at home. Rivals Toledo and Central Michigan will face off against EMU in two West Division showdowns, Oct. 10 and Oct. 12, respectively, before the Eagles proceed to close the lid on regular season contests at Scicluna Field with a pair of cross-divisional matches. Eastern is set to play Kent State on Friday, Oct. 17, while the Ohio Bobcats are the opposition in the home finale, Oct. 19.
Eastern wraps up the regular season with three MAC road contests, starting with trips to Northern Illinois, Oct. 24, and Western Michigan, Oct. 26. Following the game against the Broncos in Kalamazoo, where EMU clinched last year’s MAC championship, the Eagles finish out the regular season at Bowling Green, Oct. 31. If EMU finishes in the conference’s top-eight, it will qualify for MAC Tournament play, competing in quarterfinal action on Nov. 2. The highest remaining seed will host the semifinals, Nov. 7, and the MAC Tournament Championship will be held on the same field, Sunday, Nov. 9.