EMU Women's Soccer; Eagles Soar Past Fordham, 2-0, in 2014 Season Opener

Eastern Michigan University
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Vultaggio and Dzik score goals, while McCabe pitches a shutout for the EMU Soccer victory

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) – The Eastern Michigan University soccer team opened up the 2014 regular season in winning fashion, soaring past Fordham University 2-0 Friday evening, Aug. 22 at Scicluna Field. Starting the 20th season in program history, EMU improves to an all-time mark of 11-5-4 in season openers.

Last year’s Mid-American Conference players of the year scored the two goals to propel the Eagles to victory; reigning MAC Offensive Player of the Year Angela Vultaggio found the back of the net in the 25th minute, and 2013 MAC Co-Defensive Player of the Year Emily Dzik added an insurance goal in the second half. Junior Molli Krick and sophomore Madison Hirsch set up their teammates for the pair of goals. Meanwhile, Megan McCabe and the rest of the EMU backline secured the shutout with two saves by the starting keeper.

EMU out-shot Fordham 10-8, including 4-2 in shots on goal. Vultaggio took a game-high four shots while Fordham’s Kate McDonnel attempted three shots to lead the Rams. The Eagles controlled the ball for the majority of the game as well as having a 4-1 advantage on corner kicks; the only Fordham corner happened in the waning second of the match.

Fordham started out on the offensive attack, firing a shot on goal in the second minute of the contest. The attempted score found the gloves of McCabe for the first save of the season. The Rams continued to blast shots towards the
goal, but they missed wide of the target as the game remained scoreless.

After the early threat by Fordham, the Eagles’ nerves settled as they took control of possession. Looking for a prime opportunity to strike, Eastern found a chance in the 25th minute and did not waste it. Krick found Vultaggio on a run down the center of the field. As the keeper came to the top of the box, the senior picked her spot and placed it with perfection in the back of the net to give the Green and White the 1-0 advantage.

For the remainder of the first half, neither team had a legitimate scoring opportunity as the match remained a one-goal difference after 45 minutes. Each team took four shots in the first half, including one on goal with Eastern’s shot finding the net. Only one corner kick took place in the opening half, belonging to the Eagles.

With a one goal lead, the EMU backline clamped down for the second half, holding the Rams to just one shot on goal and no further legitimate scoring chances. In the 67th minute, the Green and White doubled its lead after a beautiful cross from Hirsch scampered through the traffic to find Dzik on the back post. The wise veteran knew exactly what to do with the ball, placing the ball where out of the reach of the Fordham keeper for the goal. Despite the two-goal lead, the defense continued to hold strong to secure the shutout and Eastern’s first victory of the 2014 campaign.

EMU Head Coach Scott Hall made substitutions throughout the match as 17 Eagles saw minutes, including the debuts of freshmen Chanel Vani and Alex Wilbanks.

The Eagles will hope to keep the momentum going as they return to Scicluna Field Sunday, Aug. 24, to close out the season-opening weekend. EMU hosts Indiana University, a 2013 NCAA Tournament qualifier, for a 1 p.m. matchup.