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EMU Women's Soccer: Eagles Soar West for Weekend in Oregon

Eastern Michigan University

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Eagles Soar West for Weekend in Oregon

EMU soccer travels 2,373 miles to battle Oregon, Sept. 5, and Oregon State, Sept. 7

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) -- Looking to get back on the winning track, the Eastern Michigan University soccer team remains away from Ypsilanti, soaring 2,373 miles into Oregon for two matchups against Pac-12 Conference foes. First, EMU will square off against the University of Oregon, Sept. 5, under the lights of Pape Field for a 7 p.m. local first touch. Wrapping up the excursion, Eastern takes on Oregon State University in Corvallis, Ore., Sept. 7 at 1 p.m. PDT.

EMU DROPS TWO AWAY FROM SCICLUNA FIELD: After starting off the season with a perfect weekend, the Eagles' tough non-conference scheduled continued as they hit the road for the first time. In the first road contest of the 2014 campaign, EMU fell 3-0 to Michigan State University Friday afternoon, Aug. 29, at DeMartin Stadium. The Spartans scored once in the first half and added a pair of insurance goals in the final 45 minutes to hand the Eagles their first loss of the season. Two days later, Eastern took No. 16 Texas Tech University to overtime, but it was the nationally-ranked Red Raiders who scored in the 93rd minute to claim the 2-1 victory over the Eagles. Angela Vultaggio got the Eagles out to an early lead with a goal in the fifth minute, and starting keeper Megan McCabe made three first half saves to help EMU hold on to a one-goal lead at halftime. However, Texas Tech knotted the match with a goal in the 56th minute, and the Red Raiders found the net just three minutes into overtime to leave South Bend with their national ranking and perfect record intact. The neutral site match took place at Alumni Stadium on the campus of the University of Notre Dame as part of the Notre Dame Invitational.
DEALING WITH THE DUCKS: The Eagles and Ducks will meet on the pitch for the first time ever Friday night, Sept. 5. After dropping its season opener at Wisconsin, Oregon has rattled off three-straight victories, including a weekend sweep at home over Saint Mary's and Loyola Marymount. In those three wins, the Ducks have kept opponents off the scoreboard as goalkeeper Abby Steele has pitched shutouts for 270 consecutive minutes. The two weekend shutouts put Steele's mark at 16 for her career, tying a school record. The senior goalie has only allowed one goal in 2014, making 13 saves to increase her career total to 257. In terms of offense, Oregon has a balanced attack with five different Ducks scoring one goal apiece this season.

BATTLING THE BEAVERS: For the first time in history, Oregon State and EMU will square off against one another. The Beavers are 0-3-1 on the 2014 campaign after also facing Loyola Marymount and Saint Mary's. OSU and LMU played to a scoreless draw, Aug. 29, before the Gaels claimed a 4-2 decision over the Beavers, Aug. 31. The two goals against Saint Mary's were the first scores for Oregon State all season as midfielders Emma Bergstrom and Sabrina Santarossa found the back of the net. In between the posts, freshman Bella Geist has been busy stopping 29 shots on goal.

SCORING MACHINE: Through the first four games of the season, senior forward Angela Vultaggio has put together a solid case to re-claim her title as MAC Offensive Player of the Year. The Chesterfield, Mich. native already has a MAC Offensive Player of the Week honor under her belt in 2014, and she is currently scoring at a rate of one goal per game. If she keeps up the average, Vultaggio will snap the EMU single-season goal record of 17 set by Jessica Hupe during the 2002 campaign. Last year, Vultaggio tallied 13 goals that sits second in EMU laurels. On the Eastern career goals list, the Green and White senior is currently in third with 29, chasing Amanda Kulikowski who sits in second with 35 goals.

EMILY DZIK NAMED 2014 SENIOR CLASS AWARD CANDIDATE: Eastern Michigan University senior Emily Dzik was chosen as a candidate for the 2014 Senior CLASS Award. Dzik is one-of-30 women's soccer student-athletes that was selected throughout the nation, Sept. 2. An acronym for Celebrating Loyalty and Achievement for Staying in School®, the Senior CLASS Award focuses on the total student-athlete and encourages students to use their platform in athletics to make a positive impact as leaders in their communities.

In terms of character, Dzik is a leader for the EMU soccer program. Starting in every game since she arrived on campus as a freshman, she has proven to be a leader on the field. Her teammates look up to her, and she is serving as a team captain for the 2014 campaign.

Dzik is a two-time All-MAC First Team honoree and has started every game of her EMU career. She was named MAC Co-Defensive Player of the Year in 2013, leading the EMU defense that pitched five shutouts throughout the season as the Eagles captured the MAC regular season crown. She started every game for the Eagles, playing 1,930 out of a possible 1,967 minutes. Dzik collected NSCAA All-Great Lakes Region Third Team and All-MAC First Team honors for her performance on the pitch, while proving to be an offensive threat on corner kicks as three headers found the back of the net. She was also recognized for athletic and academic success by earning Capital One Academic All-District Second Team and Academic All-MAC accolades.

Dzik was a leader among the EMU soccer student-athletes as they became role models for kids on youth soccer teams, running out on the pitch with the Eagles for the starting lineups. Also, in the Eagles’ final non-conference match of the 2013 season, Sept. 22, at Scicluna Field against Indiana State, the Eastern Michigan University soccer team recognized the match as Cancer Awareness Day. The Eagles sported teal armbands, headbands and special white jerseys with teal-colored numbers, the color of ovarian cancer awareness. As an upperclassman, Dzik was one of the leaders with this important awareness day.

Dzik excels in the classroom with a difficult major, holding a 3.98 GPA while studying nursing. In 2013, Dzik was recognized for athletic and academic success by earning Capital One Academic All-District Second Team and Academic All-MAC accolades. She also found herself as an Academic All-MAC student-athlete in her sophomore season, the first year eligible for the honor. Dzik is an EMU Scholar Athlete with one of the highest GPAs out of all
Eastern Michigan student-athletes.

The list will be narrowed to 10 finalists midway through the regular season, and those 10 names will be placed on the official ballot. Ballots will be distributed through a nationwide voting system to media, coaches and fans, who will select one male candidate and one female candidate who best exemplify excellence in the four Cs of community, classroom, character and competition.

**POWER PLAYS:** The gauntlet of the grueling non-conference schedule continues for Coach Scott Hall and his squad. The Green and White is currently in a stretch of playing five consecutive games against teams from the five “power” conferences. EMU started the stretch with a 2-0 victory over Indiana at home, before dropping a road matchup at Michigan State and a neutral site contest to nationally-ranked Texas Tech in overtime. The Eagles flock to Oregon for games against the Oregon Ducks, Sept. 5 and the Oregon State Beavers, Sept. 7. Similar to last season, the tough non-conference schedule will test EMU and prepare the team for the Mid-American Conference slate.

**MILES UPON MILES:** After two home exhibition matches as well as two games at Scicluna Field to begin the regular season, EMU is currently in the midst of spending 35 days away from Ypsilanti for six road contests. Before the Eagles return home, they will travel a total of 3,171 miles during the six-game road trip. The longest venture will be out to the West Coast to face Oregon and Oregon State; the distance from Ypsilanti to Eugene, Ore. is 2,373 miles. However, it is not the longest trip the Eagles have taken in program history; the Green and White traveled to 4,453 miles to Hawaii for a pair of contests in 2005. Life on the rigorous road ends Sept. 26 in Oxford, Ohio as Eastern battles Miami University to kick off MAC play. Two days later, the team returns home to host Ball State in a Sunday afternoon affair, Sept. 28.

**EXTENDED BREAK:** With one-third of their regular season in the books, the Eagles will take an extended break from facing any opponents on the pitch. EMU will have 14 days in between contests as Coach Scott Hall and his squad travel to the Windy City, Sept. 21, for the final non-conference contest of the season. The University of Illinois-Chicago, playing its inaugural women's soccer season, will host the Eagles with the action beginning at 1 p.m. CST from Flames Field.