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Eastern Michigan University

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Eagles and Ducks Battle to 1-1 Draw

Bianca Rossi records EMU’s lone goal, while Megan McCabe makes a season-high nine saves

EUGENE, Ore. (EMUEagles.com) – The Eastern Michigan University soccer team started its West Coast weekend road trip with a 1-1 draw against the University of Oregon, Sept. 7, at Pape’ Field. The Friday night standstill was the first draw of the 2014 regular season for both the Eagles (2-2-1) and the Ducks (3-1-1) as Oregon saw its three-game winning streak come to an end at the hands of the Green and White.

The senior duo of Bianca Rossi and Marisa Kozikowski put the Eagles on the scoreboard midway through the first half. Kozikowski found the head of Rossi on a cross in the box, giving EMU the one-goal advantage and ending Oregon's streak of consecutive shutouts at three games. In goal, Megan McCabe (2-1-1) put together a strong performance, making a season-high nine saves.

Oregon held advantages in shots, 18-8, as well as corner kicks, 5-2. Marlo Sweatman brought the Ducks back in the contest with a second-half goal courtesy of an assist from Kira Wagoner. After allowing the Eastern goal in the opening half, Oregon goalkeeper Abby Steele (3-1-1) stopped all three shots on goal that the Eagles took throughout the remaining 65 minutes of play.
Eastern wasted no time in starting the game on the attack as Megan Trapp threw a header just high over the net, 47 seconds into the contest. The script quickly flipped minutes later as the Ducks took three consecutive shots with the last saved by McCabe. After stopping the game’s first shot on-goal, EMU found the open net on the opposite side of the turf. In the 25th minute, Kozikowski sent a beautiful cross into Rossi, who re-directed the ball with her head into the back of the net. The goal was Rossi's first of the 2014 campaign, and Kozikowski also collected her first assist of the season.

The hometown Ducks pressed throughout the remainder of the first half to try and tie the contest. With three corner kicks, Oregon had opportunities on set pieces, but the EMU back line stood tall in front of McCabe. After the first 45 minutes of play, the Eagles found themselves ahead, 1-0. McCabe made four saves in the opening half as Oregon sent seven shots her way. While Eastern only attempted four shots, the lone shot on goal from Rossi found the opening for the half’s only score.

McCabe continued her strong play to start the second half. The junior keeper came off her line to win an important ball that denied Oregon a prime scoring opportunity. With this aggressive play, McCabe started a counterattack for the Green and White, moving the ball quickly up the pitch. Trapp found Rossi in the middle, but the senior was denied her second goal of the contest as Steele made the stop.

Keeping up the attack, the Ducks finally found the equalizer in the 75th minute. Similar to the EMU goal, Wagoner sent a cross that connected with the head of Sweatman. As McCabe dove left to cover the easier angle, the Oregon midfielder placed her header to the opposite side as the ball rolled into the net to knot the contest at one goal apiece.

Two minutes after Oregon tied the game, the Eagles nearly regained the lead as Angela Vultaggio had a one-on-one opportunity after getting past a defender. With Steele racing up to the top of the box to take away any openings, Vultaggio slowed down the pace in an attempt to throw off the Ducks' keeper. However, Steele managed to block the shot to deny the senior Eagle and keep the match at a standstill.

In both overtime periods, neither team had a golden opportunity to score the game-winner. McCabe made a pair of saves as both defenses played strong to force the 1-1 draw.

The Eagles will remain in Oregon for the remainder of the weekend, playing its second contest in the Beaver State. Wrapping up the excursion, Eastern takes on Oregon State University in Corvallis, Ore., Sept. 7. First touch from Lorenz Field is set for 1 p.m. PDT.