EMU Women's Softball: MAC Preseason Poll Predicts Eagles to Finish Fifth in the MAC West

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MAC Preseason Poll Predicts Eagles to Finish Fifth in the MAC West

EMU softball kicks off 2014 season, Friday, Feb. 7 in Spartanburg, S.C.

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CLEVELAND, Ohio (EMUeagles.com) – The 2014 Eastern Michigan softball team has been picked to finish fifth in the Mid-American Conference West Division as the conference released its preseason coaches’ poll, Thursday, Feb. 6. Defending MAC Tournament Champions Central Michigan topped the standings as the favorite to win the West with six first-place votes, while Ball State is predicted to come in second, also receiving six first-place votes. In the East, the coaches felt that Kent State would top the division as it received seven first-place votes.

With Central and Ball State leading the pack in the MAC West, Northern Illinois was tabbed to finish third, while Western Michigan, EMU and Toledo round out the division. In the East, Ohio was picked to finish second, receiving two first-place votes, while Miami, also receiving two first-place votes was picked for third. Bowling Green, Akron and Buffalo rounded out the East as Buffalo received one vote for a first-place finish in 2014.

The Chippewas have also been tabbed as the favorites to claim the MAC Tournament Championship for the second year running and earn an NCAA Tournament berth, receiving four votes for a predicted repeat title. Meanwhile, Ball State, Kent State and Ohio each received two votes for the tournament crown and both Buffalo and Northern Illinois received one vote apiece.
Head Coach Melissa Gentile enters her first season at the helm of the Eastern Michigan University softball team and is looking to improve upon the team's 17-33-1 overall record and its fourth-place finish in the MAC West Division a season ago.

The Green and White will take the field for the first time in the 2014 season, Friday, Feb. 7 as the Eagles will participate in the USC Upstate Tournament in Spartanburg, S.C. Eastern will first take on Virginia at 1 p.m. before sizing up with tournament host, USC Upstate at 3 p.m. in the doubleheader.

2014 MAC Softball Preseason Coaches' Poll (First-Place Votes in Parentheses)

MAC East Preseason Poll
1. Kent State (7 First Place Votes)
2. Ohio (2)
3. Miami (2)
4. Bowling Green
5. Akron
6. Buffalo (1)

MAC West Preseason Poll
1. Central Michigan (6)
2. Ball State (6)
3. Northern Illinois
4. Western Michigan
5. Eastern Michigan
6. Toledo

Predicted 2014 MAC Tournament Champions
Central Michigan (4 Votes)
Ball State, Kent State, Ohio (2)
Buffalo, Northern Illinois (1)