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Eastern Michigan University

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Softball Picks Up One Win on Final Day of USC Upstate Tournament

Eagles play two extra inning games, clinching the 2-1 win over N.C. Central

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (EMUEagles.com) – The Eastern Michigan University softball team played two extra inning games in the final day of the USC Upstate Tournament, Saturday, Feb. 8. The Eagles fell to Towson University, 8-7 in nine innings, in their first contest of the day before defeating North Carolina Central University, 2-1 in eight innings, in the night cap.

Aoife Duffy (Powell, Ohio-Olentagy Orange) led the EMU lineup with four hits between the two games, while Jenn Lucas (Pinckney, Mich.-Pinckney) had two RBI for the Eagles. Junior pitcher Lindsay Rich (Perrysburg, Ohio-Perrysburg) earned both starts in the circle pitching eight complete innings, while Abbie Minsker (Howell, Mich.-Hartland) clinched her first collegiate victory. With the split, Eastern moves to 2-2 overall on the season.

Game One: Towson 8, Eastern Michigan 7 (9 innings)

The Eagles found themselves in a jam in the bottom of the first inning after committing an error on the first play of the game with a single through the left side of the field to follow. A wild pitch put runners on second and third with only one out on the board before Missy McCormick drilled a three-run home run over the left center fence, allowing Towson to take the 3-0 lead.
Rich helped herself in the top of the second inning when she drove a leadoff home run over the left center wall to bring Eastern within two of the Tigers. The Eagles put the pressure on Towson when freshman Meagan Winkelseth (Ypsilanti, Mich.-Ypsilanti) notched her first collegiate hit with a single to left center and Elaine Whitbeck (Holland, Mich.-West Ottawa) followed it up with a walk.

The Green and White loaded the bases for senior Lindsay Smith (Seville, Ohio-Cloverleaf) when Myranda Barnes (Ypsilanti, Mich.-Belleville) laid down a sacrifice bunt that caused a Tiger miscue. Smith had perfect execution at the plate, knocking a single to the opposite field allowing Winkelseth to score from third. Towson tightened the defense and was able to make a play at the plate before a line out ended the Eagle offense in the bottom of the second with EMU trailing by one.

Eastern continued to strike in the top of the third when Katy Wyman (Kalamazoo, Mich.-Portage Central) singled, and Rich picked up her second hit of the contest with a double to right center. Wyman crossed home when Duffy drove her first hit of the season to right field, tying the score at 3-3 and forcing the Tigers to make a pitching change.

The pitching change did not stop the Green and White offense as Winkelseth notched her second hit of the game before Barnes singled up the middle to score Duffy, giving Eastern its first lead of the contest. The Eagles extended their lead to 6-3 in the top of the fourth inning, using four hits as back-to-back singles from Amanda Stanton (Homer Glen, Ill-Lockport Twn.) and Lucas started the inning before Duffy drove a single through the left side to score Wyman.

Towson did not give in as a powerful fifth inning with four hits, including a two-run home run, knotted the score at 6-6 and brought freshman Alyssa Huntley (Sterling Heights, Mich.-Stevenson) in on relief for Rich.

A scoreless sixth and seventh inning sent the Green and White into its first extra-inning international tiebreaker game of the season as Huntley was placed on second and moved to third on a sacrifice bunt from Whitbeck. A sacrifice fly to deep right field allowed Huntley to score the unearned run for Eastern and hold the 7-6 lead heading into the bottom of the eighth inning.

The Tigers were also able to execute a sacrifice bunt to move the runner to third and scored on an Olivia Yarbrough two out single to left field. The Eagles could not capitalize in the top of the ninth with the runner on third, while the Tigers notched the winning run with a two-out single to right field in the bottom of the ninth.

Three Eagles had multi-hit games with Duffy leading the way, tallying three hits and two RBI. Rich also have three hits in the contest with one RBI, Winkelseth notched two hits for EMU and Smith, Lucas and Barnes all drove in one run. Rich went 4.1 innings in the circle before Huntley came in on relief for the final 4.1 innings. Although suffering her first loss in the circle, the freshman hurler fanned eight batters on the afternoon.

McCormick was the catalyst of the Tiger offense with two hits and five RBI, while Maureen Hepner knocked in two runs for Towson, including the winning run.

**Game Two: Eastern Michigan 2, N.C. Central 1 (8 innings)**

After being retired in order for the first two innings, Duffy picked up Eastern's first hit of the contest with a leadoff single up the middle but the Eagles were unable to capitalize on the hit as North Carolina Central found the outs it needed to get out of the inning.
In the battle of the Eagles, neither team seemed to be able to push a run across the plate as each team left one runner on the base path in the fourth, fifth and sixth inning. Both teams sat down three batters in order in the seventh, sending EMU into its second extra inning contest of the day.

With a runner on second base in the top of the eighth inning Markel Wylie singled to center field, advancing the runner to third base. With one out on the board, Emerie Germ knocked a single to the opposite field as a play at the plate retired the second out of the inning but not before Angelique Perricelli touched home for N.C. Central. Minsker got the final out of the inning as she caught Cami Hampton looking, carrying EMU into the bottom of the eighth trailing 1-0.

Much like Eastern's first game of the day, the Eagles perfectly executed the international tiebreaker inning as Mady Hostetler (New Haven, Ind.-Woodlan) advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt from Abby Davidson (Westerville, Ohio-Olentangy Orange). Pinch hitter Abi Clark (Clinton, Mich.-Clinton (Alma)) stepped in with one out and lined a single to center field, knotting the score at 1-1.

With a runner on first, Lucas dug in and laced a double to left center allowing the winning run to cross the plate and handing Eastern the 2-1 victory over N.C. Central.

The Green and White had four hits, with Lucas and Clark each tallying an RBI; while Minsker (1-1) picked up her first collegiate win, throwing 4.1 innings of relief. Rich earned the start in the circle going 3.2 innings with three strikeouts, while Minsker fanned two.

North Carolina Central also had four hits on the game as Wylie and Germ had two apiece, while London Booker went the distance in the circle with four strikeouts and allowing one earned run.

The Eagles will continue their 26-game road stint as they head to Fort Myers, Fla. for the FGCU Tournament, Friday, Feb. 21 - Sunday, Feb. 23. The Green and White will play five games at Florida Gulf Coast. First pitch against Harvard is slated for 9 a.m., Friday, Feb. 21.