EMU Women's Softball: Eagles Set to Take the Field for 10 Games in Six Days

Eastern Michigan University
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Eagles will play four mid-week games before playing in a second FGCU Tournament in the Sunshine State

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EAGLES SET FOR 10 GAMES IN FLORIDA: Eastern Michigan softball will stay in the Sunshine State when it plays 10 games in six days. The Green and White is set to play Florida International Tuesday, Feb. 25 with first pitch of game one at 3 p.m. EMU heads back to familiar territory, Wednesday, Feb. 26, as it takes on FGCU in two games. The first of the two games is scheduled for 2:30 p.m., while the second game will be under the lights at FGCU Softball Complex with first pitch slated for 7 p.m.

Eastern continues its stretch on the road when it plays Bethune-Cookman on back-to-back days, first taking on the Wildcats in Fort Myers, Fla., Feb. 27 at 3 p.m. The Eagles will stay in Fort Myers, Fla. to participate in a second tournament at Florida Gulf Coast, where they will run into Bethune-Cookman for a 10 a.m. showdown. The Green and White will conclude day one of the tournament with a 2:30 p.m. game against Hofstra. On Saturday, Eastern will take on Long Island-Brooklyn at 12:15 p.m. before matching up against Hofstra at 7 p.m. The Eagles will conclude the tournament, Sunday, March 2 when they square off with Long Island-Brooklyn at 10 a.m. before heading back north.

GETTING ON BASE: Although the Green and White has struggled at the plate recently, the Eagles have found other ways to get on-base with six players holding on-base percentages over .300. Junior pitcher Lindsay Rich leads the EMU offense with a .412 on-base percentage and a .571 slugging percentage, while senior Lindsay Smith and sophomore Abby Davidson both have .400 on-base percentages for the Eagles.
Sophomore Aoife Duffy and freshman Katy Wyman have both proven they know how to get on base with each holding a .364 on-base percentage through the first nine games of the 2014 season.

THREE STRIKES, YOU'RE OUT: Junior Lindsay Rich and senior Lauren Wells have already tallied double-digit strikeouts in just the first nine games of the 2014 season. Rich has made an appearance in eight of the Eagles’ nine games with three starts. The Perrysburg, Ohio native has struck out 20 batters in 31.2 innings pitched.

After not seeing action in the opening weekend, Wells made four appearances and three starts this past weekend at the FGCU Tournament. In her 10.1 innings of work, the Lowell, Ind. native averaged one strikeout per inning, fanning 10 batters over the weekend.

Freshman Alyssa Huntley is right on pace with the upperclassmen, striking out nine batters in her 8.2 innings in the circle, while Abbie Minkser has struck out two batters on the season.

EAGLES WIN WHEN...: When Eastern softball gets the early lead in the game, it has no trouble closing out and tallying a "W" for the contest. The Eagles are 2-0 when leading after the second inning and 2-1 when holding the advantage after the third and fourth. The Green and White has not lost when it has the lead after the fifth and sixth innings, grabbing a combined 4-0 record.

If EMU doesn't capture the early lead in the contest it has had troubles coming from behind to notch a win. When the opposition gets the first lead in the contest, EMU is 2-5, having two come-from-behind victories over Virginia and N.C. Central.

ADVANCING THE RUNNERS: The EMU offense has had no problem advancing the baserunners, hitting at a .491 clip including seven players hitting .500 or better when runners are on the base path.

Sophomore Myranda Barnes is 7-for-9 at the dish for a .778 average when runners are on-base, while Elaine Whitbeck is 2-for-3 with a .667 average. Sophomore Abby Davidson has also had success at the plate with runners on, going 4-for-7 for a .571 batting average, while junior Lindsay Rich has been a constant for Eastern in the box, going 5-for-8 when trying to advance a runner.

FORCING ERRORS: Eastern has found ways to get on-base this season, whether it be hitting or because of opposition miscues. The Eagles have gotten on-base eight times this season due to opposition errors and have allowed opposing teams to reach base only seven times due to fielding errors.

GET THEM IN: The Green and White has reached base nine times from fielder’s choice, but has had its struggles in scoring runners, stranded 53 base runners so far this season. Eastern has only had nine two-out RBI compared to the opposition’s 23 two-out RBI.

Furthermore, the Eagles have capitalized only one time in their nine opportunities to score a run with bases loaded, while the opposition has scored twice in just eight opportunities for a .250 batting average. Senior Lindsay Smith knocked in a base loaded RBI against Towson, Feb. 8 with a perfectly executed single to the opposite field, scoring Meagan Winkelseth.

LEADING IN ALL ASPECTS: Junior pitcher Lindsay Rich has been a leader on the field and in the batter box for EMU this season, leading the team in five offensive categories: slugging percentage (.571), on-base percentage (.412), runs scored (5), average with runners on base (.500) and average with RBI opportunities (.500) as well as eight pitching categories: win-loss percentage (.667), wins (2), innings pitched (31.2), strikeouts (20), appearances (8), games finished (5), batters struck out looking (9) and games in relief (5).

SCOUTING THE PANTHERS: Florida International comes into Tuesday’s contest on a two-game winning streak, defeating Dartmouth and North Florida, Feb. 22. The Panthers post an 11-3 record on the season, splitting contests with DePaul, Wisconsin and North Florida.
The FIU squad has two players hitting over .400 as junior Krystal Garcia leads the charge with 14 hits in her 33 at-bats, including a team-high 14 RBI for a .424 batting average. Freshman Stephanie Texeira has had a breakout season thus far, hitting at a .410 clip, tying for a team-high 16 hits and knocking in nine runs which is good for third on the team. Rebekah Sanchez is tied with Texeira, tallying 16 hits and a .340 batting average while catcher Aliem Lopez ranks second on the team with 12 RBI.

The Panther pitching staff is led by sophomore Corinne Jenkins who has yet to be beaten this year with a 5-0 record in her eight starts and four complete games. Jenkins has a team-best 1.24 ERA in her 39.2 innings pitched allowing just seven earned runs to cross the plate. Junior Shelby Graves has made nine appearances in the circle for FIU for a 5-2 record. Graves has thrown 35.1 innings with two complete games and three starts, while Mariah Dawson has made five appearances for the Panthers in 19 innings of work.

Eastern and Florida International have faced one common opponent in Florida Gulf Coast. The Panthers defeated FGCU 7-4, Feb. 14 while EMU was unable to pick up the win in the battle of the birds, falling 12-0 in five innings, Feb. 23. This will be the fifth meeting between the Panthers and the Eagles with FIU holding a 3-1 advantage in the all-time series. Last year, the teams split in a doubleheader with Eastern taking game one, 5-4, before FIU rallied to take the 4-1 win in game two, March 6, 2013.

**BATTLE OF THE EAGLES ROUND TWO:** After playing host to its second tournament of the 2014 season, Florida Gulf Coast holds a 9-6-1 record coming into the mid-week doubleheader against Eastern.

Junior Kelsey Carpenter continues to lead the Eagles at the plate starting all 16 games with a team-high 24 hits including six doubles and 16 RBI. The junior outfielder ranks second on the team, crossing the plate 17 times and ties for first with three round-trippers. Alexis Ross holds a .371 batting average for the Eagles ranking second on the team with 15 RBI, while Makensie McAvoy and Jessica Barnes are both hitting over .300 for FGCU.

Amanda Josie and Shelby Morgan have each picked up three wins in the circle for the Eagles but have had to rely on their offense as the two have given up a combined 36 runs on the season. Jackie Owen holds a team-best 2.86 ERA in her six appearances and 22 innings pitched, while Taylor Wade has six appearance, hurling 20.1 innings.

Eastern looks to get revenge on FGCU after being shut out on the final day of the FGCU Tournament, Feb. 23.

**BETHUNE-COOKMAN AT A GLANCE:** The Wildcats have struggled to start the 2014 campaign, posting a 1-11 record while taking on three ranked opponents in early competition. Bethune-Cookman's lone win came against Campbell 3-2 at the Hatter Invitational, Feb. 14.

Although the Wildcats have had a hard time finding a win, three players are hitting over .300 this year with Calesha Shelley leading the team with a .405 batting average. Shelley has a team-high 15 hits and seven runs. Bailey Connor posts a .333 batting average with a team-high six RBI in the 2014 campaign and ties for first with one home run, while Shamaria Engram is the other Wildcat to have a round-tripper this year.

Bethune-Cookman pitching is led by Connor, who has made 10 appearances and five starts, hurling three complete games with 27 strikeouts in 33.2 innings of work. Sabrina Anguiano has made eight appearances and seven starts, throwing two complete games and 34.1 innings with 22 strikeout.

This will be the second time the Wildcats and the Eagles meet on the field, with Bethune-Cookman holding the 1-0 advantage, defeating Eastern 3-1, Feb. 24, 2009.

**A LOOK AT HOFSTRA:** The Pride enter the FGCU Tournament on a high note, taking home a tournament championship at the Leadoff Classic hosted by South Florida, Feb. 21-23. Hofstra went 4-1 at the tournament, falling only to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Becca Bigler leads the Pride in hitting with a team-high .545 with six hits in 11 at-bats, while freshman Michaele Transue made the best of her opportunities grabbing one hit on two at-bats. Senior Rachel Senatore and sophomore Maggie Hawkins lead the team with eight hits this season, while Hawkins and Tori Rocha have driven in a team-best seven runs. As a team, Hofstra is hitting a .430 clip in its five games, compared to its opponents .238 batting average.

Through five games, the Pride has yet to make an error on the defensive side of the ball and forced three errors on
the opposition.

Junior Morgan Lashley boasts a 3-0 record in the circle, pitching two complete games for Hofstra. The right-handed pitcher has struck out a team-best 13 batters in 19 innings and holds a 2.58 ERA, which is good for second on the squad. Junior Taylor Pirone picked up the Pride's only loss of the season and tallied the final with three appearances and two starts to go along with one complete game. In her 13.2 innings in the circle, Pirone has a team-best 2.56 ERA with nine strikeouts.

Friday's game between Eastern and Hofstra will mark the first time the two teams have met on the field.

LIU-BROOKLYN AT A GLANCE: The Blackhawks come into the weekend tournament on a three-game losing streak, posting a 4-10 overall record in the 2014 campaign.

Freshman Kayla Gloady has come up big for LIU in the first 13 games of her collegiate career, leading the team with a .306 batting average, 11 hits and four RBI, while sophomore Whitney West has a team-high 13 hits so far this season and has stolen a team-best four bases on four attempts. Nichole Toven and Lauren Morizi have each tallied double-digits his this season for the Blackhawks as Toven has 11 hits and Morizi has 10.

Shelley Procter has picked up all four of LIU-Brooklyn's wins in the circle, making 11 appearances and throwing one complete game. The freshman right-hander has hurled a team-high 57.1 innings and fanned 36 batters, while Cassie Vondrak has thrown 30.1 innings for the Blackhawks with 27 strikeouts in 13 appearances and five starts.

This weekend's contests will be the first time Eastern Michigan and LIU-Brooklyn have met on the field in the history of the two programs.

ON DECK: The Eagles will head north to participate in the Dayton Tournament in Dayton, Ohio March 14-15. The Green and White will take on host, Dayton, Friday March 14 at noon before playing IUPUI on back-to-back days and closing out the tournament against in-state rival, Oakland University on Saturday, March 15 at 4:30 p.m.