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Senior Night and “Eagles Unite” Highlight EMU’s Next Meet

EMU gymnastics hosts Western Michigan, Feb. 15, at Bowen Field House

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUeagles.com) -- For the second-straight week, the Eastern Michigan University gymnastics team will host an in-state rival at Bowen Field House. While the Eagles competed against No. 19 Central Michigan, Feb. 7, they will battle the Broncos of Western Michigan University, Feb. 15, at 7 p.m. The Mid-American Conference dual meet will be Senior Night as well as an Eagles Unite event.

The Green and White are coming off a setback against the Chippewas in the home opener. However, EMU put together a high team score for the second straight week. In the past two meets, Eastern has averaged a team total of 194.700.

Senior Spotlights: Four Eagles will be honored Feb. 15, as part of Senior Night against Western Michigan. Below is a spotlight on each senior.

Shawna Ciaramella -- Has competed in 36 meets throughout her EMU career...Earned NACGC/W Scholastic All-America and Honorable Mention Academic All-MAC accolades as a junior...Boasted a career-high 9.775 on beam and a 9.750 on floor.

Miranda Jarvis -- Has competed in 24 meets for the Green and White...Ranked 10th in the MAC on floor as a
freshman...Earned a career-high 9.850 on floor as well as personal-best 9.750s on both beam and vault.

Taylor Patterson -- Has competed in 26 meets while at Eastern...Was in the EMU lineup in every meet during her sophomore and junior seasons...Recorded a personal-best 9.500 on floor and a career-high 9.750 on bars.

Ashley Quinton -- Has competed in 28 meets in her four-year career as an Eagle...Received Honorable Mention Academic All-MAC accolades during her junior year...Tallied personal-bests of 9.725 in both vault and beam while recording a career-high 9.825 in EMU's last meet versus Central Michigan.

Broncos Coming to Bowen: Western Michigan enters Saturday's rivalry matchup coming off not only its first win of the season, but it was also the Broncos' first conference victory of the 2014 campaign. WMU defeated Ball State University, 193.175-190.525, recording its highest team score of the season to pick up the first victory under new Head Coach Penny Jernigan, Feb. 9. Western is led by Jessi Buis, who ranks ninth in the conference on vault with an average score of 9.785. The sophomore tied for the top score against the Cardinals with a season-high 9.825 on the apparatus.

Eagles Unite: Not only is the Feb. 15 dual against Western Michigan recognized as Senior night, but it will also be an "Eagles Unite" contest, where EMU student-athletes are encouraged to attend to support their fellow Eagles while wearing the t-shirt with the slogan on it. The new mantra of the Eastern Michigan University Department of Athletics – "Eagles Unite" – is more than just a catchy slogan, but a campaign of support that pervades all of EMU's 21 varsity sports. The athletic department is encouraging student-athletes to attend specific sporting events that serve as the opportunity for them to show their school pride both on and off the field while building camaraderie amongst other student athletes.

Quality Score by Quinton: Senior Ashley Quinton recorded the highest score of the night for the Eagles, Feb. 7, in their home opener versus Central Michigan. The team co-captain soared through the air on bars, receiving a career-high 9.825 from the judges for a third-place finish in the event. Competing on the apparatus in each meet this season, Quinton has recorded scores of 9.700 or higher in three of the Eagles' four meets.

What A Score!: After not reaching the 193-point mark in their first two meets, the Eagles broke out a 194.800 at the Michigan/Illinois Challenge, Feb. 1. EMU partnered with in-state rival and host Central Michigan, combining for a score of 391.400 to top Illinois institutions Illinois State University and the University of Illinois-Chicago, who totaled a 384.450. The Green and White recorded season-bests on all four apparatuses with a 48.625 on vault, a 48.525 on bars, a 48.775 on beam and a 48.875 on the floor. Eastern's team score was the best mark in a decade. The Eagles tallied a 195.550 at the Mid-American Conference Championship, March 19, 2004. Coincidentally, the conference championship meet that year was hosted at CMU.

There's No Place Like Home: The matchup between the Eagles and Broncos will be the second of four home meets for Eastern this season. Following the dual against CMU, Feb. 7. Head Coach Steve Wilce and his squad host Western Michigan, Feb. 15, in Bowen Field House. The Eagles wrap up their home slate in the venerable building, March 8, hosting the Air Force Academy, Northern Illinois University and Temple University for the Eagle Invitational. Then, EMU Gymnastics will serve as host of the 2014 MAC Championships, March 22, with the action taking place inside the Convocation Center.

Top O' The MAC: After receiving all-conference accolades a season ago, two Eagles have quickly soared to the top of the MAC charts to begin the 2014 season. Sophomore Khadijah Hudson is currently the sixth-best vaulter in the MAC with a 9.808 average and a season-high 9.850. Teammate Anna Willette, the top vaulter in the MAC a season
ago, is now rising to the top of the conference on beam. The Eastern junior is ranked fourth through the early portion of the 2014 campaign, boasting a 9.717 average that includes a 9.775 against Bowling Green, Jan. 25. Both Eagles were All-MAC Second Team honorees in 2013.

**The Streak Must End:** When Eastern hosts WMU, Feb. 15, the Green and White will look to snap a 10-meet losing streak within the conference. The last time the Eagles won a MAC regular season matchup was March 10, 2012, when EMU topped Northern Illinois, 193.850-192.075. However, despite the struggles during the regular season, Eastern has not finished last at the MAC Championships the previous two season. In 2012, Eastern tied for fifth, ahead of Ball State. Last season, the Eagles also placed ahead of the Cardinals at the conference meet.

**Facing the Nation's Best:** Head Coach Steve Wilce and his squad have had their hands full to start the 2014 season. Four of the first seven opponents on the schedule have been nationally-ranked. The Eagles opened up the season with a quad meet at Kent State, when the Golden Flashes were ranked No. 21 in the country. In addition to KSU, No. 16 Rutgers University competed in the meet. Eastern partnered with then-No. 23 Central Michigan for the Michigan/Illinois Challenge, Feb. 1, before hosting the No. 19 Chippewas, Feb. 7, at Bowen Field House for a MAC dual.

**Eagles Take Flight with Air Force:** After back-to-back meets at home, the Eagles will flock to Colorado Springs, Colo. to face the Falcons of the Air Force Academy for a pair of meets, Feb. 26 and March 1. Both meets are scheduled to begin a 6 p.m. Mountain Time, which is 8 p.m. Eastern Time. One week after the final dual out west, Air Force will invade Ypsilanti to compete in the Eagle Invitational, March 8, against EMU, Northern Illinois and Temple.