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Eastern Michigan University

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Eagles Set for Mid-Week Doubleheader at Valpo

The Green and White head to Valparaiso, Ind. for its 26th road contest of the 2014 season



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ON THE ROAD AGAIN: The Eastern Michigan University softball team will head to Valparaiso, Ind. to play in its 26th road game of the 2014 campaign. The Eagles will take on the Valparaiso University Crusaders in a doubleheader affair Wednesday, April 2, with first pitch of game one slated for 2 p.m. CT from the Valparaiso University Softball Field.

FINDING THE GAME AT HOME: Fans can follow along with the action in Valparaiso, Ind. by heading to valpoathletics.com. The Crusaders will provide live stats for fans as well as radio for the doubleheader event.

Fans are also encouraged to follow @EMUSB on Twitter for live updates and can join in on conversation using #timetoshine.

TOUGH START TO MAC PLAY: The Green and White was unable to find a win, going up against Ohio University and the University of Akron in the opening weekend of Mid-American Conference play. The Eagles first fell to the Bobcats in a doubleheader, March 28, before falling in matching 2-1 contests to the Zips, March 29 - March 30.

FRESHMAN STEPS UP IN MAC PLAY: Freshman [Michelle Kriegshauser](#) had the hot bat for the Eagles this past week as she went a perfect 5-for-5 in a doubleheader against Ohio Friday, March 28. The freshman ripped her first career home run over the right center fence, while also tallying one double between the two contests. The New Lenox, Ill. native also drove in a RBI against the Bobcats and scored a pair of runs for EMU.

Kriegshauser is hitting at a .500 clip in MAC competition with six hits, one RBI and two runs scored, while also

holding an .833 slugging percentage and a .538 on-base percentage. The freshman outfielder put up a team-leading .462 batting average in the Eagles' six contests on the week with six hits, two runs scored and one RBI while also tallying five putouts and no errors in right field. Kriegshauser ended the weekend with a .769 slugging percentage and a .500 on-base percentage recording at least one hit in all but one contest for EMU.

WELLS FINDS HER RHYTHM IN THE CIRCLE: Senior [Lauren Wells](#) was the only Eagle pitcher that was able to silence the powerful bats of Ohio in Eastern's first Mid-American Conference contest of the 2014 campaign, March 28. The Lowell, Ind. native went 3.1 innings and allowed just three runs, striking out four.

The senior got the ball in game one against Akron, throwing a season-best seven innings for her second complete game of the season. Wells fanned a season-high eight batters while allowing just four hits and two runs in seven innings of work keeping the powerful Akron offense at bay. Despite being 0-2 on the week, Wells posted her best week of the season with 12 strikeouts and just 12 hits in 13.0 innings pitched, including a four hit appearance against Akron.

TAKING ON A NEW ROLE: Head Coach [Melissa Gentile](#) has been switching up the lineup all season long trying to find that perfect fit heading into MAC play. The first-year head coach may have found a good fit for the leadoff hitter in sophomore third baseman [Abby Davidson](#). Davidson was the leadoff hitter for the Eagles in three of their four games this weekend, going 3-for-12 with one run and two RBI.

The Westerville, Ohio native holds a .313 batting average so far this season when she leads off the inning for the EMU offense, posting five hits in her 16 opportunities. The sophomore third baseman is hitting at a .291 clip for the Eagles this season with a team-high 23 hits, including six doubles, one home run and eight RBI.

BETTER WITH RUNNERS ON: The Eagles have struggled to put runners on the base path this season, hitting just .185 when bases are empty but have found a way to get the bat on the ball with runners on the bases. EMU is hitting .235 with runners on, including .222 with bases loaded in its first 29 games of the 2014 campaign.

Junior [Jenn Lucas](#) has been clutch with bases loaded for Eastern, going 2-for-4 at the dish, while [Lindsay Smith](#) has posted one hit in her two opportunities with bases loaded. Meanwhile, sophomore [Abby Davidson](#) is hitting a team-best .364 with runners on base, tallying 12 hits in 33 chances, and Smith is currently posting a .333 batting average with runners on base. Senior [Amanda Stanton](#) joins the mix as the final Eagle hitting above .300 with ducks on the pond, carrying a .324 batting average.

HITTING THE SOUTHPAW: The Green and White faced the first left-handed pitcher of the 2014 campaign in Allie Rhodes of Notre Dame. As a team, Eastern hit at a .273 clip, tallying three hits in 11 at-bats. Rhodes pitched just 2.2 innings against EMU, giving up two runs, one of which was earned, before Fighting Irish Head Coach Deanna Gumpf was forced to change pitchers before any further damage was done.

The Eagles have had practice with a lefty hurler as senior [Lauren Wells](#) has been a constant in the EMU lineup in her four years at Eastern Michigan.

STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE: After an injury in practice put freshman catcher [Taylor Wagner](#) on the bench for MAC opening weekend, sophomore [Aoife Duffy](#) was called upon by Head Coach [Melissa Gentile](#) to power the battery in the weekend contests.

Duffy started all five games behind the plate for the Eagles last week with three hits in seven at-bats, including one double and scoring one run. The Powell, Ohio native forced an Akron error in game one that knotted the score at 1-1 on a sharply hit ball to center field. Duffy scored the Green and White's lone run in game two against the Zips when she doubled to the right center wall before [Lindsay Smith](#) ripped a double to left center that would score the sophomore catcher.

Duffy has appeared in and started 12 games for the Eagles behind the plate and is the only EMU hitter to be above .300 as she posts a .320 batting average in her 25 at-bats with eight hits, including one double and two RBI.

VALPARAISO AT A GLANCE: The Valpo Crusaders come into the mid-week doubleheader having struggled so far this season with a 7-21 overall record and a 2-2 Horizon League record.

Although the record may not show it for the Crusaders, the Valparaiso lineup brings big bats to the mid-week contests having notched 18 home runs in its first 28 contests. Senior Amanda Wisniewski has a team-high six home runs, while also lacing six doubles which ties for second on the team. Sophomore Kaitlyn Ranieri leads the team in both hits (25) and runs scored (20) while boasting a team-best .309 batting average. Ranieri has also had a team-high 16 walks on the season and knocked in 10 RBI, which ties for fourth on the team.

As a team, the Crusaders are hitting at a .234 clip, while opponents are hitting .301 against Valpo pitching. The Valparaiso pitching staff has struggled through the first half of the season with a 5.05 team ERA. Sophomore right-hander Siera Pico (1-11) leads the staff with 22 appearances and five complete games, while tossing 67.1 innings and striking out 37 batters with a team-best 4.68 ERA. Left-hander Taylor Weissenhofer has been the pitcher of decision in 10 games for the Crusaders, picking up a team-best five wins in her 14 appearances.

SERIES HISTORY: Valpo leads the all-time series, 2-1, over the Eagles after sweeping the Green and White at Varsity Field, April 3, 2013.

EMU was unable to come away with a win in game one of the doubleheader in the 2013 season after the Crusaders used a big first inning to take the 5-2 lead over the Eagles and went on to a 5-4 victory. In game two, Eastern got on the board first but a home run and two singles brought in three separate runs for Valpo and handed them the 3-2 win.

[Lauren Wells](#) and [Lindsay Rich](#) split time in the circle in game two, with Rich suffering the loss, while Taylor Weissenhofer earned the win for Valparaiso, throwing two complete innings and doing all the work herself with six strikeouts and giving up only one hit.

ON DECK: Eastern returns to Ypsilanti, Mich. Saturday, April 5 in hopes of getting its first true home game of the 2014 season. The Eagles are scheduled to take on Central Michigan Saturday, April 5 at 2 p.m. on Varsity Field before concluding the series Sunday, April 6 at 1 p.m.