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Eastern Michigan University

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Ninth Inning Homer Lifts Buffalo to MAC Victory Over Eastern

The Eagles were unable to come away with a victory in weekend MAC contests

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BUFFALO, N.Y. (EMUEagles.com) – The Eastern Michigan University softball team dropped a 6-4, nine-inning heartbreaker to Mid-American Conference foe the University at Buffalo Sunday, April 13.

With the loss, EMU falls to 9-26 overall and 0-8 in the MAC, while Buffalo improves to 20-17 overall and 4-2 in conference play.

Sophomores Abi Clark and Mady Hostetler led the Eagle offense with two hits a piece, while Clark, Amanda Stanton and Jenn Lucas all drove in runs for the Green and White.

Heather Ryder was the offensive catalyst for the Bulls in the series finale going 3-for-5 at the plate with four RBI including the game winning two run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning, while Savanna Norcio tallied three hits on the afternoon.

After four scoreless innings, Eastern was the first to light up the scoreboard when Clark led off the inning with a single up the middle and Abby Davidson came in to pinch run for her. A single from Hostetler moved Davidson into scoring position while a throwing error on a sacrifice bunt allowed the Eagles to take the 1-0 lead.
Buffalo scored their first run of the contest in the bottom of the fifth inning when two singles brought in the Bulls first run of the contest. UB took its first lead when Jessica Taylor belted a solo home run over the left field wall.

Eastern's offense responded in the top of the seventh inning using two hits and a sacrifice fly to score three runs. Starting pitcher Tori Speckman hit Meagan Winkelseth to lead off the inning before walking Lindsay Smith to put runners in scoring position for EMU. Nicole Aviles came on in relief of Speckman before a steal and a passed ball moved Smith just 60 feet from home. With a runner on third, Stanton dug in and ripped a single to center field to knot the game at 2-2.

Clark kept the ball rolling for the Eagles when she tallied the Green and White's second straight single with a base knock through the right side of the field, plating freshman Taylor Wagner. A deep sacrifice fly from Lucas brought in Eastern's third and final run of the inning, allowing EMU to take the 4-2 lead into the bottom half of the inning.

The Eagles were unable to hold the Bulls in the bottom of the seventh inning as two hits scored two runs, knotting the score at 4-4 and sending the game into extra innings.

With one out in the top of the eighth, Lindsay Rich notched a pinch hit single to left field but was left stranded as the Eagles could not push a run across the plate, while the EMU defense stepped up in the bottom of the inning to force a ninth inning.

Again, Eastern tallied one hit in the top of the ninth but were unable to bring in the run. The Bulls kicked off the ninth inning with a double to the right center wall before Ryder stepped in and drove a two-run round tripper over the left field wall to secure the walk off victory for UB.

Freshman Abbie Minsker (2-2) suffered the loss in the circle pitching seven complete innings for the Green and White, while Lauren Wells and Alyssa Huntley each threw 0.2 innings of relief work. Aviles (3-4) recorded her third win of the season, pitching three innings in relief of Speckman who went six innings allowing just four EMU hits.

Eastern will be back in action Wednesday, April 16 when it travels to East Lansing, Mich. for a mid-week doubleheader against the Michigan State Spartans. First pitch of the single game is slated for 5 p.m.