EMU Women's Softball: Walk-Off Single Gives Eagles First MAC Victory of 2014 Season

Eastern Michigan University
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Sophomore Abi Clark drove in a walk-off single in the bottom of the eighth to secure an Eagle victory on Senior Day.

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YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUeagles.com) – On a day that honored three seniors from the Eastern Michigan University softball team, the Eagles picked up their 10th victory of the season as well as their first Mid-American Conference win with a 4-3 decision over the Northern Illinois University Huskies in eight innings, April 20. The three senior that were honored prior to the game were Lindsay Smith, Amanda Stanton and Lauren Wells.

After playing three extra inning contest in as many days, the Eagles were finally able to secure a victory when sophomore Abi Clark knocked a walk-off bases loaded single to left field, scoring Stanton for the Eagles’ first win since April 2, snapping an eight game losing streak.

With the win, Eastern improves to 10-30 overall on the season and 1-11 in the MAC. Meanwhile, Northern Illinois falls to 19-22 overall and 7-7 in conference play. Clark propelled the Green and White offense, going 2-for-3 at the plate with two RBI and scoring once, while Abby Davidson and Taylor Wagner each had two hits for EMU and Davidson drove in one RBI. Freshman Alyssa Huntley (3-4) grabbed her third victory of the season, pitching one inning of relief, while Wells got the start in the circle, hurling 6.1 innings with four strikeouts and Abbie Minsker threw 0.2 innings without giving up a hit.
NIU catcher Emily Naegele led the Huskies’ offense, driving in all three Northern Illinois runs with a home run in the top of the fourth inning, while Kayti Grable went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate and Nicole Gremillion posted two hits. Jessica Sturm (12-11) suffered the loss in the circle for the Huskies pitching three innings in relief.

Eastern was the first to strike in the contest when Wagner ripped her first career triple to the right field wall before a throwing error allowed Wagner to touch home and give EMU the 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning.

Naegele hit her second home run in as many day with no outs and two runners on base in the top of the fourth inning to allow the Huskies to take the 3-1 lead over the Green and White. Following the round tripper, Wells forced the NIU offense into three-straight pop ups to get out the inning without any further damage.

Clark brought the Eagles within one of Northern Illinois when she blasted a solo home run in the bottom of the fifth inning. The homer marked the first career round tripper for Clark while donning the Green and White and the 12th of the season for the Eastern offense.

The Eagles continued the tradition of being the comeback kids in the bottom of the seventh, scoring one run to knot the score at 3-3 and send EMU into its third extra inning game in as many days and its second against the Huskies.

After retiring the NIU offense in the top of the eighth, the EMU offense went to work in the bottom half of the inning when Stanton was hit by a pitch to lead off the inning. That play gave the Eagles all the momentum they would need as Jenn Lucas would line a one out single to left field, advancing Stanton just 60 feet from home at third base. Junior Lindsay Rich would be intentionally walked to load the bases with just one out before Clark came through for the second time in the afternoon when she laced a single to left field, easily scoring Stanton for the Eagles first MAC win of the 2014 season.

Eastern will be back in action Friday, April 25 when it heads to Toledo, Ohio to take on the Rockets of the University of Toledo in a 1 p.m. doubleheader. The Eagles will conclude their weekend in Ohio when they go up against Bowling Green State University Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27. Saturday’s game is set for a 2 p.m. start, while the series will conclude Sunday with a 1 p.m. first pitch.