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EMU Women's Softball: 2015 EMU Softball Season Preview

Eastern Michigan University

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2015 EMU Softball Season Preview

The Eagles kick off the 2015 season in just two days when they travel to College Station, Texas.

YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) – With the Eastern Michigan University softball season just two days away, it is time to look at the 2015 Eagles. Head Coach Melissa Gentile enters her second season at the helm of the Eastern Michigan University softball team and is looking to improve upon the team’s 13-37 overall record and its sixth-place finish in the Mid-American Conference West Division a season ago.

AROUND THE HORN
Gentile will look to mix things up in the infield this season as she will move 2014 starting second baseman Jenn Lucas back into the outfield for the 2015 campaign, while bringing in two underclassman to fill the middle infield.

On the corners, Eastern sees the return of first baseman Abi Clark and Abby Davidson who both saw a significant amount of playing time at their respective positions in the 2014 season, as well as infielder Katy Wyman. Newcomers Brandice Olmos and Haley Hostetler will make an immediate impact for the Green and White defense, playing up the middle for the Eagles in 2015, while Carleigh
Herrington looks to find time at first base.

In her first season as a true starter for the Green and White, Davidson saw action in 47 games and posted a team-best .285 batting average with 37 hits, eight doubles, and 11 RBI, as well as scoring 19 times for EMU. The junior third baseman notched a .905 field percentage at the hot corner with 98 assists and 35 putouts on the year. Clark and Wyman split time at first base throughout the 2014 season, while Clark also saw significant time as the designated player. Clark hit .247 in 2014 for the Eagles with a .337 on-base percentage and Wyman had 19 hits and scored 10 times. This season, Wyman will look to make the move to second base and Clark will see more time at first.

Olmos was a four-year letterwinner at Grand Terrance High School where she garnered the Gatorade Rookie of the Year Award in her freshman season before grabbing first team all-conference honors three times. The Riverside, Calif. native led her team to a Sunkist League Championship in her senior season and will play both second base and shortstop in the 2015 season for Eastern. Joining Olmos in the middle infield is Hostetler, who was a three-time all-conference honoree that helped her team to a runner-up finish at the state championships in her freshman season. Hostetler holds the single-season home run record for the Warriors and capped off her career with a batting average of .418. The freshman infielder will also look to earn a starting spot up the middle for the Green and White in the 2015 campaign.

Herrington was a standout athlete at Keystone High School where she garnered Lorain County Division II Player of the Year accolades in her junior season after leading her team to a district semifinal. The Elyria, Ohio native was a 2013 National Fastpitch Coaches' Association Third Team All-American after hitting at a .474 clip with 37 hits, six home runs, and 27 RBI.

OUTFIELD
The Eagles have a solid set of returners to the outfield for the 2015 season, bringing back three players, including MAC All-Freshman team selection Michelle Kriegshauser. Kriegshauser posted a .270 batting average that ranked second on the team, while her 33 hits tied for third. The starting right fielder tallied 13 doubles, one triple, three home runs and 13 RBI on the season.

Kriegshauser led the Eagle offense in slugging percentage (.467) and doubles (13), while ranking second in batting average (.270) and total bases (57). Last season, the right fielder tied the 2014 NCAA single-game record after notching three doubles against Valparaiso University, April 2. Following the record-setting day, Kriegshauser tacked on seven more doubles, ranking eighth in the nation and third in the Mid-American Conference with 0.39 doubles per game.

Along with Kriegshauser, Myranda Barnes, Mady Hostetler, and Elaine Whitbeck will look to make an impact in the final two spots in the outfield after each started at least 15 games in the 2014 campaign. Making her return to the outfield, Lucas also hopes to be a spark in the grass this season after starting two seasons in the outfield prior to moving to second base for the 2014 season. The senior hit .209 with 31 hits, including nine doubles and 12 RBI.

The final Eagle looking to find a spot in the mix during the 2015 campaign is freshman walk-on Angel
Schilke. Schilke was a four-time all-district and all-region honoree for Saline High School where she helped the Maples to back-to-back SEC Championships in her junior and senior campaign.

**IN THE CIRCLE**
Senior Lindsay Rich looks to cap off her final campaign donning the Green and White in fashion after rising to the top of the Eagle arsenal in the 2014 season. Rich not only led the team in all pitching categories but also became a threat at the plate as well. The right-hander hurler made 38 appearances in the circle, while tossing 143.3 innings and striking out 84 batters for the Green and White. Joining Rich in 2015 are sophomores Alyssa Huntley and Abbie Minsker, who each made 24 appearances in their freshman campaigns.

Huntley, a right-handed hurler, made 10 starts in her freshman campaign, pitching 59.0 innings and grabbing four wins for the Green and White. For her efforts, Huntley was named the MAC West Co-Pitcher of the Week for the period ending March 24, 2014 when she picked up her second collegiate win, going six innings against the Penguins of Youngstown State Tuesday, March 18, 2014. The then-freshman went six full innings with three strikeouts and also threw 0.1 inning of relief in game one with one strikeout for the Eagles.

In her first season, Minsker made 11 starts for the Green and White, hurling 38.1 innings for EMU. The Howell, Mich. native earned three wins for the Eagles in the 2014 campaign, striking out 14 batters and earning one save. Freshman Trisha Trujillo rounds out the EMU pitching staff as she comes to Ypsilanti after a four-year high school career at California High School where she garnered Pitcher of the League honors four times and all-area twice.

**BEHIND THE PLATE**
Eastern sees the return of junior catcher Aoife Duffy and sophomore Taylor Wagner, while Coach Gentile also brought in newcomer Camri Grace to fill the spot behind the plate in the 2015 season. Duffy made 19 starts behind the plate for EMU in the 2014 campaign, while Wagner started 33 of the 34 contest she played in during her first season donning the Green and White.

Grace, a four-year letterwinner at Williamston High School, will look to make an impact behind the plate as a rare left-handed catcher as well as see some time at first base. She will join the Eagles as an all-state honorable mention selection in the state of Michigan after hitting the game winning, two-run home run in the district finals in the 2013 season.

The Eagles will kick off the 2015 season when they travel to College Station, Texas to participate in the Texas A&M Tournament, Feb. 13-15. The Green and White will play two games against both Missouri State and Texas A&M before closing out the tournament with a contest against Penn State. First pitch of the 2015 season is slated for 10 a.m. Friday, Feb. 13 against Missouri State.