



Men's Basketball | 8/20/2019 3:43:00 PM | Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Communications

Minnesota Crookston Men's Basketball Releases 2019-20 Schedule; Open the Season on the Road with Defending National Champion



2019-20 Schedule

CROOKSTON, Minn. – The University of Minnesota Crookston men's basketball team officially unveiled their 2019-20 schedule Tues. Aug. 20. The Golden Eagles will open their slate against the defending NCAA Division II men's basketball champion Northwest Missouri State University Nov. 8 at 5:30 p.m. in St. Joseph, Mo. Minnesota Crookston will play six non-conference games, one exhibition, and 22 Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) ties. The Golden Eagles will play 33 games in the friendly confines of the recently renovated Lysaker Gymnasium, which just was fabricated with brand new bleachers, a new sound system, and a state-of-the-art live stream and instant replay solution from Keemotom.

"This season will be the toughest schedule we have ever put together," said Head Coach [Doug Wallace](#). "All but one regular season game we play this year will be against high quality Division II opponents. Our season opener in Missouri against the defending National Champs and most likely preseason No. 1 team in the country will be a great test for us, but also a great opportunity. We will see where we are at as a team and how we stack up against the best real quick. My hope is that our non-conference schedule prepares us well for our conference season. I know myself and our players are ready to get started."

The Golden Eagles are looking to build on their best season in their time as an NCAA Division II institution. Minnesota Crookston posted a 17-16 (9-15 NSIC) mark. The Golden Eagles put up their first record over .500, setting a school record for overall wins and conference wins. In addition, Minnesota Crookston made their first-ever appearance in the quarterfinals of the NSIC/Sanford Health Tournament at the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls, S.D. The Golden Eagles made the appearance after a major win on the road at Augustana University, the 2015-2016 NCAA Division II National Champion.

Minnesota Crookston returns several key pieces from that team, including all-time leading scorer, and the conference's No. 3 all-time leading scorer, [Luisito Cleary](#) (Sr., C, Oak Creek, Wis.). Cleary has been a consistent All-NSIC First Team, and All-Region player throughout his career. Cleary was an All-American during the 2017-18 season. He has been the nation's top free throw shooter statistically the last two seasons. In addition, Minnesota Crookston returns [Malcolm Cohen](#) (R-Sr., C/F, Detroit, Mich.), who was third on the team in scoring with 30 points per game. [Brett Juhl](#) (Sr., C, Chive, Iowa) and [Brian Sitzmann](#) (R-So., C, Savage, Minn.) also had prominent roles last season and will look to increase roles this season. [Zach Westphal](#) (Sr., F/C, Galesburg, Spain) ended the season strong, starting the final eight games. The Golden Eagles also return key player [CJase Julliasse](#) (R-Jr., F/C, La Crosse, Wis.), as well as [Zach Westphal](#) (R-Fr., C, West Fargo, N.D.), who redshirted last season. In addition, Minnesota Crookston has added seven newcomers who will look to push the returnees and make an impact in their first season for the Golden Eagles.

Minnesota Crookston opens their slate with an exhibition Oct. 30 at 4 p.m., against Bethel University. The game will mark the first men's basketball game played in the recently renovated Lysaker Gymnasium. Bethel posted a 19-8 mark last season in NCAA Division III.

The Golden Eagles lift the lid on the regular season on Nov. 8 at 5:30 p.m. in the Hilliard Tip-Off Classic in St. Joseph, Mo., as they take on defending National Champion Northwest Missouri State. The Beavers posted an unbeaten 36-0 mark last season.

Minnesota Crookston then take on Missouri Western Nov. 9 in St. Joseph, Mo. The Griffins went 12-18 last season, they are coached by former Northern State University assistant coach Sundance Wickes.

The Golden Eagles then take on Concordia University-St. Paul at 5 p.m. in a non-conference game at the Parkside Tournament in Parkside, Wis. The Golden Bears went 9-20 during the 2018-19 season.

Minnesota Crookston then faces either University of Wisconsin-Parkside or Hillsdale College at either 1 or 3 p.m., in Kenosha, Wis. Parkside went 16-12 last season, while Hillsdale posted a 19-10 record during the 2018-19 campaign.

The Golden Eagles then open conference play Nov. 21 at 6 p.m., at Lysaker Gymnasium against Bemidji State University. The Beavers went 10-18 last season.

Minnesota Crookston returns to non-conference play Nov. 23 at 3 p.m., at home against Valdost, who went 6-22 during the 2018-19 season.

The Golden Eagles then take on University of Sioux Falls in a non-conference tilt Nov. 26 at 7 p.m., in Sioux Falls, S.D., at the Stewart Center. The Cougars posted a 19-11 mark last season.

Minnesota Crookston gets back to conference play Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m., versus Minnesota State University Moorhead at Niermek Fieldhouse in Moorhead, Minn. The Dragons went 19-12 during the 2018-19 campaign.

The Golden Eagles remain on the road Dec. 7 at 6 p.m. to face Northern State University, who is now under the leadership of Saul Phillips, who [Doug Wallace](#) worked under at North Dakota State University. The Wolves went 26-7 last season, winning the conference title.

Minnesota Crookston returns home Dec. 13 to face Augustana University at Lysaker Gymnasium at 7:30 p.m. The Vikings went 18-11 last season.

The Golden Eagles hit the road Dec. 14 to face Wayne State College at 5:30 p.m. The Wildcats posted a 21-10 mark during the 2018-19 season.

Minnesota Crookston ends their 2019 state on the road Dec. 21 at Bemidji State University at 4 p.m., in Bemidji, Minn., as they round out their season series with the Beavers.

The Golden Eagles commence the 2020 portion of their schedule Jan. 3 at St. Cloud State at 7:30 p.m., at Halebeck Hall in St. Cloud, Minn. The Huskies went 22-9 last season.

Minnesota Crookston remains on the road to face University of Minnesota Duluth Jan. 4 at 5:30 p.m., in Duluth, Minn. The Bulldogs posted a 17-10 mark in 2018-19.

The Golden Eagles return home Jan. 10 at 7:30 p.m., for their second game of the season against Northern State. Minnesota Crookston remains at home Jan. 11 at 5:30 p.m., to face MSU Moorhead.

The Golden Eagles hit the road Jan. 17 at 7:30 p.m., to face Winona State University. The Warriors ended the season last year for Minnesota Crookston at the Sanford Pentagon. Winona State posted a 14-17 mark last season.

The Golden Eagles remain on the road Jan. 18, as they take on Upper Iowa University at 5:30 p.m., in Fayette, Iowa. The Peacocks went 7-22 during the 2018-19 campaign.

Minnesota Crookston opens a four-game home stand beginning Jan. 24 against University of Mary. The Marauders went 12-17 last season. Tip-off for the game will be at 7:30 p.m., in Crookston, Minn.

The Golden Eagles remain at home Jan. 25 to take on Minot State University at 5:30 p.m. The Beavers posted a 14-18 mark last season.

Minnesota Crookston stays at the friendly confines of Lysaker Gymnasium Jan. 31, as they face Southwest Minnesota State University at 7:30 p.m. The Mustangs went 18-14 last season.

The Golden Eagles remain in Crookston Feb. 1, to face Sioux Falls at 5:30 p.m.

Minnesota Crookston moves into a four-game road stand starting the next weekend. The Golden Eagles will take on Minnesota State University Feb. 7 at 7:30 p.m. The Mavericks went 18-12 last season.

The Golden Eagles then face Concordia-St. Paul Feb. 8 at 5:30 p.m., at the Gangelhoff Center in St. Paul, Minn.

Minnesota Crookston begins their final road weekend Feb. 14 with a Valentine's Day match-up with Minot State at 7:30 p.m., in Minot, N.D.

The Golden Eagles conclude their road games for the season Feb. 15 at 5:30 p.m., versus UMary in Bismarck, N.D.

Minnesota Crookston will close out the regular season at home the following weekend. On Feb. 21, the Golden Eagles face off with Minnesota Duluth at 7:30 p.m. The final game of the regular season will be Feb. 22 versus St. Cloud State at 5:30 p.m., from Lysaker Gymnasium.

The NSIC/Sanford Health Tournament will commence Feb. 26, and run until March 4 with the first round being played at home sites and the following games played at the Sanford Pentagon in Sioux Falls, S.D.

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PLAYERS MENTIONED

#0 Harrison Cleary C / 6' 7" / Sophomore	#21 Chase Johnson F / 6' 8" / Sophomore
#2 Ben Juhl C / 6' 11" / Freshman	#14 Brian Sitzmann G / 6' 4" / Freshman
#12 Malcolm Cohen C / 6' 6" / Junior	#44 Javier Nicolau F/C / 6' 10" / Sophomore
#1 Zach Westphal C / 6' 2" / Redshirt Freshman	

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