



## Minnesota Crookston Hits the Road for Matches with Sioux Falls, No. 12 Southwest Minnesota State

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10/17/2019 3:22:00 PM

By: **Hunter Plante, Assistant Director of Marketing/Communications**

### Minnesota Crookston Hits the Road for Matches with Sioux Falls, No. 12 Southwest Minnesota State

Minnesota Crookston enjoyed a nice homestand over the weekend, going 2-1 inside Lyster Gymnasium. The Golden Eagles swept U. Mary and Minot State for their first two conference wins of the season. On Tuesday night, the Golden Eagles fell in three sets to upstart St. Cloud State, who came into the match at No. 8 in the nation. The Golden Eagles will hit the road for matches with Sioux Falls and No. 12 Southwest Minnesota State. If the regular season ended today, both the Mustangs and Cougars would be on the outside looking in for the conference tournament, as both programs are ninth and tenth in the NSIC standings, respectively.

**• YOU LIKE THAT?** [Joan Lienemann](#) had a really solid weekend inside Lyster Gymnasium. Through three matches, Lienemann collected 59 digs, including collecting a career-high 39 digs in the five-set win over the Beavers of Minot State. The junior libero from Rosemount, Minn., was just four digs shy of setting the school record for digs in a game. Joan Ebnat set the record back in October of 2004, with 42 digs against Augustana University. Lienemann has had a breakout junior season in the back row for the maroon and gold and she will look to continue that success this weekend.

**• NAIL-BITER.** Minnesota Crookston got two wins on Friday and Saturday, but it didn't come easily. The Golden Eagles had to come from behind in both matches. Minnesota Crookston trailed one set to none against the Marsaulers, but ended up winning the final three sets. On Saturday, the Golden Eagles trailed twice in the match, being down one set to zero and again at two sets to one, before winning the final two sets. In set two on Saturday afternoon, Minnesota Crookston trailed 24-19, before showing resiliency and scoring the final seven points to win the set 26-24. In that match, the Golden Eagles had a season-high 64 kills as a team, including 22 from standout sophomore [Peggy Brown](#).

**• #800.** That was the attacking percentage for redshirt-senior [Gabriella Sikkink](#) on Friday night. The St. Charles, Minn., native had 12 kills on 15 total attacks against the Marsaulers. Sikkink also collected two blocks. Sikkink set the school record for the highest hitting percentage with her 12 kills on 15 total attacks. Sikkink broke a 17-year record that was set by Jamie Wolff who hit .769 against MSU Moorhead on 9-24-02.

**• SERVICE LINE.** The Golden Eagles have been solid from the service line this season. Minnesota Crookston has three players with more than 10 service aces on the season. [Mabel Rodriguez](#) leads the way with 16, followed by [Alli Robinson](#) with 14 and [Egine Lienemann](#) with 12. Through 28 matches last season, the Golden Eagles had just 102 service aces on the season. Through 17 matches this season, Minnesota Crookston has 82 service aces on the season. Minnesota Crookston is well on their way to eclipsing last season's mark.

**• TO THE KRUSSELBERINK.** Junior setter [Judith Krusselberink](#) had the first triple-double in recent memory two Saturdays ago in a four set loss to MSU Moorhead in Nemoak Fieldhouse. She followed-up that triple-double with a double-double on Friday night against U. Mary with 19 digs and 32 assists. She wasn't done either, Krusselberink finished the weekend against Minot State with 13 digs and 49 assists in the five set victory. It was her third-straight game with at least a double-double. Safe to say she has been playing great volleyball for the Golden Eagles.

**• GO-TO PORSHA.** [Porsha Porath](#) wasn't the only Golden Eagle to collect a double-double on the weekend. In Saturday's win against Minot State, [Porsha Porath](#) finished with 22 kills and 10 digs. That was Porath's third double-double on the season, collecting one against MSU Moorhead and South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. Porath's 22 kills was one behind her career and season-high of 23 kills she collected against the Hardrockers earlier this season. On the year, Porath leads the way with 205 kills on 698 total attacks.

**• NO LET UP.** The Golden Eagles will once again be seeing two quality opponents this weekend in NSIC play. The Golden Eagles have already played No. 5 Concordia-St. Paul, No. 6 Northern State, No. 8 St. Cloud State, No. 19 Upper Iowa and No. 20 Winona State. This weekend, it doesn't get any easier, playing two matches with No. 12 Southwest Minnesota State and Sioux Falls, who was ranked in the top 20 at one time earlier in the season.

**Minnesota Crookston Golden Eagles**  
Head Coach: [Sarah Rowan](#)  
Record at UMC: 15-58 Season at UMC: Third Season

**Minnesota Crookston at Sioux Falls**  
Date: Fri., Oct. 18  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Video: <https://portal.atratchinternet.com/siouxfalls/>  
Live Stats: <https://ufcougars.com/sidearmstats/vball/summary>

**Minnesota Crookston at Southwest Minnesota State**  
Date: Sat., Oct. 19  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Video: <https://portal.atratchinternet.com/msu/>  
Live Stats: <https://msumustangs.com/sidearmstats/vball/summary>

**#TlEhls**  
**SIoux FALLS.** The Cougars are coming off of a thrilling five-set victory over city rival Augustana on Tuesday night. That win over the Vikings stopped a five match losing streak, after starting the NSIC season 3-0. The Cougars made the NSIC tournament a season ago where they defeated Concordia-St. Paul in four sets, before falling to Minnesota Duluth in the second round of the conference tournament.

**IT'S KENZIE, NOT JOYCE.** Kenzie Byers, no relation to Stranger Things' Joyce Byers (probably), has been really good for the Cougars this season. The redshirt sophomore from Goodyear, Ariz., has 121 kills on the season and has three games with 10 or more kills, including a season-high 12 against Harding University.

**SPRINGIER IS THE BEST SEASON.** Senior RaCanda Springer is enjoying her final season as a Cougar. The Abbeots, Wis., native leads her team with 191 kills on the season and picked the best time to have her best match of the season on Tuesday Night, collecting a season-high 25 kills in the five-set victory over Augustana.

**ONE OF THE BEST.** The Cougars are one of the best teams at the service line this season. Led by Springer and Brooklynn Albrecht, who have 34 and 18, respectively, the Cougars are second in the NSIC, with 128 service aces, good for an average of 1.86 service aces per set. The Cougars are dangerous in a lot of different spots, including the service line.

**SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE.** Traditional NSIC power Southwest Minnesota State is enjoying another solid season. The Mustangs come into the weekend at 11-6 overall and 5-4 in the conference. The Mustangs are adjusting on the fly without superstar Taylor Reis, who graduated a season ago.

**SHES' YOUNG.** Angela Young has done all she can to try to replace the offensive production of Reis. The junior from Conde, S.D., leads her team with 236 kills on the season on 591 total attacks. Young averages 4.07 kills per set, which puts her at sixth in the conference.

**BUDDING STAR.** Another player who is stepping up offensively is sophomore Meg Schmidt. In her second season, the Jordan, Minn., native is already second on her team with 201 kills and is second on her team with 40.0 blocks on the season. The Mustangs have another potential star on their hands in the former Jordan high school star.

**DYNAMIC DUO.** The Mustangs have a two-headed monster at the setter position. The Mustangs have Emma Thomson and Alisa Bengen at their disposal. Thomson leads the way with 363 assists, but Bengen isn't far behind with 346. Both are ranked in the top twenty in terms of assists and that makes it a scary proposition for opponents who have to deal with not one, but two setters of this caliber.

