



Women's Volleyball | 8/18/2015 5:00:00 PM | Shawn Smith, Sports Information Director

UMC Volleyball Opened Up Fall Practice Monday



CROOKSTON, Minn. - The University of Minnesota Crookston volleyball team officially opened up practice Mon., Aug. 17 at Lysaker Gymnasium. The Golden Eagles have their biggest roster in program history with 20 student-athletes heading into the 2015 season. UMC opened training camp with testing and conditioning in the morning and went into skills sessions and game play in the afternoon session.

The 2015 season is the ninth for [Lee Anderson](#) leading the Golden Eagles. The UMC team will consist of a young core with just one senior and just one player who is a two-year starter for the Golden Eagles. UMC's lone senior is [Stephanie Pearson](#) (Sr., OH, Frankfort, Ill.), who started all 28 matches as a junior. Pearson averaged 1.88 kills and 2.59 digs per set as a junior. In addition to Pearson, the Golden Eagles also return identical twins [Kassi Green](#) (So., OH/RS, Anoka, Minn.), who was second on the team with 1.90 kills per set and also averaged 0.59 blocks per set, and [Kelci Green](#) (So., MH, Anoka, Minn.), who led the team with 1.07 blocks per set and also added 1.35 kills per set. [Sierra Trost](#) (Jr., S, Ham Lake, Minn.) returns as the only player who has been a two-year starter for UMC. Trost averaged 7.49 assists and 2.59 digs per set as a sophomore.

UMC also returns [Erin Schwarz](#) (Jr., MH, Eden Prairie, Minn.), who started 24 matches in the middle and averaged 1.18 kills and 0.59 blocks per set. The Golden Eagles also return six other letterwinners from last season. [Kaycie Hagen](#) (So., S, Savage, Minn.) split duties with Trost last season at setter in a 6-2 system. Hagen averaged 2.45 assists and 1.54 digs per set as a freshman. UMC also returns [Casey Cashman](#) (Jr., DS/Lib., Ashland, Wis.), who will be in the fray at libero. Cashman appeared in 22 matches and averaged 1.49 digs per set. [Kali Erickson](#) (Jr., OH, Fargo, N.D.) is also fighting to have a bigger role on the team as a junior as UMC has a void to fill on the outside with All-NSIC First Team pick Brittany Looker's graduation. Erickson appeared in just three matches, averaging 0.75 digs per set. [Alyssa Muelken](#) (So., MH, Savage, Minn.) also returns to the fray for UMC.

[Rachel Freund](#) (So., OH, Jordan, Minn.) and [Becca Vandenheuvel](#) (So., DS/Lib., Cannon Falls, Minn.) also return. Freund will have to redshirt due to injury, while Vandenheuvel is currently battling back from injury and hoping to be ready to go early in the season. Vandenheuvel averaged 1.32 digs per set last season for UMC.

A big addition for the Golden Eagles during the Spring was the return of [Maggie Perrel](#) (So., OH/RS, New Germany, Minn.), who took a year off of volleyball in 2014. Perrel averaged 2.01 kills per set and 0.46 blocks per set as a freshman in 2013, helping UMC to a NSIC playoff berth.

The Golden Eagles will have a lot of competition in 2015 as nobody's spot is safe due to the addition of eight freshmen who will push the 12 returnees as they all battle for spots. Defensively, [Devan Miliner](#) (Fr., DS/Lib., Rosemount, Minn.) and [Ali Schueler](#) (Fr., DS/Lib., Howards Grove, Wis.) will battle Vandenheuvel and Cashman for time in the back row and at libero. At outside hitter, [Carson Rutherford](#) (Fr., OH, Flushing, Mich.) and [Emma Melander](#) (Fr., OH, Victoria, Minn.) will help push the returnees. And in the middle, [Callie Schapekahm](#) (Fr., MH, Eagan, Minn.), [Kaitlin Sikkink](#) (Fr., MH, St. Charles, Minn.) and [Sabrina Lever](#) (Fr., MH, Hamel, Minn.).

UMC also adds [Alex Oakes](#) (Fr., S, Cloquet, Minn.), who is set to redshirt the 2015 season.

The Golden Eagles went 11-17 on the 2015 season, but return a lot of scoring off of last season's squad. UMC will open up play Sept. 4 as they face Chesnut Hill College and Florida Southern College at the Bentley University Invitational in Waltham, Mass.

For more information, visit the Golden Eagle Athletics website at www.goldeneaglesports.com.

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UMCAthletics.

The University of Minnesota Crookston is a NCAA Division II university located in the Red River Valley of Northwest Minnesota. UMC sponsors 11 intercollegiate athletic teams with membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate conference (NSIC) and the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA). The NSIC is a 16-team conference with schools situated in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

-30-



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PLAYERS MENTIONED	
#1 Casey Cashman DS/Lib. / 5' 5" / Junior	#3 Kali Erickson OH / 5' 9" / Junior
#9 Rachel Freund OH / 5' 11" / Sophomore	#11 Kassi Green RS / 5' 9" / Redshirt Sophomore
#7 Kelci Green MH / 5' 9" / Redshirt Sophomore	#18 Kaycie Hagen S/DS / 5' 8" / Sophomore
#12 Alyssa Muelken MH / 5' 11" / Sophomore	#10 Stephanie Pearson OH / 5' 9" / Senior
#15 Erin Schwarz MH / 5' 11" / Junior	#13 Sierra Trost S / 5' 8" / Junior

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