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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UMKC Heads to Lawrence for Jayhawk Invitational

LAWRENCE, Kan. – The UMKC softball team (4-16) will venture into Kansas for the Jayhawk Invitational this weekend. Due to expected inclement weather, the schedule has been altered for the Jayhawk Invitational with fewer games than originally scheduled.

The Roos will open the weekend with a single game against Drake (14-8) on Friday before playing Iowa (2-12) on Saturday morning and Green Bay (1-9) on Sunday morning. UMKC was originally scheduled to play Iowa twice.

Follow

Live stats for UMKC's games are available at UMKCStats.com.

About the Roos

Redshirt junior **Kendra Leach** (Easton, Kan.) is batting a team-high .400 with four doubles and two triples through 19 games. Leach has also been dealt eight walks, the most of any Roo.

Shortstop **Morgan Byrn** (Lawrence, Kan.) has taken 34 total bases in the first 20 games of the season, going 19-for-51 at the plate (.373) with a league-leading four home runs. Teammates **Kelsey Goodwin** (Broken Arrow, Okla.), **Ashlin O'Brien** (Fond du Lac, Wis.) and **Faith Willis** (Kearney, Mo.) have also each hit a home run for the Roos.

Freshman **Sydney Garcia** (Kansas City, Mo.) has been caught stealing just once out of her six stolen base attempts this season. She also leads all newcomers at the plate, batting .273 with four doubles and four RBIs.

UMKC played its first nationally-ranked opponent of the season on Tuesday in a doubleheader with No. 24 Arkansas. Both games were decided in five innings, as the Roos fell 10-0 and 13-1. Prior to Tuesday, the last time UMKC faced a ranked opponent was last season when the Roos played two games against No. 13 Oklahoma after a single game with No. 17 Minnesota.

Byrn received Western Athletic Conference Hitter of the Week laurels on Feb. 27 after bombing three home runs in two games at the UTA Invitational. She went 7-for-14 from the plate over the course of five games and accounted for five of the team's 11 RBIs.

The Roos went 2-3 at the Battle at the Beach in Conway, S.C., as freshman **Alex Larson** (Overland Park, Kan.) captured her first career wins, both against Rider. The freshman right-hander pitched all five innings of UMKC's 8-0 victory on Feb. 18, allowing just three hits and one walk. In Sunday's 5-3 win over the Broncs, Larson came in for relief to pitch the final 3.2 innings and gave up just two hits while throwing two strikeouts. As a result, Larson was named WAC Pitcher of the Week on Feb. 20.

Leach and sophomore infielder **Bri Sims** (Rowlett, Texas) were each named to the 2017 Preseason All-WAC team in a poll by the league's coaches.

Sims, a 2016 All-WAC first team selection, returns to the field for UMKC this season with second-team members Goodwin and Byrn. The Roos finished 24-26 overall and 10-5 in the WAC in 2016.

Scouting the Opponents

Drake holds the all-time series over UMKC, 30-4, with the Roos' last win against the Bulldogs coming at the Razorback Invitational on Feb. 28, 2016. Sims doubled in the game for UMKC while O'Brien and **Alex Gale** (Steeleville, Ill.) each stole a base in the 12-5 victory. Drake is on a two-game winning streak after topping Jacksonville and Stanford last weekend.

Saturday's meeting between UMKC and the Iowa Hawkeyes will be the first of its kind in program history. Iowa comes into this weekend's games on a 12-game losing streak with four of those losses coming against ranked teams.

The Roos and Phoenix have only played each other three times, with the last match-up resulting in a 1-0 UMKC victory in 2002. Green Bay has won just one game this season, dating back to Feb. 12 against IUPUI.

Up Next

The Roos will return to Arrocha Ballpark next weekend for the Rock Chalk Challenge. UMKC will play games against host Kansas, Tulsa, Southeast Missouri and Omaha.

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