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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UMKC Adjusts Weekend Series With Grand Canyon

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – The UMKC softball team (10-25, 3-0 WAC) has altered its weekend schedule due to the copious amount of precipitation in the Kansas City, Mo., area throughout the week.

UMKC's scheduled twin bill against Grand Canyon (26-13, 1-2 WAC) on Friday has been moved to Saturday with a 1 p.m. CT start time and a single game against the Lopes is scheduled to open the series on Friday at 4 p.m. CT. All three games are set to be played at Missouri 3&2 Complex.

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Live stats for UMKC's games are available at UMKCStats.com. For live radio stream, visit UMKCKangaroos.com/LiveEvents.

About the Roos

Redshirt junior **Kendra Leach** (Easton, Kan.) is batting a team-high .396 with seven doubles and four triples through 35 games. Leach also leads the team in RBIs, bringing home 17 base runners this season.

In the WAC, Leach ranks in the top-four in several categories, including batting average, on-base percentage (.473) and slugging percentage (.615). She also has a perfect 1.000 fielding percentage and leads the category along with teammate **Abby Warkentine** (Auburn, Kan.).

Shortstop **Morgan Byrn** (Lawrence, Kan.) has taken 45 total bases in the first 35 games of the season, going 27-for-90 at the plate (.300) while smashing a team-leading five home runs and accumulating a team-high 17 runs. Her five home runs are the third-most in the conference this season.

Infielder **Bri Sims** (Rowlett, Texas) was given six of UMKC's 12 free bases at CSU Bakersfield last weekend to lead the team in the category with 16 on the year.

Ashlin O'Brien (Fond du Lac, Wis.), **Kelsey Goodwin** (Broken Arrow, Okla.), Sims and Leach have each hit a pair of home runs while **Faith Willis** (Kearney, Mo.) and **Abbi Johnson** (Midwest City, Okla.) have each hit one out of the park this season.

Freshman **Sydney Garcia** (Kansas City, Mo.) has been caught stealing just once out of her eight stolen base attempts this season. Her eight attempts is the fifth-most in the WAC this season. She also leads all UMKC newcomers at the plate, batting .275 with seven doubles and nine RBIs.

As a team, UMKC currently ranks third in the WAC in steal attempts (35), doubles (37) and triples (6). The pitching staff has combined for 56 strikeouts, the fourth-most in the league this season.

When UMKC swept CSU Bakersfield to open WAC play last weekend, it was just the fourth time since joining the league that the Roos swept a conference opponent. The Roos also swept the Roadrunners and Seattle U last season and Utah Valley in 2015.

UMKC played its first nationally-ranked opponent of the season on March 7 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 these games, 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 WAC 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.

Freshman **Alex Larson** (Overland Park, Kan.) was named WAC Pitcher of the Week on Feb 20 for her notable performances against Rider at the Battle at the Beach on Feb. 18 and Feb. 19. Between the two games, Larson pitched 8.2 innings, giving up just five hits while throwing three strikeouts. The right-hander also posted a 0.00 ERA in both appearances.

Leach and Sims 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 Opponent

Grand Canyon leads the all-time series over UMKC, 6-3, but the Roos won their last two games in Phoenix, Ariz., in 2016 by two runs apiece.

The Lopes opened league play at home against Seattle U last weekend, where they dropped the series, but avoided the sweep, after closing the three-game set with an 8-0 victory in five innings. Grand Canyon is 4-3 on the road this season, picking up wins at Stanford and Santa Clara.

Up Next

UMKC will take a break from conference competition when it hosts South Dakota State for a twin bill on Tuesday at Missouri 3&2 Complex.

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