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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2017

## ***Softball Set to Face CSU Bakersfield in WAC Tournament Opener***

**LAS CRUCES, N.M.** – The UMKC softball team (15-36, 5-10 WAC) has earned the No. 4 seed and will open the Western Athletic Conference Tournament against No. 5 seeded CSU Bakersfield (11-31, 4-11 WAC) at 12 p.m. CT on Thursday.

The winner will go on to battle top-seeded New Mexico State at 5 p.m. CT, while the other will look to keep its tournament run alive against No. 2 Utah Valley or No. 3 Seattle U at 7:30 p.m. CT in the double-elimination tournament.

### **Follow**

Live stats for UMKC's games are available at [UMKCStats.com](http://UMKCStats.com).

### **About the Roos**

**Kendra Leach** (Easton, Kan.) is batting a team-high .388 with 10 doubles and four triples through 51 games. In the WAC, Leach ranks in the top-five in several categories, including batting average, on-base percentage (.482) and slugging percentage (.583). She is also one of three student-athletes in the conference to have a perfect 1.000 fielding percentage.

Shortstop **Morgan Byrn** (Lawrence, Kan.) has taken 78 total bases in 51 games this season, going 42-for-137 at the plate (.307) while smashing a team-leading 11 home runs. The sophomore launched five long balls in five games during the final home stand of the 2017 season and ranks third in the WAC in the category.

Leach, Byrn and **Kelsey Goodwin** (Broken Arrow, Okla.) are hitting above .300 to lead the team. Goodwin has accumulated 18 runs, seven doubles and a pair of home runs.

Outfielder **Sydney Garcia** (Kansas City, Mo.) leads all freshmen at the plate, batting .263 with seven doubles, two triples and 10 RBIs. Garcia has also been caught stealing just once out of her 10 stolen base attempts this season.

Infielder **Bri Sims** (Rowlett, Texas) has been given a team-high 25 free bases this season. She is also second on the team in home runs after hitting her third long ball of the season over the center field wall against Grand Canyon on April 8 at Missouri 3&2 Complex.

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

As a team, UMKC currently ranks first in the WAC in walks (154), second in steal attempts (52), and third in triples (8) and home runs (26).

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**

UMKC holds the all-time series over CSU Bakersfield, 10-4, after sweeping the three-game set in Bakersfield, Calif., during the regular season. It was just the fourth time since joining the league that the Roos swept a conference opponent.

The Roadrunners are led at the plate by Nicole Curry, who is batting just under .300 with five doubles, one triple and 15 RBIs. In the circle, Summer Evans has posted a 4.33 ERA with eight wins, 13 complete games and 19 strikeouts in 127.2 innings pitched.

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