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[Men's Sports](#)

[Women's Sports](#)

[Headline News](#)

[Philosophy](#)

[Quick Facts](#)

[Recruiting Forms](#)

[Royal Report](#)

[Staff Directory](#)

[Athletic Training](#)

[SID Resources](#)

[Facilities](#)

[Tickets](#)

[Athletic Apparel](#)

[Loyal Royals](#)

[Hall of Honor](#)

[Summer Sports](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[EMU Hot Links](#)

Friday 9/8/2006

EMU Fall Athletes Prepare for Season with help from Optical Performance Associates

Optical Performance Associates LLC, a company based in Cherry Hill, N.J., which specializes in team development and leadership, visited the Eastern Mennonite University fall sports athletes on Wednesday, August 23.

Keith Waldman, OPA representative, used different team activities including a rope course to enhance team unity and communication. Waldman did a full team building and sports psychology workshop with the field hockey team while working in smaller sessions with the men's

EMU field hockey coach **Brenda Bechler** stated, "Through various activities Keith encouraged teamwork as the athletes utilized their problem solving skills to overcome the different obstacles. They were challenged to take a number of risks and trust their teammates to help, which I felt built accountability and respect amongst the players."

According to their website OPA specializes in building strong team communications through workshops and special activities that help to build team unity and boost moral. Their programs are designed toward developing a long lasting goal for your team to follow throughout the season.

EMU Athletic Director Dave King added, "I am very pleased that Coach Bechler took the initiative to secure the funding for this experience for our student athletes. Outside resource people can often get concepts through to athletes easier than our own staff. With our emphasis on the added value that athletics brings to a college education, this is the type of activity that is needed to help us achieve our mission of developing young people through athletics."

Waldman was able to appear due to a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) grant provided at the beginning of the school year to EMU.

For information on Optical Performance Associates LLC, [click here](#).



OPA Representative Keith Waldman participates in a team building activity with EMU fall athletes.

