

1-29-1985

01/29/1985 - Womens Basketball

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "01/29/1985 - Womens Basketball" (1985). 1985. 30.
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Jan. 29, 1985
LS-WBB 71

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--A wise sage once said "Go west young man, go west." The Eastern Illinois women's basketball team will take heed to that advice and embark on the Gateway Conference's version of the western expedition to the league's outback. The Lady Panthers (10-7, 2-5) travel to Wichita State on Thursday (6-11, 2-5) to take on the Shockers before battling the Lady Bears of Southwest Missouri State (7-10, 4-3) on Saturday.

"This road trip is important for us to get back on the right track," explains EIU head coach Barbara Hilke. "We made way too many mental mistakes against Southern Illinois last week and we can't do that again.

"It is time for the players on the team to suck it up and play good hard-nosed basketball like they are capable of. The true character of this team must come through on this road-trip. I'm confident that if we play aggressive, fundamentally-sound basketball--like we are capable of--we can have a great shot at coming back from the west with a 2-0 mark."

Eastern's unsung hero to date is the "hardcover" version of its book end forwards. Chris Aldridge (Taylorville) is a rock-em, sock-em player that doesn't know the meaning of giving less than 100%. The junior all-conference candidate is averaging 15 ppg and 8.3 rpg in league play. She is scoring at a 14.1 clip and hauling down 7.1 boards overall.

Consistency is Aldridge's trademark. The aggressive performer can always be seen grabbing a rebound at one end of the court--and streaking to the other end for the fast-break basket. Aldridge--a defensive specialist--is constantly assigned to guard the opposing team's premier offensive forward or center. The 5-foot-10, 150-pounder often gives away 40-50 pounds and two-four inches to the players she is matched up with. Aldridge also earned a perfect 4.0 GPA last semester in physical education.

Senior Toni Collins (Lincoln/Jamaica-Sidell) is at the other forward spot. The two-time all-league pick is averaging a team-leading 15.6 ppg and 7.4 rpg. She also recorded a perfect 4.0 GPA in physical education last semester.

EIU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
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Melanie Hatfield (Lawrenceburg, Ind.) is third on the team in scoring with a 12.1 average. The junior guard leads the squad in steals with 43 and is second in assists with 71. Junior Kim Maxey (Mattoon) is among the league leaders in assists with 76.

Wichita State is led by Allison Daniel. The junior guard is averaging 18.2 ppg and 7.4 rpg. She is coming off a 25-point, 10-rebound performance in a league win against Northern Iowa. Junior forward Jenny Parr is second on the team in scoring with a 13.5 average while center Terria Dawson leads the Shockers in rebounding with an 8.7 mark.

Pre-season all-league selection Jeanette Tendai is the head "bear" for Southwest Missouri. The 6-0 junior leads the team in scoring (19.8) and rebounding (9.1). Six-foot center Sharon Zeilman is the aircraft carrier in the middle. She averages 10.8 ppg while also recording 35 blocked shots this year. EIU's team has 35 total. Zeilman had a career-high six in a loss to Drake.