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10/01/1980 - Soccer Governors Cup Classic

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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920

Oct. 1, 1980

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's soccer team, ranked No. 1 in the NCAA II Midwest poll, will try to enhance its reputation at the four team Governor's Cup Classic at DeKalb this Friday and Saturday (Oct. 3-4).

The Panthers, 5-1, face the Western Illinois Leathernecks at 5 p.m. Friday with the host Northern Illinois Huskies facing the defending major college national champions SIU-Edwardsville at 7 p.m.

The winners will compete Saturday evening at 7 p.m. on NIU's astroturf field for the championship.

"Western is ranked third in the midwest so this is a key game for us," said Coach Schellas Hyndman. "We need to beat them to retain that No. 1 ranking plus it could affect us later in tournament selection if we were to lose since Missouri-St. Louis defeated us earlier."

Both WIU and UMSL perennially compete with the Panthers for a NCAA II tournament playoff spot in the Midwest Region.

The Leathernecks are currently 4-0 but will probably be without their leading scorers, Jamaicans Tony Christie and Noel Smith, who sustained recent hamstring injuries.

EIU, though, is "probably playing better than ever," says Hyndman. "We have become a closer team the last couple weeks and having Gordon Prempeh (previously out with an injury) back has helped . . . opponents respect him and have to mark him heavily."

In Prempeh's absence, freshman Damien Kelly (Dublin, Ireland) has picked up the scoring slack with eight goals, 40% of the team's offensive production.

"We knew Damien was a talent but he has come along further than we anticipated at this point . . . plus he's dangerous without the ball," Hyndman explained.

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Hyndman has made one defensive change, switching Gordie Weidle (Edmonton, Can.) back to defense. "Gordie has played better back there . . . Jerry McAnulty (British Columbia) is also playing very well defensively."

Eastern has shutouts in four of its five victories.

The Governor's Cup is the first of a month long road trip for the Panthers. After this tournament, EIU has single games at Evansville, Indiana, Avila College and Illinois State with a tournament at Wheaton College.

Eastern does not return home until Wednesday, Nov. 5 against Blackburn College.