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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Leigh Hankins (South Beloit) has been a reserve center for the Eastern Illinois University basketball team throughout the first half of the season.

Hankins, a 6-6 junior, has come off the bench in all 14 of the Panthers' games this year to average 4.5 points and 3.0 rebounds. He is one of only four players to appear in every game.

Hankins' top games were two 11 point outings against Central Missouri and Northern Kentucky and eight rebounds against St. Joseph's.

"Leigh has made considerable contributions for us," said first year coach Rick Samuels. "He understands our defensive concepts as well as anyone on the team.

"He needs to be more aggressive . . . on a couple occasions he's really gotten in there so he's made progress and shown to be capable inside."

Eastern, 7-7, concludes its season with ten of its final 13 games at home with Mid-Continent Conference rival Youngstown State here Saturday (Jan. 24) night.