

2-23-1981

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "02/23/1981 - EIU swimmers will participate in the mid continent conference championship" (1981). 1981. 431.

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Panther Sports News

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Feb. 23, 1981
LS-AS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's swimmers will participate in the Mid-Continent Conference championship this weekend (Feb. 26-28) in a final opportunity to pick up some qualifiers for the nationals.

The MCC meet will be held Thursday through Saturday at Western Illinois University. The Leathernecks are the defending champs.

If history means anything, though, the Panthers might be better off not winning.

Two years ago EIU pointed to this meet, won the title and then finished 15th in the NCAA II National Championship.

Last year Coach Ray Padovan deemphasized the conference meet, EIU dropped to third but rebounded strongly to crack the coveted 'top ten', finishing 8th at the NCAA II event.

The nationals are three weeks off, March 19-21, at Youngstown, OH.

Having qualified eight individuals in 25 events, Padovan says a few more have "one last chance to reach cutoff marks this weekend.

"We'd like to still get Tim Bird (Evanston-Elk Grove) in the 200 fly and Greg Lanchester (Carbondale) in the 100 backstroke.

"Scott Vick (Springfield) is just on the edge of a couple freestyle events, the 500 and 1650 and Brian Kay (Arlington Heights-Rolling Meadows) has a shot at the 1650, also."

The Panthers' lone returning conference champs, Jim Hall (McHenry) and Steve Boone (Charleston), would like to defend their titles in the 500 freestyle and 100 breaststroke, respectively.