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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920

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Feb. 22, 1983
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's basketball game at Western Illinois Saturday night (Feb. 26) presents a must win situation for the Panthers if they are to win the Mid-Continent basketball title.

EIU dropped into second place in the league with a 7-2 record after losing to Southwest Missouri 82-75 Monday night. The Bears now lead with a 5-1 record but Western Illinois, which closes its conference schedule against EIU Saturday, is 8-3.

A WIU victory would give the Leathernecks a final 9-3 conference mark while pushing the Panthers into third place. Eastern, 11-15 overall, has a non-conference home game with Illinois Tech Monday but then finishes with two conference games at Illinois-Chicago Wednesday (March 2) and hosting the front running Southwest Missouri Bears on Saturday (March 5).

"We weren't aggressive at Southwest. They knew the importance of the game and were ready," said Coach Rick Samuels. "We told the players that championships aren't dumped in their lap . . . that they will have to earn everything they get.

"I can't predict how we'll do in these final three conference games but I feel certain we'll get after it from the first minute."

EIU downed the Leathernecks earlier this year in Charleston, 89-82, shooting 55% from the field and making 31 of 41 free throws compared to just eight of nine for WIU.

"We can't expect that kind of margin up there so we must play tougher on defense. Western has won ten of its last 11 so it's one of the hottest teams in the country right now," Samuels said.

Tim Dykstra (Plymouth, IN-LaVille) became the first Panther to earn conference 'Player of the Week' honors last week. The 6-5 junior, the only player to start every game this season, has averaged 16.8 the last four games shooting 63% from the field.

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He's now averaging in double figures at an even 10 points a game and boosted his FG% to .475. "When Kevin (Jones) was slowed by the knee injury, Tim really took control offensively a couple games and has kept it up. If he can continue to shoot well from the perimeter, it will keep people from sagging inside on (Kevin) Duckworth so much."

GAME NOTES

THE GAMES: Eastern Illinois University at Western Illinois University, 7:30, Saturday, Feb. 26, Western Hall, Macomb

Eastern Illinois University hosts Illinois Tech, 7:30, Monday, Feb. 28, Lantz Gym, Charleston

THE SERIES: The Panthers trail WIU, 59-45, but won the game earlier this year, 89-82, as Kevin Jones hit a career high 31 points and Doug Crook added 21.

This is the first meeting between Illinois Institute of Technology and EIU.

WESTERN ILLINOIS: The Leathernecks enter the game with a 19-10 record and had won ten straight before Southern Mississippi snapped the streak Monday night. WIU is 8-3 in the conference with the EIU game the Leathernecks final AMCU contest. All-American Joe Dykstra, averaging 20.4 points, set a school career scoring record recently and has almost 2200 career points. He will likely break his season scoring record of 629, set two years ago. Guard Eric Jackson is scoring nearly 15 points a game and has set a field goal shooting mark for a guard hitting 54% of his shots. The Leathernecks are the nation's No. 3 free throw shooting club hitting 78.3%. Dykstra ranks in the top 20 nationally with an 88.3% mark.

ILLINOIS TECH: The Scarlet Hawks, in only their second year of NCAA Division II play, are 11-17. They are led by three year starter Frank Ricciardi who is averaging 13.1 and 10.6 rebounds, which ranks him in the top ten in NCAA II rebounding stats. The only other starter in double figures is John Ptasinski at 12.7.

KEVIN JONES: Senior guard Kevin Jones (Indianapolis, IN-Marshall/Kankakee CC), although playing with his knee taped, has not been hampered by the cartilage problem suffered two weeks ago. He has scored 65 points in the last four games since returning to the lineup. He leads the team with a 17.1 average and will likely crack the 500 season mark and wind up in the top ten among EIU single season scorers.

TIM DYKSTRA: Junior forward Tim Dykstra (Plymouth, IN-LaVille), who earned conference 'player of the week' honors last week, has had a hot shooting hand recently. Through the first 22 games he was only averaging 8.7 points and hitting 43.5% from the field. In the last four games he has averaged 16.7 and shot 63% to boost his season marks to 10 points and 47.5%. Dykstra also leads the team with 767 minutes played, steals (25) and second in assists (90).

TEAM SHOOTING: The Panthers could set a team field goal shooting mark as they are hitting just over 50%. The school record is 50.5%. Since second semester the Panthers are shooting 53.4% from the field as a team while the starters are hitting 55.6%.

MID-CONTINENT STANDINGS:

	League	Overall
Southwest Missouri	5-1	12-13
Eastern Illinois	7-2	11-15
Western Illinois	8-3	19-10
Illinois-Chicago	5-3	13-10
Northern Iowa	5-4	12-15
Valparaiso	3-9	12-14
Wisconsin-Green Bay	2-9	8-17
Cleveland State	0-4	7-19

TENTATIVE STARTERS:

<u>Eastern Illinois</u>				
F	22	Tim Dykstra	6-5	Jr.
F	52	Dirk Androff	6-7	Jr.
C	00	Kevin Duckworth	6-11	Fr.
G	10	Doug Crook	6-1	So.
G	44	Kevin Jones	6-3	Sr.

Western Illinois

F	42	Joe Dykstra	6-6	Sr.
F	24	Rick Resetich	6-7	Jr.
C	45	Roger Nickell	6-9	Sr.
G	3	Eric Jackson	6-2	Sr.
G	10	Daryl Reed	6-2	Fr.

Illinois Tech

F	24	Frank Ricciardi	6-5	Jr.
F	25	John Ptasinski	6-5	Jr.
C	32	Bob Ganofsky	6-6	Sr.
G	20	Brian Bonnett	6-1	Jr.
G	23	Cary Musser	6-2	Fr.