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03/11/1983 - Baseball To Open Season

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Panther Sports News

March 11, 1983
LS-AS-Baseball

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Solid pitching and strong defense will be major contributors to Eastern Illinois University's baseball success this spring.

The Panthers open their 59-game season Wednesday (March 16) at Indiana University and then return for the home opener Friday (March 18) against Wisconsin-Parkside.

"Our defense is our strong point, particularly with the infield, and our pitching could be decent," says sixth year coach Tom McDevitt.

"Due to the nice weather we've been able to workout outdoors much more and consequently our defense is a lot farther along at this point compared to other years."

Playing seven or eight games each week, though, McDevitt will need plenty of pitching and has three quality starters returning from last year's 29-12 club.

The No. 1 hurler is senior Marshall Crutcher (Tower Hill), who had a 6-1 record last year including a one hit victory over SIU-Carbondale. "Marshall is effective because he throws the ball across the plate . . . it's that simple. He doesn't beat himself," said McDevitt.

Behind him are senior Kevin Gordon (Morris-Joliet JC) and sophomore Mick Freed (Lexington), who had 4-1 and 3-2 records, respectively. Gordon may be the harder thrower as he struck out 37 in 35 innings last year.

Senior Bill Morton (Peoria-Central) could start but McDevitt says he would prefer to use him in relief because "that's where most of his potential lies."

Others competing for a starting spot are Dave McWhorter (Libertyville), Mike Steinkamp (Lincoln), Jim Wilkins (Country Club Hills-Marist), Paul Skorupa (Barrington), Sam Light (Bartonville-Limestone) and Kevin Smith (Peoria-Richwoods). Mark Daugherty (Charleston-Lake Land CC) is injured so "he'll tell me when he's ready," says McDevitt.

Centerfielder Troy Harper (Fox Lake-Grant/Lake County CC) and third baseman Kevin Seitzer (Lincoln) both topped .400 last year. Harper's .453 set a school record, and is the fourth best average among returning players in NCAA Division I.

-more-

Seitzer hit .416 and is the only player in EIU history to top .400 in his first two years. "Seitzer is a definite All-American candidate. He knows the strike zone and has a good short stroke yet can hit the ball out," says McDevitt. "He's a complete player . . . intelligent, decent arm, aggressive runner."

These two also supplied the power last year as Harper had 10 homers and 44 RBIs while Seitzer had seven and 50.

Two other returning .300 hitters are junior shortstop Brian Jones (Charleston) at .338 and senior first baseman-catcher Jeff Yocum (Ottawa) at .304.

"Jones jumped from .289 as a freshman to .338 last year, and is as good a shortstop as there is in the state. Yocum is actually our best catcher but we've shifted him to first base because we had a big hole there and he could make the transition easier," McDevitt explained.

Freshman Tim Torricelli (Springfield), one of two catchers chosen to play in an Illinois-Michigan prep all-star game last summer, will be behind the plate.

Lincolnland CC transfer Steve Hall (Williamsville), who led the state junior colleges in triples, will be the second baseman. Bryan Dillard (Chicago Heights-Bloom) is slated to start in leftfield but will also backup Hall, who currently is injured.

Neal Bertram, who played both left and right field last year, will start in right this spring.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY 1983 BASEBALL ROSTER

NO.	NAME	B-T	POS	HT	WT	YR	HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JC)
1	Don Stephens	R-R	OF	5-9	160	Fr.	Taylorville
2	Kevin Seitzer	R-R	3B	5-11	175	Jr.	Lincoln
3	Bob Schlechte	R-R	1B	6-0	180	Sr.	Strasburg (Lakeland CC)
4	Steve Hall	S-R	2B	5-9	165	Jr.	Williamsville (Lincolnland CC)
5	Jim Wilkins	R-R	P	5-10	165	Fr.	Country Club Hills (Marist)
6	Sam Light	R-R	P	5-10	170	Fr.	Bartonville (Limestone)
7	Brian Jones	R-R	SS	6-0	170	Jr.	Charleston
8	Troy Harper	R-R	OF	6-0	190	Sr.	Fox Lake (Grant/Lake County CC)
9	Bryan Dillard	S-R	2B	5-11	165	Sr.	Chicago Heights (Bloom)
10	Dave McWhorter	R-R	P	6-1	170	So.	Libertyville
12	Kevin Smith	L-L	P	6-0	170	Fr.	Peoria (Richwoods)
14	Mick Freed	R-R	P	6-3	195	So.	Lexington
15	Dan Hickey	R-R	OF	5-8	160	Fr.	Chicago (Kennedy)
16	Paul Skorupa	R-R	P	6-4	190	Fr.	Barrington
17	Mike Steinkamp	R-R	P	6-3	195	Fr.	Lincoln
18	Neal Bertram	L-R	OF	6-2	175	Sr.	Crystal Lake
19	Mark Daugherty	L-L	P	6-1	180	Jr.	Charleston (Lakeland CC)
20	Marshall Crutcher	R-R	P	5-10	170	Sr.	Tower Hill
21	Tim Torricelli	R-R	C	5-8	175	Fr.	Springfield
22	Steve French	R-R	OF	6-2	175	Sr.	Crest Hill (Lockport)
23	Jeff Yocum	R-R	C	6-0	180	Sr.	Ottawa
24	Bill Morton	S-L	P	6-4	185	Sr.	Peoria (Central)
25	Kevin Gordon	R-R	P	6-3	210	Sr.	Morris (Joliet JC)

1983 EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY BASEBALL SCHEDULE

1:30, Wed., March 16	at Indiana (2)	Bloomington, IN
2:00, Fri., March 18	WISCONSIN-PARKSIDE (1)	Monier Field
1:00, Sat., March 19	at Evansville (2)	Evansville, IN
March 25-April 2	<u>Spring Trip</u>	
1:00, Fri., March 25	at Arkansas State (2)	Jonesboro, AR
1:00, Sat., March 26	at Arkansas State (2)	Jonesboro, AR
1:00, Sun., March 27	at Arkansas State (2)	Jonesboro, AR
1:00, Mon., March 28	at Arkansas State (1)	Jonesboro, AR
1:00, Tues., March 29	at Memphis State (2)	Memphis, TN
1:00, Wed., March 30	at Memphis State (2)	Memphis, TN
1:00, Thurs., March 31	at Memphis State (2)	Memphis, TN
1:00, Fri., April 1	at Murray State (2)	Murray, KY
1:00, Sat., April 2	at Murray State (2)	Murray, KY
1:00, Tues., April 5	BRADLEY (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Wed., April 6	at Illinois State (2)	Normal, IL
1:00, Sat., April 9	IUPUI-INDIANAPOLIS (2)	Monier Field
Noon, Sun., April 10	at Purdue (2)	Lafayette, IN
3:00, Tues., April 12	at Illinois (1)	Champaign, IL
1:00, Wed., April 13	INDIANA STATE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sat., April 16	SIU-EDWARDSVILLE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sun., April 17	SIU-EDWARDSVILLE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Tues., April 19	ROSE-HULMAN (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Wed., April 20	ILLINOIS STATE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sat., April 23	WESTERN ILLINOIS (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sun., April 24	WESTERN ILLINOIS (2)	Monier Field
3:00, Tues., April 26	ILLINOIS (1)	Monier Field
1:00, Wed., April 27	SIU-CARBONDALE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sat., April 30	ISU-EVANSVILLE (2)	Monier Field
1:00, Sun., May 1	ISU-EVANSVILLE (2)	Monier Field
3:00, Tues., May 3	at Illinois Wesleyan (1)	Bloomington, IL
1:00, Wed., May 4	at Missouri-St. Louis (2)	St. Louis, MO
1:00, Sat., May 7	at Greenville College (2)	Greenville, IL
1:00, Sun., May 8	at Millikin (2)	Decatur, IL