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03/13/1984 - Tennis Team Opens Season

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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's women's tennis team will open its spring season at 3 p.m. Friday with an indoor match at Bradley University.

"This will be a good opportunity for everyone on the team to implement the thing we've been working on," EIU coach Gail Richard said. "We'll use this match to chart our progress and to see what needs to be worked on before we get heavily into the conference season."

Bradley will give the Lady Panthers their first look at a Gateway Collegiate Conference opponent this spring as Eastern attempts to better its winless 1983 campaign and last-place tie in the GCAC.

Already the netters have shown improvement under first-year coach Richard as the women compiled a winning record in exhibition matches last fall. Although Bradley finished only two notches above Eastern in the Gateway last season, Richard said she expects a very difficult match for her players.

"I think Bradley is going to be strong," Richard said. "I'd rather have that, though, because we'll have to dig down and use all the skills we have. We won't be able to coast through any matches."

Richard said she plans to play junior Nancy Abney (Kankakee-Eastridge) at the No. 1 singles position with sophomore Heather England (Lake Bluff) at No. 2 and sophomore Patti Kearns (Palatine-William Fremd) at No. 3. Sophomore Sally Stout (Peoria-Richwoods) will play No. 4 singles with juniors Dawn Pavlik (Geneva-St. Edward) and Gina Andres (Mascoutah-Belleville Area CC) competing at Nos. 5 and 6, respectively.

Abney and Stout will form one doubles team with Andres and Pavlik combining as another and England and Kearns rounding out Eastern's top three doubles combinations.