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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University concluded its volleyball recruiting season recently with the addition of four more promising recruits.

Three junior college transfers and a talented prepster bring to seven the number of recruits committed to EIU for the upcoming season. Earlier, EIU head coach Betty Ralston signed Jeanne Pacione and Sue Miloch of Wheeling and Kaye Skerston from Springfield Sacred Heart.

April Deer (East Peoria), a 5'7" setter/outside hitter, and Lori Berger (Henry-Henry-Senachwine), a 5'9" middle blocker, will join the Lady Panthers after leading their Illinois Central College team to a third-place finish at the national tournament last fall.

Venita Plese (Wilmington/Joliet JC), a 5'9" middle and outside hitter from Joliet Junior College and Diane Eiserman of Libertyville round out Eastern's fine recruiting year.

Deer, a 5'7" setter/outside hitter from East Peoria, and Berger, a 5'9" middle blocker from Henry, boast two years of national tournament experience, which EIU head coach Betty Ralston said should enable them to help her squad immediately.

"I'm looking for April to act as a setter for us in the six-two (offense)," Ralston said. "Her experience in a setting role should be very helpful."

Ralston said she has plans to use Plese in the middle, where Eastern graduated two outstanding players.

"Venita has the quickest arm swing of all our recruits, which is why we want to groom her as a middle. She led her team in kills and solo blocks and has an excellent vertical (25-inch) jump," Ralston said.

This recruiting season's sleeper could be Eiserman, who Ralston said was overlooked by many schools because her 5'8" stature is short for a middle hitter/blocker.

Her strength is definitely blocking," Ralston said. "I'm counting on her to come in and give us blocking help, which we lacked last year, and help us hit in the middle.

"I'm very pleased with the talent we added and although this may be a rebuilding year for us, I think we'll have a good season," she added.