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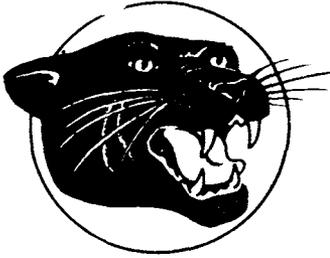
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Panther Sports News

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May 15, 1984
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--The Mid-Continent and Gateway Collegiate conferences recently held their spring meetings with basketball legislation most affecting Eastern Illinois University's men's and women's athletic programs, athletic director R. C. Johnson reported.

The AMCU-8 will continue to hold a men's post-season basketball tournament but the format has been changed. Instead of playing at one site, the tournament will be held at on-campus arenas with the highest seeded team hosting each game.

"Seeds will be based on the regular season league finish, and we'll play the championship game on the Saturday night prior to the Sunday NCAA tournament selection announcement," said Johnson.

"Right now we are still eligible for receiving an automatic bid with the 1987 season but with the NCAA moving up to 64 teams and the NIT taking 32, we'll continue to push for our league champ to get an at-large berth between now and 1987.

"This new format is for a one year trial basis . . . same as this past March when we played in Springfield, MO. Then next spring we'll make an evaluation as to which way we'll go."

The women will continue to conduct a round robin regular season schedule with the champion receiving an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament rather than advance through a post-season tournament.

"The most encouraging aspect in the Gateway is the Collegiate Sports Network out of Baton Rouge has expressed an interest in televising some league games," Johnson reported. "We will have a special meeting in August to followup on this progress.

"This cable firm has sent a letter to the league commissioner (Patty Viverito) stating they have decided to feature one women's conference and chose the Gateway.

"They plan to televise 12 games and hope to have three million subscribers signed up

by fall they already have one cable system in St. Louis. This is a real boost for the league and basketball programs in particular," Johnson said.

The Mid-Continent set playing dates for next year's championships with EIU hosting the indoor track meet on March 1 & 2. Golf has been switched to a fall sport to take advantage of the longer season with the league meet scheduled for a neutral Chicago site.

The AMCU athletic directors decided that baseball would switch to a divisional setup with the AMCU coaches charged with the responsibility of determining specifics.

Outdoor track will hold its league meet at Western Illinois, tennis at Illinois-Chicago and swimming in conjunction with the Midwest Swimming Championship in Chicago. There will be no wrestling championship instead league athletes will advance directly to the national championship through a regional qualifying tournament.

Eastern will host no women's conference championships in 1984-85 but will be the site for three league meets the following season in swimming, indoor and outdoor track.

"We also discussed league expansion but no action was taken although we do have some schools interested in joining," Johnson said. "Since we've only been a viable league for a couple years it's pleasing that we already have others interested in coming aboard."