

Eastern Illinois University

## The Keep

---

1982

Press Releases

---

8-17-1982

### 08/17/1982 - Running Backs

University Marketing and Communications

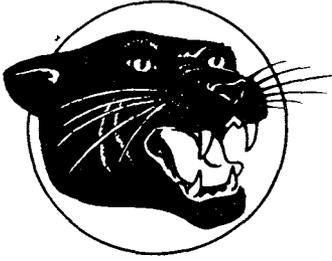
Follow this and additional works at: [https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press\\_releases\\_1982](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1982)

---

#### Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "08/17/1982 - Running Backs" (1982). 1982. 535.  
[https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press\\_releases\\_1982/535](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1982/535)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Press Releases at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 1982 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).



# Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920

DAVID KIDWELL, *Sports Information Director*

OFFICE: (217) 581-2920

HOME: (217) 345-4166

RUNNING BACKS  
(Fifth in a Series)

Aug. 17, 1982  
LS-AS-FB STATE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's football reputation as a passing power may take a hiatus this fall as the Panthers intend to pay more than lip service to improving the running game.

Last year EIU ranked No. 4 in the nation with 258 yards passing per game but only 101 yards rushing, the poorest balance since Darrell Mudra became head coach four years ago.

Intent upon narrowing that gap, offensive coordinator Chuck Dickerson has stated the Panthers want to take advantage of Eastern's strong off-the-line blocking.

Plus backfield coach Mike Williams has no qualms about saying "our overall talent among the running backs is better than any other segment on the team . . . we have a lot of depth.

"If someone gets hurt we don't have to throw in the towel. Whoever steps in may have a different style but the level of talent will be similar."

A healthy Kevin Staple (Markham-Thornwood) would go along way towards upholding those statements. Staple, a 5-8, 180 junior who has bulked up over 15 pounds since his frosh season, ranked eighth in the nation last year in all-purpose running (rushing, receiving, kickoff and punt returns) with a 133 yard average. All this despite missing two games and parts of several others with a shoulder separation.

"Kevin is in the best shape of his life and knows the offense inside and out . . . I think he's headed for an excellent year," Williams says.

Staple set an EIU season pass catching record for running backs with 37 last year and needs just 143 yards to move into EIU's all-time top five career rushers. He has 1276 career yards, leading the team the past two years.

His running mate will probably be either Wes Nixon (Lorain, OH-Illinois Valley CC) or Darryon White (East St. Louis-Senior).

Nixon, a JC transfer who really surprised coaches last spring, carried the ball 31 times for 134 yards in three spring games to lead all rushers.

"He's only 5-7 but runs like a big man . . . a north-south runner. At the same time he has little man moves . . . that great balance and field vision."

White is waiting for an opportunity to crack the starting lineup after sitting out last year with a broken leg. "He's a bit rusty but no one has better hands or runs better pass routes. He's a good open field runner who needs to regain a step he lost sitting out."

Letterman Tyrone Davis (East St. Louis-Lincoln), a parttime starter last year, is the best blocker and most capable in short yardage situations. "He's improved but how much he plays will depend upon the type of camp he has . . . it's all up to him."

Williams also expects Roy Ellis (Chicago-Manley), Jeff Musgray (Alton) and Melvin Ware (Cleveland, OH-Chanel/Triton JC) to contribute.

"Ellis has gained 10 pounds and is in excellent condition. Musgray is quicker in uniform than any running back on the team and could really make things happen on the punt and/or kickoff teams. Ware is a juco transfer who came in this fall and already has shown great athletic ability in a short time . . . once he learns our offense he's gonna make some of those in front of him work harder," Williams predicted.

Williams also listed four underclassmen among those reporting for early workouts. They are Ted Melvin (Elwood, IN), Bill Hatfield (Freeburg), Cris Carrico (Chatsworth) and Calvin Pierce (Robbins-Richards).