

11-14-1983

11/14/1983 - Basketball Signs First Player For Next Season

University Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1983

Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "11/14/1983 - Basketball Signs First Player For Next Season" (1983). 1983. 575.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_1983/575

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 1983 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact 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

Nov. 14, 1983
LS-AS-BASKETBALL
(WOMEN'S)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL-- Eastern Illinois University kept pace with other successful Division I women's basketball programs and strengthened its future Friday by signing an outstanding high school athlete to a national letter of intent.

Michelle Newman, a senior at Mattoon High School, became the first player to commit to EIU for the 1984-85 season when she signed the letter Friday afternoon at her home.

Newman's mother Karen, younger sister Stephanie, Eastern head coach Barbara Hilke and assistant Deanna D'Abbraccio witnessed the precedent-setting signing as Newman became the first woman to sign with EIU under the NCAA's new early-signing provisions.

"Truly outstanding athletes all over the country are signing early this year," Hilke said. "Eastern is very fortunate to acquire a class athlete like Michelle."

Newman, a 5-foot-10, 150-pound forward for Mattoon, has been a member of the Green Wave varsity for four years and will begin her third season as a starter next month. She scored 15 points per game last season and hauled down 7.4 rebounds a contest.

"Fundamentally, Michelle does all the things you want a power forward to do at the college level," Hilke said. "She has good foot speed, great quickness, a good outside shot and is commanding on the boards."

Newman said her forte is rebounding and she hopes to help the Panthers in that regard beginning in 1984. "I know coach Hilke told me it gets pretty rough under the boards, but I think I can take it," said Newman, who is confident of her ability to play at the Division I level.

She said her main reason for choosing Eastern's program for her college basketball career was the university's close proximity to Mattoon.

"I like Eastern because it's close to home and I know most of the players from camp," she said.

Participating in basketball camps on campus the last two summers gave Newman valuable experience that she credits with helping her game. "It improved my game a lot, especially defense. They work on defense a lot at camp."

Newman caught the eye of Eastern's coaches those summers as her outstanding play earned her Most Valuable Player honors at both summer camps.

"She was the most dominant player there the last two years," Hilke said. "She is an extremely bright player with great court sense and truly is a team player."

A standout both on and off the court, Newman was a member of her high school football homecoming court and has been recognized for her ability in sports other than basketball.

She was recently honored for her prowess in volleyball when she was named All-Big 12 Conference for the second time in only two years of play. Prior to playing volleyball, she spent her falls as the No. 1 singles player on the Green Wave tennis team.

She has also participated in track, making IHSA state meet appearances in the 800 meters as a freshman and sophomore and running the 400-meter leg for Mattoon's 800-meter medley relay team in last year's state meet.

At least one school, the University of Missouri, tried to lure Newman to its institution for her ability as a volleyball player. She said Bradley University and "a lot of little schools around here" have also made inquiries, but most have been attracted by her talent on the basketball court.

During her final year on Mattoon's team Newman said she plans to improve one aspect of her play that has been lacking. "I'm going to work really hard on using my left hand--dribbling, shooting and everything."

Newman hails from a family of athletically talented women, including sister Kristen, a sophomore on Lakeland College's basketball team and eighth-grade sister Stephanie, who also plays volleyball and basketball.

Newman's father Allan said he was very happy she chose a school close to home and her mother joked, "This way I can keep an eye on her."