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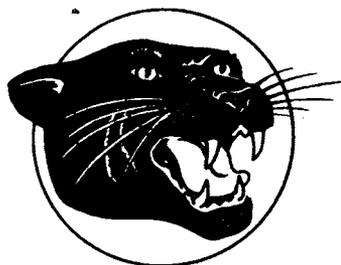
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Panther Sports News

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LS-AS

OFFENSIVE LINE (SECOND IN A SERIES)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Veteran Scott Gilleland (Barrington) is firmly entrenched as Eastern Illinois University's starting center but will be flanked by rookies on both sides.

The Panthers' offensive line is definitely inexperienced but certainly not void of talent.

First year coach Greg Dubinetz took a giant step towards rebuilding a line depleted by graduation when he came up with a couple 250 lb. tackles, Brad Mars (Marshall) and Alvin McMurray (Chicago-Dunbar), during spring drills.

Entering fall camp the No. 1 guards are Mike Kuhn (Downers Grove-North) and Chuck Van Wagoner (Decatur-MacArthur) although their status will be challenged by the return of Bob Norris (Pittsfield) who started on the 1978 championship team as a freshman before transferring to a JC.

Gilleland, though, will anchor the line. A senior who missed several games last year with a broken arm, he "will coordinate a lot of on the field details," says Dubinetz.

"He has young players on both sides so he'll have to take control out there but he's got the experience . . . very smart . . . quite capable."

Mars and McMurray have "unlimited potential" says Dubinetz although they offer contrasting personal characteristics. "Brad is quiet while Alvin is more vocal and enthusiastic but both are big, powerful players . . . McMurray has a little more experience than most of the young linemen (lettered as a freshman) so he's already pretty salty."

Kuhn, a red-shirted freshman, has "good size and strength and is intelligent enough to quickly pick up some of the complicated blocking schemes we have."

Van Wagoner, affiliated with the program for a couple years as a backup, has emerged as a legitimate candidate to start. "Chuck is the type of player you want to see play because he has worked so hard to overcome some shortcomings . . . he has developed into a good drive blocker and his pass protection improved considerably during the spring."

George Tuzil (Schaumburg) is the top backup at center. He started several games when Gilleland was injured last season, and could easily step in if Gilleland is forced to move to another position due to injuries.

Kent Lawrence (Coal Valley-Moline) and Mark Zwilling (Olney-Illinois Valley CC) will backup the guards and tackles. Lawrence is the most experienced guard on the squad but missed winter conditioning and was behind slightly entering fall camp.

"Kent is quick enough to be a good pulling guard but needs work on pass protection," says Dubinetz.

Zwilling transferred from Illinois Valley CC, a strong JC program, but had to "make the transition to our program this past spring. He can play either guard or tackle but right now we're looking at him as a tackle . . .he has good speed for his size."