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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY - Charleston, IL 61920
217/581-5981

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL (May 12, 1987)--Eastern Illinois University's women's track Lady Panthers will be the hosts Thursday-Saturday (May 14-16) for the Gateway Conference Outdoor Track and Field Championship.

Competition begins at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, 10:00 a.m. on Friday and noon on Saturday at O'Brien Stadium, with all 10 conference schools entered. EIU was fifth in last year's meet, while Southern Illinois took top honors.

Six seniors will be making their last appearance for the Lady Panthers: YVONNE BREITWIESER (BELLEVILLE-EAST), JANINE JARRIS (ST. CHARLES), LAUREN LYNCH (ELMHURST-YORK), KERRI SPERRY (LITCHFIELD), VALETA STRICKLAND (CHICAGO-SOUTH SHORE) and DEBBIE ZUBIK (CALUMET CITY (THORNWOOD)).

Strickland, a two-time indoor conference champion in the shot put, is favored to capture her first outdoor title with a pre-meet best of 49-5 3/4, which is also a school record. Zubik enters with the third-best toss of 45-7 1/4. Lynch's school-record time of 2:06.77 for the 800-meter leads the conference, while her 4:28.96 in the 1,500, also a school record, is second in the league.

Sperry is a member of EIU's school-record setting 3,200 relay squad, and Breitwieser has the 10th-best throw in the javelin at 122-5. Jarris, who set a conference record en route to victory in the indoor 1,000-yard run, has missed most of the outdoor season because of a viral infection.

"I think the people who are ranked among the conference's leaders have excellent chances of doing well," said EIU coach John Craft. "Since we're at home they should be even more pumped up. Our people have been competing well this spring and they've gotten better as the season went along."