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06/17/1987 - Jim Maton Goes To Championship

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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY - Charleston, IL 61920
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (JUNE 17)

LS - H+

CHARLESTON, IL.--JIM MATON, Eastern Illinois University

All-American distance runner, will challenge the nation's best in the 800 run at The Athletic Congress Outdoor Track & Field Championship Friday-Saturday (June 25-27) at San Jose (CA) City College.

MATON recently finished third in a school record time 1:46.9 in the 800 run at the NCAA National Championship.

"Now he's going up against the best in the nation . . . collegians, ex-collegians, Olympians, whoever wants to enter," said EIU Coach NEIL MOORE.

The TAC Championship, formerly the AAU meet, would not only be a prestigious meet for MATON to place high but is "kinda key to hooking up with some other meets," Moore said.

"Coming up this summer are the World Championships in Rome, the Pan-American Games, the World University Games, the Olympic Sports Festival for collegians and a USA-England meet.

"If he places in the top three at TAC, he'll have a good chance to make one or more of these other meets because they consider the performance at the TAC first when selecting those squads.

"So even though Jim has had some outstanding meets this spring, this is a great opportunity to be rewarded with some nice perks," Moore said.

The qualifying time for the 800 is 1:47.97, a time MATON has bested by slightly more than a second. "Based on everything I see in Track & Field News, Jim is definitely in the top 10 going in. Except for some of the Californians, the people competing there, though, will be quality people so it's definitely the toughest meet in the country."

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The weather may benefit **MATON** who recorded his 1:46.9 in the heat and humidity at the NCAA Meet in early June in Baton Rouge, LA. Since then he has been training daily in the 90 plus degree heat of central Illinois.

"At Baton Rouge he ran a lot of extra meters because he had to pass on a curve and often was running in lanes two and three rather than one so he's capable of bettering his time," Moore explained.

"But I think it'll take a 1:45 to win it . . .and he's capable. He's been training hard here . . . not slowed by the heat at all.

"Tom (Akers, assistant coach) has him doing speed work and building his strength while maintaining his mileage. Tom has really been the one who's worked with Jim, and has done an outstanding job with him," Moore praised.

"Jim has done his homework, too. I'd just like to see him do well so he can get some international experience this summer and then have a legit shot at the '88 Olympics."