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Panther Sports News

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LS-Hometowns

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University's men's cross country team enters the NCAA District IV Qualifying Meet at Champaign Saturday (Nov. 10) with a realistic approach.

"Our team goal is to run the best race of the season and improve our times that we ran up there before (in the Illinois Invitational on Sept. 29) and have the best team finish Eastern has ever had at the Division I level," said assistant coach Tom Akers.

The Panthers are in their fourth year of Division I competition, and their best performance in the district was 14th in 1981. Eastern was 19th in '82 and 15th last season in the meet.

Akers said the top four teams and first five finishers not members of those squads will advance to the national meet, which will be held Nov. 19 at Penn State.

The district may be one of the best in the nation with NCAA defending national champion Wisconsin entered. "There are a number of outstanding teams who will be there," Akers said.

Individually, Eastern's best chance may be senior Nick Whiteside (Mount Vernon), according to Akers.

"Nick has an outside chance of qualifying for the national meet," said Akers. "He has a very realistic shot at being our top finisher ever in the Division I regional."

To do that, Whiteside must finish no lower than Tim Warneke's 42nd place in 1982.

Others who will represent the Panthers are senior Scott Pillsbury (Petersburg-Porta/Lincoln Land), senior Mitch McClure (Paxton/Parkland), senior Scott Tracy (Downers Grove-North), sophomore Jeff Armstrong (Streator/Danville), freshman Dale Righter (Mattoon) and freshman Darrin Bishop (Quincy).

The 10,000 meter race is scheduled to begin at 11:30 a.m.