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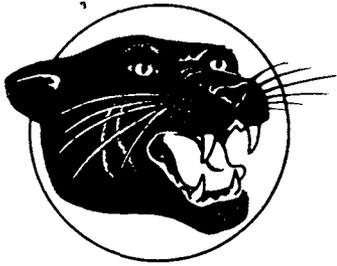
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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Charleston, IL 61920

DAVID KIDWELL, *Sports Information Director*

OFFICE: (217) 581-2920 HOME: (217) 345-4166

Nov. 2, 1981
LS-Hometowns

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Five returning All-Americans including Charleston's Tom Hussey will lead Eastern Illinois University's swimming team into its initial season as a Division I team.

The Panthers will open the season in a coed meet on Friday, Nov. 13 at the University of Illinois.

The first home meet, also coed, is an afternoon contest on Friday, Dec. 4 against Illinois State.

Besides Hussey, three other seniors, Tim Bird (Evanston-Elk Grove), Jim Hall (McHenry), Ted Soltys (Elmhurst-York), and sophomore Greg Lanchester (Carbondale) are back from a team that was sixth in its final NCAA II season.

"We're a relatively small squad but everyone can contribute . . . I wouldn't say we're short on numbers but we don't have any extras either," said Coach Ray Padovan, entering his 16th year after being named NCAA II National 'Coach of the Year'.

"Going to Division I, it's not realistic to think about placing at nationals anymore since the cutoff times are extremely tough . . . if we get someone to qualify fine, but we're setting more realistic goals.

"We want to win the conference . . . the competition among the four teams is pretty even. The week after conference we compete in the Midwest Championship which is a quality group of 15-18 teams . . . these meets are back-to-back and we want to do well both weekends," Padovan said.

Hussey is the most decorated of the returning All-Americans. In three seasons he has earned eight All-American awards. His speciality is the 200 backstroke where he has been A-A all three years and was fourth last season.

Bird has seven A-A awards earning three in the 100 fly. Hall and Soltys each have six A-A awards, predominately in freestyle and free relays. Lanchester swam on two relays that earned A-A.

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"If Dan Grady (St. Anne-Kankakee Eastridge) continues to develop he'll help in the sprint freestyle. With Mike Roessler graduated, Ed Boone (brother of graduated Steve) will be our short breaststroker," Padovan said.

Kurt Simons (Elmhurst-York) and Andy Salm (Rockford-Boylan) are "capable divers . . . they'll have to carry us there."

Miguel Carrion (Quito, Ecuador) of Ecuador will compete in the distance freestyle, backstroke, butterfly and IM. "He's as good in every one of those events as anyone we have . . . not necessarily the best but for a freshman, he's quality material," Padovan said. "A former Eastern swimmer coached down there and recommended him."

Included among the other top newcomers are Kevin Malak (Glenview-New Trier West) in the sprint freestyle, Steve Burggraff (Lakewood, CO) in the breaststroke and middle distance freestyles, David Delisio (Hickory Hills-Stagg) in the butterfly and Jeff Novak (Hoffman Estates) in the freestyle.

Greg Freeback (South Holland-Thornwood) and Barry Rogers (Sterling) will "provide additional depth in the freestyles."