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09/24/1986 - Cocaine A Drug Too Good To Try

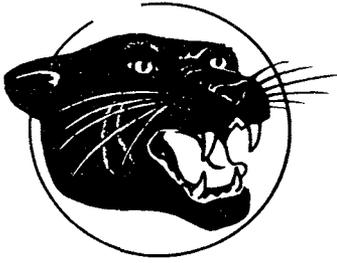
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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Sept. 24)

CHARLESTON, IL.--"The best way to describe cocaine is it's a drug too good to try."

That's the message St. Louis Cardinal all-pro linebacker E.J. Junior conveyed to Eastern Illinois University athletes in a mandatory drug education session Tuesday night (Sept. 23).

EIU President Stan Rives opened the program by saying, "I've always been proud of our athletic program. But never more than tonight for requiring you to attend this meeting."

Suspended for cocaine use four years ago, Junior spoke from experience as his comments captured the attention of nearly 400 athletes.

"If I wouldn't have gotten caught I don't think I ever would have stopped because it was that good. But I could easily have ended up dead. I could have been the first athlete to die from cocaine. I could have been Lenny Bias or Don Rogers.

"But God gave me a second chance. You can't say the same for Lenny Bias or Don Rogers," says Junior, who received a probationary sentence back in 1981.

Junior warned the athletes there is no difference between a hard and soft drug. "A drug is a drug is a drug. You don't need that little edge. Instead you take away that little edge . . . which might be the difference between you and your opponent."

Also speaking was Dr. Richard Newman, a Quincy psychiatrist and certified drug expert who, besides informing the athletes about the effects of drugs on the body's functions, said that 12 years old is the average age where experience with drugs begins.