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03/07/1986 - Baseball Returns From Stellar Season

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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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL (March 7, 1986)--Eastern Illinois University's baseball squad may only be entering its fifth season at the Division One level, but the Panthers have already drawn national attention.

Eastern has six starters and seven pitchers returning from last year's team which went 33-14-1 overall and a perfect 8-0 in the Association of Mid-Continent Universities Conference Gray Division. The Panthers were runners-up in the AMCU post-season tournament.

In the 1986 edition of Baseball America's College Baseball magazine, Eastern is listed as the team to beat in the AMCU and a possible challenger for an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament in May. To quote the publication, "The conference's best bet to crack the 40-team tournament field this season is Eastern Illinois."

EIU head coach Tom McDevitt, who has an eight-year record of 212-120-1 (.638) as the Panther skipper, also likes his squad's chances this season. "I'd like to have an NCAA bid," said McDevitt. "That's what we're going to shoot for. One of our goals is to win the conference and then get an NCAA bid. If we're healthy, I don't mind putting this team up against any team in the midwest. This team has got as much potential as any team I've ever had."

McDevitt, who led Eastern to a second-place finish at the 1981 Division II College World Series and a fifth-place showing at the 1978 Division II College World Series, has one of the nation's premier pitchers on his staff in sophomore right-hander Brian Corn (Elgin). A member of Baseball America's 1986 All-America Checklist, Corn tied for 21st in the country last spring with an average of 10.3 strikeouts per nine innings. He was 6-3 with a 2.83 earned run average while striking out 65 and walking just 32 in 57 1/3 innings.

Corn also compiled impressive numbers while pitching in the Jayhawk League in Kansas last summer. "The Jayhawk League is one of the three best collegiate leagues in the country," said McDevitt, "and Brian went out there and struck out 46 people in only 28 innings with an ERA under 2.00."

The six other returnees on the EIU pitching staff are junior Dave Goodhue (Fithian-Armstrong), senior Jim Wilkins (Country Club Hills-Marist), senior Mike Steinkamp (Lincoln), senior Bill Jose (Salem-Mineral Area CC), senior Paul Skorupa (Brownsville, TX-Barrington) and senior Sam Light (Bartonville-Limestone).

Goodhue led the AMCU a year ago with a 1.89 ERA for 57 innings while posting a 3-1 record with 50 strikeouts and only 19 walks. Wilkins was 4-3 with a 2.20 ERA for 28 2/3 innings and struck out 20 while giving up just six base on balls. Steinkamp tied Corn for

second on the team with six victories while ranking 10th in the conference with an ERA of 4.86 for 50 innings.

As a team, Eastern was fifth in the nation last year with an earned run average of 3.45 for 48 games, and the Panthers tied for ninth in the country with eight shutouts. EIU pitchers also set a school record with 294 strikeouts.

Goodhue was 0-7 last summer in the highly competitive Alaskan League, while Wilkins was unbeaten in five decisions in the Midlothian League. "Goodhue played for the worst team in Alaska," McDevitt said. "I know there were games where he struck out 13 guys and got beat, so he's a lot better pitcher than his record showed.

"There's no question Dave Goodhue will be in my rotation, none whatsoever. He's a good pitcher. Somebody will probably draft Goodhue this spring. Wilkins played for the best semi-pro team in Chicago, the Midlothian White Sox, and he was 5-0."

Panther pitchers should get plenty of support from an offense that batted .321 as a team with 43 home runs and 279 runs batted in. Leading the Eastern hit parade are senior catcher/third baseman Tim Torricelli (Springfield), senior first baseman Kendall Snyder (Raymond-Lincolnwood/Lincoln Land CC), senior designated hitter Bernie Holland (Olympia Fields-Thornwood), senior outfielder Kevin Smith (Peoria-Richwoods), senior shortstop Terry McDevitt (Charleston-Lake Land CC) and junior second baseman Rick Sterioti (Joliet-Catholic).

Torricelli batted .360 last year with a team-high seven homers and 34 RBIs, and Snyder hit .316 with six homers and 36 RBIs. Holland clubbed six homers and drove in 35 runs while batting .283, and Smith hit six homers and had 28 RBIs and a .278 average. McDevitt batted .264 and drove in 21 runs from the No. 2 spot in the batting order, and Sterioti hit .276 with 16 RBIs.

"Torricelli is the best catcher we've got, and he's the best third baseman we've got," McDevitt said. "His manager (in the Jayhawk League) said Torricelli was the best catcher in the league. He's going to be playing somewhere. Snyder is a big-time glove man. Personally, I think he's a professional prospect, and I think he's going to show it this year."

Torricelli batted .373 with nine homers for Beatrice (NB) in the Jayhawk League last summer, while Snyder hit .285 with 10 doubles and six homers for the Springfield Rifles in the Central Illinois Collegiate League. Holland, who also played for Springfield in the CICL, was a one-man wrecking crew as he won the league's triple crown with a .410 average, 11 home runs and a league-record 57 RBIs. Smith, meanwhile, batted .357 for the Anchorage Bucs in the Alaskan League.

"Bernie has got great bat speed, great bat speed," McDevitt stressed. "He's got a lot of potential as a hitter. Eight of his home runs last summer came off left-handed pitchers, and he's a left-handed hitter. He's got arms like telephone poles."

Smith will be moving from right field to center field, replacing Monty Aldrich, who is now a member of the Atlanta Braves' organization. The Panthers' other losses to graduation were left fielder Tim Parker and right-handed pitcher Mick Freed, who is currently a member of the St. Louis Cardinals' organization.

"Kevin is an excellent runner," McDevitt said. "He can run the 60 under 6.6, and he's also got good bat speed. He led his team in hitting at Alaska. He's got speed, and he covers a lot of ground."

Eastern's top newcomer is freshman Stan Royer (Charleston), who was a 10th-round draft choice last year by the Atlanta Braves. Royer will share catching and third-base duties with Torricelli, McDevitt said.

"He's got excellent potential as a hitter," the coach said, "excellent potential as a hitter. He might be as good a hitter as I've ever had as a freshman. If Torricelli catches, I'm going to play Royer at third base. If Royer catches, I'm going to play Torricelli at third base."

Eastern will be going after its 16th straight winning season against a schedule which includes Illinois and Purdue from the Big Ten Conference, Indiana State, Illinois State, Southern Illinois and Bradley from the Missouri Valley Conference and Division II national powers Troy State and Southern Illinois-Edwardsville.

The Panthers will face two-time AMCU tournament champion Southwest Missouri State, Western Illinois and Northern Iowa in conference games. The top two teams from the Gray Division and Blue Division (Cleveland State, Illinois-Chicago and Valparaiso) will advance to the double-elimination AMCU post-season tournament on May 9-11 at Chicago.

The Panthers open their 60-game schedule on March 11 with a 1:00 p.m. double-header against Wisconsin-Parkside before traveling to Murray State for a three-game series on March 15-16.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FINAL 1985 BASEBALL STATISTICS (33-14-1)

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AVE</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>AB</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>RBI</u>	<u>SO</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>SB</u>	<u>PO</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>FDG</u>
Tim Parker, lf/3b	.378	47	119	43	45	11	-	6	28	17	34	4	33	1	-	1.000
Bernie Holland, dh	.283	46	120	26	34	10	1	6	35	21	6	5	-	-	-	-
Monty Aldrich, cf	.396	48	149	43	59	9	3	7	36	14	41	4	76	2	1	.987
Kendall Snyder, lb/3b	.316	47	152	31	48	11	-	6	36	21	12	3	315	24	8	.977
Tim Torricelli, 3b/c	.360	48	139	36	50	8	-	7	34	9	31	2	130	65	10	.951
Kevin Smith, rf/p	.278	47	144	34	40	8	-	6	28	19	13	8	51	4	5	.917
Terry McDevitt, ss	.264	39	125	26	33	8	1	-	21	17	19	6	46	108	14	.917
Rick Sterioti, 2b	.276	48	127	23	35	7	1	-	16	11	25	3	74	102	13	.931
Alswinn Kieboom, c	.268	37	71	11	19	5	-	-	14	14	13	2	179	19	3	.985
Tim Bogar, lf	.351	28	57	15	20	6	-	2	10	12	10	3	26	38	4	.941
Ken Turner, of/dh	.453	34	53	20	24	3	-	2	10	6	6	8	5	-	1	.833
Mike Rooney, of/dh	.243	18	37	3	9	2	1	1	6	5	4	1	19	-	-	1.000
Terry Keigher, lb/of	.200	18	20	3	4	-	-	-	1	2	5	-	42	3	1	.978
Chuck Reno, c	.714	6	7	2	5	2	1	-	4	-	1	-	6	-	-	1.000
Mick Freed, p/dh/lb	.000	13	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	10	13	1	.958
Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	56	3	.958
EIU TOTALS	.321	48	1326	316	425	90	8	43	279	171	222	49	1025	435	64	.958
OPP TOTALS	.233	48	1307	173	304	46	9	29	141	294	139	42	995	432	78	.948

<u>PITCHERS</u>	<u>ERA</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>GS</u>	<u>CG</u>	<u>SHO</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>1P</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>ER</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>SO</u>
Mick Freed, rh	4.07	11	10	6	1	-	7	2	66 1/3	59	34	30	24	60
Dave Goodhue, rh	1.89	12	11	3	1	-	3	1	57	50	30	12	19	50
Paul Skorupa, rh	6.06	14	-	-	-	2	3	0	16 1/3	12	11	11	19	30
Brian Corn, rh	2.83	10	10	4	1	-	6	3	57 1/3	37	30	18	32	65
Jim Wilkins, rh	2.20	10	3	-	-	1	4	3	28 2/3	20	10	7	6	20
Eric Hillman, lh	3.42	9	1	-	-	1	1	2	23 2/3	19	10	9	17	21
Mike Steinkamp, rh	4.86	13	9	3	1	-	6	2	50	65	31	27	12	15
Bill Jose, rh	3.20	9	2	2	1	-	2	1	25 1/3	23	9	9	6	20
Kevin Smith, lh	6.24	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	4 1/3	3	3	3	2	6
Sam Light, rh	3.55	7	1	-	-	2	1	-	12 2/3	16	5	5	2	7
EIU TOTALS	3.45	48	48	18	8	6	33	14	341 2/3	304	173	131	139	294
OPP TOTALS	6.35	48	48	13	1	2	14	33	331 2/3	425	316	234	222	171

SEASON SUMMARY

NCAA I: 22-9-1
 NCAA II: 3-4
 NCAA III: 8-1
 At Home: 20-5
 On Road: 8-8
 Neutral: 5-1-1