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## 04/22/1986 - Womens Tennis Team Gateway Conference Championships

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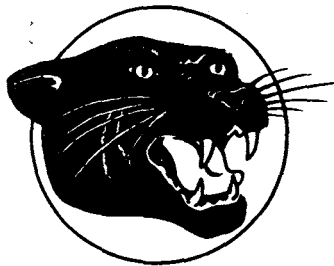
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# **Panther Sports News**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--(April 22, 1986)--The Eastern Illinois women's tennis team is going into the Gateway Conference Championships with the attitude, "What have we got to lose?" The matches, which will be held April 24-26 in Terre Haute, Ind. can only help to improve the Lady Panthers' performance record which currently stands at 7-9.

"We do not have any seeded players, however this may work to our advantage . . . The pressure isn't on us to do well," explains head coach Gail Richard. "Overall, we're the sleeper team, but people shouldn't overlook us . . . We have some tough players."

No. 1 singles LAURI LEHMAN (Belleville-Belleville AC) has faced some tough competition this spring. Her wins were over Suzy Dupont (UNI) by the scores 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, Gayanne Gromm (ISU) 7-6, 2-6, 7-6, and Sue Steuby (SIU-C) 6-4, 6-2. "The competition at No. 1 is very intense . . . She's played some good matches in the last couple meets . . . Her game is peaking and I expect her to do well this weekend," says Richard.

Senior DIANA DURKEE (Lebanon-Belleville AC), No. 2, "has been playing very well this season," states Richard. "She's had a couple excellent wins . . . especially over (University of) Northern Iowa player Renee Kern (6-1, 6-4)." Other wins by Durkee include a 6-1, 6-1 elimination of Illinois State player Dawn Hanson and a defeat over Indiana State's Julie Wake 6-4, 6-7, 7-6.

As a duo, Lehman and Durkee could go "head-to-head," predicts Richard. "They have beaten some stronger teams and then turned around and lost to some weaker teams, but I think that they should have the edge in this weekend's competition because they are playing their last Eastern match."

No. 3 player senior SALLY STOUT (Peoria-Richwoods) has the ability to pull some upsets this weekend, according to Richard. "Sally is peaking in her play right now . . . she had a real good weekend and should be ready for conference." Stout pulled out two impressive wins over the weekend--one over Bradley's Lisa Pettit 7-6, 6-4 and another over Ellen Moellering (SIU-C) 6-3, 6-4.

If junior LORI ZUPANCI (No. 4) (Edwardsville), is able to adjust her style to her competition, she should have a very good weekend. "Lori plays a good base-line game as well as a fine net game . . . She has to be able to adjust that style in order to be effective over her competitors." Two well-executed wins were made last weekend over Indiana's Shelly Allen 6-1, 6-4 and Sheri Knight (SIU-C) 4-6, 6-4, 6-0.

Still learning to adjust to the college level of competition, No. 5 Lisa Stock (Elmhurst-York), freshman, "needs to keep her confidence up . . . Lisa needs to use this conference match to get her feet we." Stock defeated Maria McDonald (UNI) 6-3, 6-3 and lost in a few close matches so far this season.

No. 6 player Maureen McKeon (Northbrook-Glenbrook North), freshman, is used to the "quick point of the doubles game . . . in singles she doesn't wait for the key moment . . . If she's on top of her game this weekend she should do well."

Together, Stout and McKeon have been "up and down" in their play all season. "If they stay aggressive in their play they are capable of doing well this weekend."

Stock teamed up with freshman Beth Stuckey (Belleville-Belleville East) to create a duo which started off strong, but has since "not played as consistently as possible . . . They are starting to get a little more aggressive again," notes Richard. Strong wins for this team include a 3-6, 7-6, 6-4 defeat over a duo from Illinois State and a 6-3, 6-4 win over a strong Bradley pair.

"The girls are ready for conference," says Richard, "mainly because they know they have nothing to lose and everything to gain."