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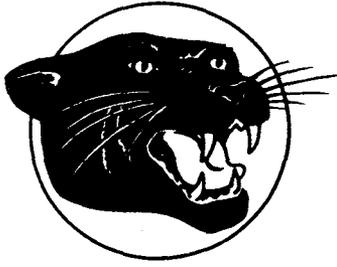
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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL (April 28, 1986) -- The Eastern Illinois men's track team will have to be in top form as they compete in the Mid-Continent conference meet this weekend in Macomb, Illinois.

The reason Eastern will have to be in top form is because Northern Iowa is the favorite to win the conference championship this year. "No doubt about it, that Northern Iowa is the favorite," said Eastern head coach Neil Moore. "It will probably come down to us and Western Illinois for second," Moore said.

Eastern is plagued by injuries at this point in the season. "Our injuries haven't just come on in the last week, they have been accumulating all season," said Moore. "And almost all of our injured competitors were potential scorers in the conference meet."

Eastern will rely on its throwers and a few runners to carry the team through this year's conference showdown.

Jim Maton (SHELBYVILLE) is expected to carry a big load in the running events. Maton is coming off an outstanding weekend, in which he placed seventh in the 800 meter run at the prestigious Drake Relays. Maton has a time of 1:50.95.

Another runner expected to play a large role in this weekend's meet is freshman Ian Isaacs (NORTH AURORA). Isaacs has led the Panthers all season in the sprint events.

Dan Matas (OAK PARK) and Larry Thoennissen (MORTON) are expected to lead the Panthers in the weight events.

"Northern Iowa has a lot of depth," said Eastern assistant coach Tom Akers. "We'll have to have some miracle performances by our freshmen to contend for the title," added Moore.