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08/08/1986 - Defensive Line

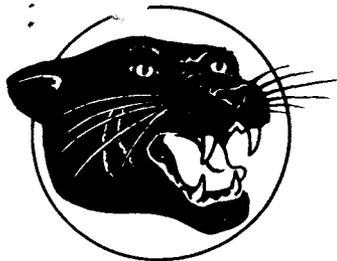
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Panther Sports News

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DEFENSIVE LINE

(Third in a Series)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (August 8, 1986)

CHARLESTON, IL.--"We have a lot of competition with no one head and shoulders above the rest." So says Bill Bye, Eastern Illinois University's defensive line coach, who has three weeks of fall camp to find three starters among a half dozen legitimate candidates.

If anyone seems to have an edge it would be John Jurkovic (Calumet City-Thornton Fr. North), a 6-2, 260 sophomore end who lettered as a frosh.

He appeared in eight games last year getting 20 tackles and "exhibited outstanding potential," says Bye. "He has excellent leadership qualities also."

Scott Pilkerton (LaMesa, CA-Helix/Grossmount CC) and Dave Lewandowski (Elmwood Park-Fenwick) are the two most likely competing for the other starting end position.

Lewandowski, just a junior, has an edge in size at 6-3, 250 to Pilkerton's 6-2, 225 but is also coming off knee surgery which sidelined him for most of the '85 season.

"Dave has great football instincts and if he's healthy will play a lot. Scott has good quickness and played well once he got an opportunity last year," said Bye.

Pilkerton led the team with eight tackles for loss and was second with six QB sacks.

Carl Parker (Evanston), a junior, started every game last year, four inside at nose guard and seven as an end. "Carl is competing for an end

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spot this year and has more experience than any returning lineman," says Bye. "He is very intelligent . . . reacts to plays real well. But at 5-10 is at a disadvantage because of size."

Aaron Thomas (Markham-Tinley Park/Moraine Valley CC) will probably start at nose guard unless one of the end candidates is shifted inside.

The segment's only new JC transfer, Ike Freeman (Long Beach, CA-Long Beach CC), is a nose guard but Bye is hesitant to project him into the lineup since he was not here for spring practice.

"Ike is quick and rushes well but, like all transfers, will need time to learn the system," he said.

Sophomore Jeff Rolson (Farmer City-F.-Mansfield), a 260 lber. who can bench 400 plus pounds, has shown "good improvement. He played in short yardage and goalline situations and will play if he continues the improvement he made during the spring."

Three redshirt freshmen who will have an opportunity are Eddie Doxy (Chicago Heights-Bloom), Mike Bollan (Villa Park-Willowbrook) and Matt Murphy (Marshall).

Of those three, Doxy may have the best chance to see action early in the year. "Eddie rushes the passer well and has good football instincts," says Bye.

"We're probably as deep as we've been since I've been here. I think we have two legitimate players at each spot and three in some cases."