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12/11/1986 - EIU's Football Panthers Remain State's Most Successful I-A or I-AA Team Payton, Marable, Latu, Stevenson

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Panther Sports News

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY - Charleston, IL 61920
217/581-5981

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Dec. 11)

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CHARLESTON, IL.--Eastern Illinois University's football Panthers remain as the state's most successful I-A or I-AA team over the past several years.

The Panthers reached the NCAA I-AA playoff quarterfinals before being eliminated by Eastern Kentucky, 24-22, recently. EIU concluded with an 11-2 record tying the 1982 team for second most wins in a season, and finished with a No. 3 ranking in the final I-AA poll.

This is the fifth time in the last nine years EIU has been in post season play averaging nearly 9-3 p/year with a combined record of 79-29-1. All nine seasons have been above .500.

Eastern also won the Gateway Conference championship with a 5-1 record, the sixth time in seven years EIU has won a league title.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SEASON WRAPUPS LISTED BY HOMETOWNS ON OFFENSIVE

BACKS:

NAPERVILLE (CENTRAL): QB SEAN PAYTON, senior quarterback, finished as the No. 3 all-time NCAA passer, regardless of division, with 10,655 yards .. .led NCAA I-AA with 3456 yards this year and was No.2 in total offense with 308.8 p/game . . . he was the Gateway Conference Offensive 'Player of the Year' for the second time in his career . . .three time 1st Team All-Conference .. .in 33 starts had 20 games over 300 yards, including one over 500 and five over 400. . . holds 14 of EIU's 15 major passing and total offense records.

CHICAGO (SCHURZ): RB JAMES MARABLE, sophomore running back operating out of a single back set, earned 2nd Team All-Gateway Conference honors as he ran for 112.7 all purpose yards p/game .. .he had 62 yards p/game rushing and now has 842 yards in two seasons . . . he scored 16 TDs, just one short of the EIU season record, and T8th for most TDs among NCAA I-AA schools.

THOUSAND OAKS, CA (MOORPARK CC: UASI LATU, junior running back, rushed for 174 yards in a backup role for the Panthers . . .appeared in eight games averaging 21.8 yards p/game, 4.7 p/carry, and scored one TD with a long run of 20 yards vs. Southern Illinois.

CHICAGO (OAK PARK-RIVER FOREST): BEN STEVENSON, sophomore running back, appeared in four games rushing for 72 yards, 4.0 yards p/carry and one TD . . .his long run was 18 yards vs. Western Illinois.