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Panther Sports News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--The Eastern Illinois University 'Brighten O'Brien' athletic fund drive has topped the \$400,000 figure nearing its goal of \$440,000.

At a steering committee meeting Wednesday night, EIU athletic director R. C. Johnson reported that the drive had passed the 92% mark with \$406,186 pledged. The money will be spent for capital improvements at O'Brien stadium.

Major plans call for the installation of lights and a new artificial track and renovation of the pressbox.

"We only need to raise \$33,814," said Johnson, "so the steering committee has decided to ask every Panther Club member to give an additional \$30 beyond what was previously pledged for this year.

"A letter was sent to nearly 1000 Panther Club members. Our original objective was to conclude this drive by the end of February but now we want to wrap it up by the end of the year.

"Our plans are still to have the lights, track and pressbox completed by next fall. We are hoping to be able to work on all three projects at the same time next summer," Johnson explained.

Johnson also said nearly 200 individuals and/or corporations have donated towards the fund drive. "I again believe that indicates a broad based support for our athletic program. The money has not just come from a few large donors. Everyone is again contributing what they can, and speaking for the steering committee we are very appreciative."

Secretary of State and EIU graduate Jim Edgar is the national chairman for the fund drive. Other steering committee members are Murray Choate and J. W. Oglesby of Charleston, Roger Dettro and Dan Marvin of Mattoon, Sonny Greco and Frank Vala of Springfield, Allan Heath and Dave Musgrave of Robinson, Carl Koerner of Effingham, and Ray Suddarth of Fairfield.