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### 08/08/1984 - The Quarterbackers

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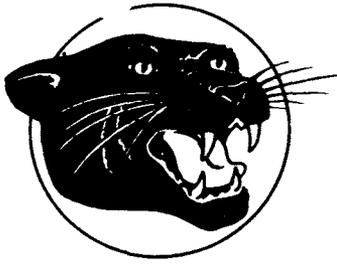
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# Panther Sports News

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Aug. 8, 1984  
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## THE QUARTERBACKERS (FIRST IN A SERIES)

CHARLESTON, IL--If Eastern Illinois University's quarterback competition was a horse race, the two leading participants, Sean Payton and John Rafferty, would be entered in the program as 1 and 1A.

The Panthers are fortunate to have depth at this critical position as these two sophomores (both were awarded another year's eligibility due to a retroactive NCAA regulation) waged a close duel during the spring.

Eastern opens the season Saturday, Sept. 1 in a non-conference game at Grand Valley State just outside Grand Rapids, MI. The first home game is Sept. 15 against Northeast Missouri.

EIU head coach Al Molde says Payton (Naperville-Central) is "clearly No. 1 but Rafferty (Mt. Carmel) is not so far behind that he couldn't catch up. I know I'd feel comfortable with either in there."

At the beginning of last season it appeared Rafferty was solid as the No. 1 QB for the next three seasons. An academic all-conference pick, his stats were respectable with 1504 passing yards and 55.6% completions.

However, all ten of his TD passes came in the first five games. He slumped some in the second half of the season throwing 11 interceptions and averaging less than 100 yards a game.

Payton sparkled in a sub role earning Mid-Continent 'player of the week' honors in the Western Kentucky season finale and then coming off the bench to almost lead the Panthers to a come-from-behind victory in the Indiana State playoff game.

"Sean progressed quite a bit the latter half of the season," says Molde. "He made the most of his opportunity . . . then was more impressive in the spring in

THE QUARTERBACKS  
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regards to pass completions and execution.

"He still needs work on consistency and staying in control of game situations because he has a tendency to get too excited . . . although he was improved in the spring game."

Against Western Kentucky Payton was 7-15-1 for 150 yards passing, threw a 57 yard TD strike to Jerry Wright and ran for touchdowns of two and 13 yards.

"John is very steady but struggled a bit in the spring with his passing. I know he got picked off more than he wanted so he also needs to work on consistency. We know he's capable and with both of these young men just sophomores, we should be pretty solid in the near future," Molde said.

Backing up Payton and Rafferty will be senior Gary Scott (Ingleside, CA-Los Angeles City CC), who subbed briefly last season, and Pat Carroll (Dundee), a red-shirt freshman.