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11/20/1984 - Sean Payton Player of the Year

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Panther Sports News

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LS-Hometown

21

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLESTON, IL--Eastern Illinois University quarterback Sean Payton (Naperville-Central) has been chosen Mid-Continent Conference 'Player of the Year'.

Just a sophomore, Payton put on an incredible passing performance this fall leading the Panthers to a seventh straight winning season (6-5) and a share of the MCC championship, the fifth straight year EIU has either won or tied for the league crown.

He set nine EIU game and season records, 16 Mid-Continent records and is the No. 2 quarterback in NCAA I-AA in several categories.

His 1984 stats are 270-473-15 passing for 3483 yards and 28 TDs, averaging just under 350 yards per game, which are some astonishing totals for his first full year of collegiate football.

Payton's most noteworthy school records are for passing yardage in a game (486) and season (3843), and touchdowns in a season (28). Among NCAA I-AA quarterbacks, he is No. 2 in the nation for yardage, TD passes and total offense (333 yards per game).

He threw for 373 yards in the first half against Western Kentucky in the season finale 50-19 win, and that yardage figure eclipses the known I-AA record for most yardage in a half.

He threw for over 300 yards in nine of the 11 games and was over 400 in the last three. Payton threw TD passes in all but one game with a high of five in the final win over Western Kentucky.

"I thought we'd throw more this year but I don't think anyone expected us to throw this much . . . myself included. But for a quarterback it feels good to open it up," Payton said.

"Even though teams knew we were going to throw, we didn't face that many tough blitzes so were able to have quite a bit of success . . . plus I had four excellent receivers and the offensive line kept improving game after game. By the end of the year I had considerable time to set up.

-more-

"Also, I felt confident of my ability to move the team . . . either running or passing the ball. In high school we used more play action and sprint out while here I had to learn to drop back so that was a transition but I feel comfortable with that now," Payton commented.

With two years left he says his personal goals are to improve his arm strength and to read defenses better. "I think all quarterbacks believe they constantly need work on reading defenses . . . we saw several different looks this year on defense, and the way to be better is to watch a lot of film to familiarize yourself with what's happening on the field."

SEAN PAYTON

<u>OPPONENT</u>	<u>CPL</u>	<u>ATT</u>	<u>INT</u>	<u>YDS</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>TD</u>	<u>RUSH</u>	<u>TD</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Grand Valley State	21	31	-	325	.677	3	-28	-	297
Indiana State	32	56	2	323	.554	2	16	-	339
Northeast Missouri	23	41	1	326	.561	3	-48	-	278
Toledo	27	48	1	252	.563	1	15	1	267
Ferris State	14	28	0	313	.500	3	-4	-	309
Illinois State	24	43	4	345	.558	1	-16	1	329
Southern Illinois	27	54	3	384	.500	4	-30	1	370
Western Illinois	13	30	-	216	.433	-	-56	1	160
Southwest Missouri	33	48	3	486	.688	3	12	-	498
Northern Iowa	34	58	1	412	.586	3	-23	-	389
Western Kentucky	22	36	0	461	.611	5	-20	-	441
TOTAL	270	473	15	3843	.571	28	-182	4	3661