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08/05/1986 - Quarterback Sean Payton

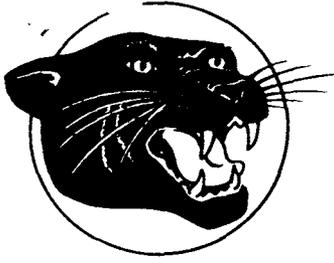
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Panther Sports News

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QUARTERBACKS

(First of a Series)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (August 5, 1986)

CHARLESTON, IL.--When your quarterback is bidding to become only the fifth collegian to throw for over 10,000 yards, there's no secret as to who the offense will revolve around.

That's the case at Eastern Illinois University where two-time Honorable Mention All-American Sean Payton is on target to join an exclusive group.

The Naperville (Central HS) senior has 7199 yards, needing just 2801 to join the likes of Neil Lomax and Doug Flutie in the 10,000 yard category. (NOTE - All-Time Top Ten Listed at the End of the Release)

"There's no question he's the most highly visible player on the team," says coach Al Molde, "and if we're to do well, it's because Sean is our offensive leader.

"He's been on campus all summer . . .lifted weights, thrown everyday in preparation for the season. Football has been his life all summer long . . . he eats, sleeps and thinks football."

Besides the AP All-American honors, he has twice been named all-conference earning Player of the Year honors in 1984 and ESPN 'Player of the Week' honors when he threw for a school record 509 yards.

He's also had four games over 400 yards, 13 above 300 and holds 14 school records. The only passing and total offense mark he does not have is for TD passes in a game.

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Molde said he and Payton have discussed the individual accomplishments. "If it (10,000 yards) happens, that's great. But Sean wants the team to have a great year . . . that's most important.

"I'm sure he'd like a chance at pro ball. Quarterback is the toughest position to make but how can you argue with what he's accomplished. I think Payton is equal to several playing right now," Molde.

"The pros have shown an interest but how much more they show will be reflected by the overall team success."

Since Payton is a veteran, Molde said the same approach will be taken toward the offense. "Offensively, we'll operate the same. We'll remain predominantly a passing team although will implement the running game a bit more when a ball control situation is necessary."

With veteran backup John Rafferty graduated, the slot behind Payton will be filled by junior Pat Carroll (Dundee). "Pat made a lot of progress last spring leading his teammates to a win in the spring game.

"He has made great strides in understanding our offense, has a strong arm and knows with Sean No. 1 that he can only do his best and push Sean as much as possible."

Three freshmen recruits are Eric Arnold (Pekin), John Curtis (Fairfield, OH) and Burgess Watts (Warrenville-Wheaton Central). "I think all three have the potential to play for us at some point, and one will make the traveling squad this year," Molde explained.

NCAA ALL-TIME ALL-DIVISIONS TOP 10 PASSERS

1. Neil Lomax (Portland State, 1977-80)	13,220
2. Willie Totten (Mississippi Valley, 1982-85)	12,771
3. Doug Flutie (Boston College, 1981-84)	10,579
4. Brian McClure (Bowling Green, 1982-85)	10,280
5. Ben Bennett (Duke, 1980-83)	9614
6. Keith Bishop (Illinois Wesleyan, 1981, 83-85)	9579
7. Jim McMahan (Brigham Young, 1977-78, 80-81)	9536
8. Dave Geisler (Wisconsin-Stevens Point, 1982-85)	9518
9. John Elway (Stanford, 1979-82)	9349
10. Ken Hobart (Idaho, 1980-83)	9300