

★ JIM EVERETT ★

Albuquerque and the National Football League apparently haven't seen the end of powerful Jim Everett, one of the Duke City's finest quarterbacks ever. The durable Everett has a rosy future as premier signal caller for the New Orleans Saints.

Then a lanky two-way star at quarterback and safety, Everett is remembered for his storied senior season when he led coach Jerry Hall's unbeaten Eldorado High School Eagles to the 1980 Class AAAA state football championship. The Eagles toppled Clovis, 14-11, in the title game.

Fifteen years and more than 40,000 yards later -- with an all-Big Ten season in 1984 at Purdue University for good measure -- Everett continues his five-star NFL career as a premier passer.

Tonight, Everett, 32, who now calls Coto de Caza, Calif., his home, becomes the 55th to be inducted into the Albuquerque Sports Hall of Fame. He's one of the youngest ever to enter the hall.

Everett is a 10-year NFL veteran who was an all-Pro selection in 1990. He has passed for 31,284 yards (18th all-time NFL) and 212 touchdowns (28th). He's played eight seasons with the Los Angeles Rams; the last two with the Saints.

Following Joe Montana's retirement, only Miami's Dan Marino and Denver's John Elway rank ahead of Everett in 3,000 yard-plus seasons; Marino with 11, Elway 10 and Everett seven. When Montana retired after illustrious seasons at San Francisco and Kansas City, he had eight 3,000-yard seasons.

"I had productive seasons in baseball with the Roadrunner Little League as well as the Young America Football League long before I played at Eldorado," Everett said. "That's where my career started.

"The amazing part was that I played on teams that lost only four games in four seasons at Eldorado. We were 13-0 in my senior year; 12-1 as a junior; 7-3 as a sophomore and 7-0 during my freshman year with the B team."

Everett, who still buys uniforms in support of the Roadrunner Little Leaguers, remembers pitching, playing third base, shortstop, second base and the outfield with the Majors, the Indians, the Oilers and the A's.

He played tackle on offense and defense during his early YAFL days with the Irish and the Tar Heels. He was quarterback for the Cougars when he was in the eighth grade.

"The turning point of my career was my sophomore season at Purdue University," Everett said. "It was then that I fully understood the pro offense.

My quarterback coaches, Jim Colletto and Bo Spoo, were responsible for that."

Everett was born in Emporia, Kan., then lived briefly in Washington, D.C. When he was in the third grade, the family moved to Albuquerque, as his father became a professor at the University of New Mexico. Everett attended Collett Park Elementary School and Hoover Middle School before enrolling at Eldorado.

Everett said Jim Young, formerly at Arizona, recruited him at Purdue. Houston selected Everett in the first round of the NFL draft after his senior college season. He refused to report to the Oilers, who then had quarterback Warren Moon running the show. The Oilers traded Everett to the Rams for a starting guard and three draft picks.

After a half-season stint on the bench, Everett replaced an injured Bart Bratowski as starting quarterback. He threw eight TD passes and completed 73 for 1,018 yards to lead the Rams to a runner-up spot behind the 49ers in the NFL West.

Everett remained the Rams' No. 1 quarterback until 1993 when Los Angeles finished fourth in the NFL West. Traded to New Orleans for a seventh-round draft pick in early 1994, Everett found new life with the Saints.

In 1994 he completed 346 passes for 3,855 yards and 22 TDs as coach Jim Mora's team finished second in the NFC West at 7-9. Last fall Everett completed 346 passes for 3,771 yards and 25 TDs.

In 1985 the 6-foot-5 Everett was sixth in the voting for the Heisman Trophy as a senior at Purdue where he led the NCAA in passing offense with 3,651 yards (285 of 450 completions for 23 TD and only 11 interceptions). His bullet arm still holds an all-time Purdue record with a .593 career completion percentage, 572 of 965. But, his total passing yardage of 7,411 now is third behind Mark Hermann. He threw for 43 career touchdowns, yet he was a regular Purdue starter only his last two years.

Everett's senior passing marks still rank No.2 in Big 10 history and No. 6 in NCAA annals. He played in the Hula Bowl, but missed the Senior Bowl and Blue-Gray Game because of an arm injury. He had a streak of 243 passes in 22 quarters without an interception.

Everett had a star-studded career at Purdue. He was a two-time Academic All-American and was the Associated Press' third team All-American quarterback in 1985. His best collegiate day was 35-of-55 passes for 497 yards and 2 TDs against Ohio State in 1985. He also had 27-of-47 for 464 yards and 4 TDs against Illinois and was 27-of-49 for 368 yards and 3 TDs against Notre Dame.