

New coach weighs football squad

Vic Wallace, the first-year head coach of the William Jewell College Cardinals, will spend his training camp preparing his team for the Bird Bowl, a game-type scrimmage to be held at Greene Stadium Aug. 29th at 7:30 p.m.

Wallace spent last year as an assistant coach of Texas Tech University in the famed Southwest Conference. He comes to a team that was 10-0-1 last year and carried a co-champion status in the Heart of America Conference.

The Cardinals will have a host of returning lettermen in hopes of repeating their fine season of 1980. However, Wallace says, "I am a new head coach, we have a new staff, I will present changes in offense and defensive patterns. As of right now, no one is assured of a starting position. Every year, in college or professional teams, we see starters return to camp only to find themselves beaten out of a job. The same thing could happen here".

The importance of the Bird Bowl is underscored by Wallace as being the last game-type scrimmage before the season opener with Mid-America Nazarene Sept. 5. It is also the big chance to play under the lights.

"Out of this game, and after a coaches' meeting, we will set our depth chart for the Mid-America game," says Wallace.

The Bird Bowl will also feature the Liberty Senior High School Bluejays in the same type of scrimmage and, knowing that the proceeds will go to

obtain new lights for Greene Stadium, Wallace remarks: "It will be super for the players and fans alike. I have never seen a community like Liberty. Their reactions to needy projects is remarkable."

Wallace was hesitant to agree that William Jewell and Baker University, of Baldwin City, Kan. should be rated of co-favorites, even though they were co-champions last year.

"It will be a dog fight for season honors," admits Wallace.

Dave Cunningham, last year's All American fullback, was graduated and is currently on the pre-season roster of the Kansas City Chiefs, but Coach Wallace will take a long look at several returning Cardinals who excelled in their positions last year.

On offense, quarterback Kelly Groom returns for his junior season and is expected to be the signal caller.

Last year, Groom completed 136 passes out of 262 attempts for 1,939 yards. His completions averaged 13.9 yards per catch.

Three of his top receivers also will return. Mike McGill, Scott Martin and Marty Hensley all had outstanding seasons. McGill, a senior this year, had 46 receptions for 844 yards and an average of 13.9 yards a catch to go along with seven touchdowns. His leadership qualities also are of equal importance to the team.

Martin, a returning sophomore, had 29 receptions, good for 407 yards and five touchdowns, and was an outstanding tight end.



VICTOR WALLACE
coach is optimistic

Hensley, a wide receiver, had 14 receptions, good for 173 yards and 15.5 yards per completion. He was instrumental in the success of the Cardinals.

Senior Vic Davolt, and sophomores Fernandes Gillespie and Steve Hedges are hopeful returnees and offer a varied rushing

attack coupled with plenty of speed and desire in leading the attack, but they will find some newcomers who have hopes of unseating them before the season ends.

Davolt carried the football 122 times for 482 yards and nine touchdowns, and as a senior, will be the man to look at in crucial yardage

situations.

Gillespie handled 112 carries, good for 450 yards and a 4.2-yard-per-carry average. Hedges scampered 55 times for 383 yards, and an amazing 6.7-yard average per carry.

In addition, Jerry Burch, a place-kicker, returns for his sophomore year with outstanding statistics. Last season, Burch was successful on 46 out of 49 point after touchdown tries, and booted 11 of 22 field goal attempts for 49 season points. His 49-yard fieldgoal with three seconds remaining was good for a tie score with Baker and enabled the Cardinals to attain co-champion status.

Coach Wallace has his concerns however. Jeff McGuire, last year's outstanding freshman punter, suffered an injury while swimming that required surgery. His status is questionable going into the season. McGuire punted the ball 47 times last season for 2,010 yards, an average of 42.7 yards, and was instrumental in getting great position for the Cardinals. Wallace admits that a healthy McGuire is important.

If Coach Wallace wants more assurance, he needs only to look at defensive returnees.

Guy Weber, a junior defensive tackle, was a stalwart on defense with 16 unassisted tackles and 125 assists. Weber also led the team in quarterback sacks.

Helping to bolster the line is Wayne Schmidt at left guard. The senior had eight unassisted tackles and 56 assists.

The defensive backfield is loaded with capable lettermen

Wendell McGill, one of the top linebackers in the conference, is a senior returnee. He had four sacks, 16 solo tackles and 125 assists and is rated a good bet for conference honors as well as possible All American standing. In fact, there are five returnee linebackers which should make the sober Wallace grin.

Steve Mattingly, junior linebacker with three sacks, 16 solos and 102 assists last year, will be alongside Gary Ainsworth, senior, whose stats reads nine solos, 127 assists and one sack.

Sophomore Troy Mitchess and junior Jerry Burchett, with 57 defensive assists between them, will no doubt see a lot of time in opponents backfields.

Backing them up are two capable cornerbacks.

Junior Armstrong had 16 solo tackles from his spot along with 40 tackles, and David Lewis, while only a sophomore this season, showed his abilities with 18 individual tackles along with 29 assists.

Jan Redmond, who last year was injured, is expected to fight for a starting defensive back position as all signs show the sophomore is healthy. Jewell opponents also must be aware of a crop of freshmen who are to be in camp as well as some junior college transfers that have sound credentials one hopes of grabbing starting assignments for the Cardinals.