

Cardinals hop to final four; face Austin

by Scott Burton

William Jewell and Austin College are two of four teams remaining in the NAIA Division II Football Playoffs. Following Saturday's action, the matchup for a new national champion will come into focus.

The Cardinals travel to Sherman, Tex. to challenge Austin, while the other contest has Concordia, Minn., 10-0-1, challenging Westminster, Pa., 10-0-0.

"It's been hectic in Sherman," said Austin defensive coach Ralph McCord. "It's the farthest we've been in post-season play and we're just plain excited about it!"

The Kangaroos, 10-1, beat Panhandle State Nov. 21 to advance to the semifinals. "We're expecting our toughest game of the year," added McCord. "Jewell's got a little bigger lineup, but we've played fairly well our last five or six games."

William Jewell, under first-year coach Vic Wallace, has posted an 11-0 mark and is coming off a 19-14 win over defending National Champion Pacific Lutheran. "It's the biggest win of my life," said a smiling Wallace. "But we've got to move on to another football game."

Austin, ranked sixth in the final NAIA Division II poll, is a member of the Texas Intercollegiate Athletic Conference along with Lubbock Christian, Sul Ross State, Tarleton State, Trinity and McMurry. The Kangaroos are making their second playoff appearance in three years.

Bethany, Kan. defeated Austin 35-24 in the quarterfinal round of the 1979 playoffs.

"We're anticipating a rugged football game," said head coach Larry Kramer. "Jewell's got a good ballclub. They're skilled offensively and defensively. They've got a very well-coached team."

The Cardinals are making their second playoff appearance in as many years. Wilmington, Ohio defeated Jewell 31-17 in semi-

lace, "and we've got to do some things right."

Kramer echoes Wallace on the Austin side of things. "Hey, Jewell held Pacific Lutheran to 24 yards on 30 carries. You can talk about our defense, but you'd better talk about Jewell's solidness as well."

Cardinal quarterback Kelly Groom passed for 150 yards and two touchdowns versus

can boast about. Placekicker Gene Brannum booted a 54-yard field goal in the Panhandle contest and he's averaging 42 yards per punt on the season. "He's one of the best," said Kramer. "He's missed a few more field goals on paper, but anytime you ask a guy to kick from 40 yards out you've got to expect a few more misses and some big three-pointers."

William Jewell and Austin meet for the first time in their schools' history. Kramer has posted a 10-year record of 45-58-4.

"It's hard to say what can happen," said Kramer. "We respect William Jewell. You've got to respect anybody who knocks off the number one team."

The Cardinals, under the direction of Groom, have posted a 21-1-1 record over the past two seasons. Groom, a LaGrange, Mo. native, was named the Offensive Player of the Game against Pacific Lutheran.

"We've seen game films and he looks like a very fine athlete," said Kramer. "He's not your everyday quarterback. He doesn't look impressive, but when the game's over he's used his smarts and talent to beat you."

"Scoop" Gillespie and Steve Hodges lead a backfield that's been plagued by injuries all season. Gillespie and Hodges each missed two games earlier in the year due to injury.

Defensively, the Cardinals are led by lineman Guy Weber's 10 quarterback sacks. Linebackers Tim Johnson, Wendell McGill and Gary Ainsworth have helped hold opponents to eight points per outing.

the games at-a-glance

Date: December 5
Kickoff: 1 p.m. (CST)
Radio: KWPB 91.9 and KDSX 95.0 (Tex.)
Tickets: sellout crowd of 3300
Last year's score: no previous meeting
STUDENT'S pick: William Jewell by 10
Series: no previous meeting
Coaches: Larry Kramer, **Austin College:** 45-58-4; Vic Wallace, **William Jewell:** 11-0.
Last year's record: Austin College 8-2; William Jewell 10-1-1.

Last week's results: Austin 27, Panhandle St. 16; William Jewell 19, Pacific Lutheran 14.

What to watch: The Kangaroos depend on quarterback Larry Schillings. He's completed over 50 percent of his aeriels for 1900 yards and 20 touchdowns. Receiver Clay Oliphant has hauled in 51 receptions and 11 touchdowns. Placekicker Gene Brannum booted a 54-yard field goal versus Panhandle. Defensive back Chris Luper has seven interceptions.

final play one year ago.

"We're working hard on our punting game," said Wallace. "We can't afford to have a punt blocked. We've been spending 20 to 30 minutes a day with the punters."

The Austin defense held Panhandle State to 37 yards rushing on 29 carries two weeks ago. "They're sound defensively," said Wal-

Pac. Lutheran, but Kangaroo quarterback Larry Schillings connected on 15 of 31 for 208 yards versus Panhandle. "We've got to stop Schillings," said Wallace. "Anytime you face a KODAK First Team All-American you can bet it's going to be tough."

Wallace is concerned with a consistent kicking game, but that's one category Austin