

# Jewell has No. 1 sparkle in NAIA poll

By Bill Richardson  
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It's early and the defending champion hasn't begun to fight. But William Jewell has already landed a couple of solid ticks and moved to the top of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II football rankings.

The Cardinals, who lost to Linfield in the NAIA Division II title game last fall and were ranked No. 2 a in pre-season poll, leaped over the Oregon team on the basis of victories over NAIA Division I teams Evangel and Missouri Western. Linfield opens its season this week.

Jewell Coach Vic Wallace, who told his team about the No. 1 ranking after practice Wednesday in Liberty, was happy but understandably wary.

"I'm glad we're No. 1, but I don't think it means anything this time of year," Wallace said. "We're just a target for people. The main thing is to be in the top eight at the end of the year and in the playoffs. This is a real credit to our athletic program, the school, the boosters and the community. It means more to them than the team."

Jewell, which suffered a midseason upset to Mid-America Nazarene last year while ranked No. 1, now defends its top position against a team that owns the NAIA's longest current losing streak at 24 games. The Cardinals play Culver-Stockton in their Heart of America Conference opener Saturday in Canton, Mo.

"There's no question people are out to shoot us down," Jewell quarterback Scott Sandridge said. "But they were trying to do that anyway because we played in the championship game last year. You have to work extra hard when you play a team like Culver-Stockton that is supposed to be easy. You have to get mentally prepared. We probably weren't mentally prepared when we played Mid-America last year."

Three Kansas schools, all with 1-0 records, made the NAIA Division II top 20. Baker was ranked No. 9, Benedictine No. 13 and Bethany tied with Sul Ross State of Texas for No. 17.

Defending champion Central State (Okla.), 2-0, was ranked No. 1 in NAIA Division I. Missouri Southern, 2-0, is tied with Wofford (S.C.), 1-0, for No. 5; Pittsburg State, 2-0, is No. 8 and Fort Hays State, 2-0, is No. 15.