

Baker Uses Powerful Offense As Its Best Defensive Strategy

By Bill Richardson
A Member of the Sports Staff

At halftime, Baker led William Jewell 24-21. The final score was 53-21. Coach Joe Girardi, who is quite a talker, nevertheless took no credit for inspirational oratory, or a major switch in the game plan.

"Our big adjustment at halftime was to resolve to do better, to play the kind of football we're capable of playing," said Girardi after his Wildcats had ended Jewell's unbeaten season before 6,000 fans in Baldwin City, Kan., Saturday night.

"We knew if we didn't play well, they'd run us off the field with their offense. That was our game plan, to keep their offense off the field. They never really had a chance to run it in the second half."

With Rod Froebe directing a versatile attack as the quarterback, Baker riddled Jewell's defense in the second half on scoring drives of 73, 62, 70 and 44 yards. The Wildcats relied on big plays in the first half, as running back Frank Schroeder scored on a 32-yard run and an 85-yard kickoff return.

"Schroeder is playing on a knee I wouldn't even walk on," said Girardi. "He has had surgery three times, and has had both knees operated on."

The defeat probably will cost Jewell its No. 2 ranking in the NAIA Division II football poll, and possibly a playoff spot. The Cardinals also are in a battle for first place in the Heart of America Conference. They are tied with Baker at 4-1. The H of A could have a five-way tie for the title if Ottawa, 3-2, beats Baker and Graceland, 3-2, defeats Jewell in final league games Saturday. Missouri Valley has finished conference play at 4-2.

Baker, with a 6-3 overall record, is

area colleges

hopeful of a bid to the inaugural Moila Shrine Bowl Nov. 24 in St. Joseph to play Missouri Western.

"The bowl committee saw us play Jewell," said Girardi, who thought the Cardinals may have been down after their big victory over Missouri Valley the week before. "If they weren't impressed by what we did, they'll never be impressed."

Pittsburg State also was hopeful of a post-season bid after defeating Missouri Western 45-13. Pittsburg has been under consideration for a spot in the Boot Hill Bowl in Dodge City, Kan.

"If we beat Emporia State, and they

invite us, I'm sure we'll be interested," said Coach Ron Randleman of Pittsburg, which appears destined to share the Central States Intercollegiate Conference championship with Kearney State of Nebraska.

Bethany and Tabor won Saturday to set up their Kansas Conference championship showdown game Saturday night in Hillsboro, Kan. Bethany, ranked No. 1 in NAIA Division II, downed Bethel for its 28th straight regular-season victory. Tabor kept pace in the conference with Bethany at 7-0 by defeating Friends 23-14.

Northwest Missouri State completed a rags-to-riches story in the Missouri Intercollegiate Athletic Association by downing Lincoln 42-15 and clinching the title.