

Jewell makes solid impression on Culver coach

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As a coach on the losing end of a 59-6 score, Culver-Stockton's Vince Okruch can speak authoritatively about the William Jewell Cardinals.

The Cardinals rate No. 1 with Okruch, regardless of their No. 2 ranking behind Austin College of Texas in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II football poll.

"They're awfully good," Okruch said Saturday night after the Heart of America Conference opener in Liberty. "I know why they're No. 2 in the nation. I haven't seen Austin (the No. 1 team) play, but I don't see how it could be any better."

Okruch is sold on the Jewell program, not just this year's team.

"They have a great tradition, and they've built on it," he said. "When

you keep 120, 130 players involved in your program like they have, you know you've got a good one. Then they get a game like this, and their reserves get to play three-quarters of the time. They have experience. So when it's their turn to play, they're well-groomed and disciplined to what they have to do."

Okruch said he was impressed by the overall quality of Jewell's defense, which limited Culver-Stockton to 83 yards total offense.

"We thought we could find some weaknesses," Okruch said. "We knew we would have trouble with a couple of their linemen — (defensive tackle) Guy Weber and (defensive end) Jerry Twigg — but we couldn't find anywhere to go. All their players performed well."

Jewell quarterback Kelly Groom,

who threw three scoring passes before leaving the game in the second quarter, said the Cardinals were more concerned about looking sharp in their home opener than in leaving an impressive score for the pollsters to digest.

"We have so much other stuff to worry about with eight games to play, we're not worried about the poll," Groom said. "We don't pay that much attention to it. We're right on track where we want to be. We were really sharp in this game. We ran only a few different plays, but they were all executed well."