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William Jewell reaches top of Division II poll

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After years of wishful waiting, the William Jewell College Cardinals own a No. 1 ranking in football.

The Cardinals, long a contender for national small-college honors but never first, finally reached the top perch Wednesday in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II poll.

William Jewell, 3-0, didn't play last week but moved up when top-ranked Austin College of Texas lost to Sul Ross State 23-21. Ironically, Jewell was denied the No. 1 spot in the second poll of the season when Austin leapfrogged from third place over the No. 2 Cards despite not having played a regularly sanctioned game. The Texans had beaten Nuevo Bueno of Mexico 13-3 in an exhibition game.

Jewell received 10 of the 16 first-place votes cast by selected NAIA raters around the country. The Cardinals totaled 309 points. California Lu-

theran, 4-0, received five first-place votes and 299 points. The remaining first-place vote went to fifth-ranked Linfield of Oregon, 3-0.

The NAIA has been rating teams in Division I and Division II since 1970. Division II is made up mainly of smaller private schools.

Reaction on the William Jewell campus in Liberty was predictably one of pride in the team's accomplishment.

"I was hoping for it," Jewell President Gordon Kingsley said. "It's the first time we've ever been ranked No. 1. I'm going to sound like a college president now and say that it represents the quest for excellence we seek in all areas of our school. We're proud of our debate team for finishing fifth in the nation last year, and we're proud of our football team for being first."

Vic Wallace, in his second season as Jewell's head football coach, tempered his pride with a note of caution.

"Being No. 1 is something we've worked for as a team," Wallace said. "But it's more important to

be No. 1 at the end of the season. This gives us an extra incentive, but I'm sure it also gives Graceland an extra incentive."

Jewell will play Graceland of Lamoni, Iowa, 3-1, in a Heart of America Conference game at 2 p.m. Saturday in Liberty. It's the Cardinals' homecoming game.

"That's the trouble with being No. 1," said Norris Patterson, former Jewell football coach who is chairman of the school's physical-education and athletics department. "It makes you a target. I'd rather have the opponent ranked No. 1. But I guess it's nice. We've never had the top ranking before."