

Football playoff berth ignites WJC sports

It was the year Brown Gymnasium seated its last sports fans and with the opening of the new Mabee Center, WJC enjoyed a year of some new experiences.

FOOTBALL—William Jewell opened the 1980 season with a 28-14 victory over Mid-America Nazarene. Little did Coach Stan McGarvey know, but the Cardinals would improve their record to 9-0 with eight straight victories, finish the regular season with a 10-0-1 mark and advance to post-season play in the NAIA Division II playoffs.

The Cardinals battled Heart of America Conference rival Baker University in the first round of the playoffs and emerged a 20-17 winner.

Redbird fans were worried late in the season. All-America fullback David Cunningham was nursing a bruised leg and the question remained: Would Cunningham be ready for post-season play? McGarvey opted to keep Cunningham from the starting line-up against playoff foe Baker, using him only if needed.

The Cardinals trailed 10-6 at halftime and McGarvey needed no second thoughts. Cunningham came off the bench to grab an early third quarter touchdown pass and give the Cardinals the lead for good at 13-10.

Early in the fourth quarter quarterback Kelly Groom passed to Cunningham for a 20-10 lead. Baker added a late fourth-period score to cut the margin to three, but the Cardinals were not to be denied.

It looked like the Cardinals might do it. McGarvey's charges were set to host Wilmington, Ohio in the semifinal round of the playoffs. The winner would play for the National Championship.

The Cardinals grabbed a 10-9 halftime lead, but minutes into the second half the Redbirds would never lead again in the 1980 season. Wilmington tailback Gary Worthy dashed three yards for a Quaker score and minutes later Russell Williams rambled 44 yards. Wilmington 24, Jewell 10.

Worthy added a fourth quarter touchdown for a 31-10 Quaker advantage.

The Cardinals, who had come-from-behind to defeat Mid-America, scored in the final minutes to defeat Benedictine, waited until waning moments to defeat Doane College, came from behind in the

early going to clobber Tarkio, relied on a missed Ottawa extra point attempt to win 14-13, came from an early 7-0 deficit to defeat Central Methodist and waited until the final seconds to use a Jerry Burch 49-yard field goal and tie Baker 10-10 in the regular season, could put together only a faint rally.

Quarterback Groom bounced a pass off of Mike McGill into the hands of Scott Martin. Final scene: Wilmington 31, William Jewell 17.

Things looked good for the 1981 season. Only seven seniors would be lost. Then, in a move that caught the Jewell football program by surprise, Coach Stan McGarvey announced his resignation to accept an assistant coaching job at the University of Cincinnati. McGarvey, who was named the 1980 NAIA Division II Coach of the Year, packed his bags and departed with a three-year career record of 22-11-1.

Within the past month a replacement was named to guide the Cardinals next fall. Former Texas Tech University assistant Vic Wallace has taken over the post of Cardinal leader. Wallace, a graduate of Cornell College, has coached on all three levels of NCAA football.