

punt in the opening 2 minute and Ira Chandler recovered in the end zone. Less than 2:00 later, a faulty snap cost the Vikings again as the ball sailed over Babylon's head for a Jewell safety.

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Former Rockhurst linebacker sings 'Home Sweet Home'

By Janis Carr

staff writer

Hanging onto a 14-10 lead with 47 seconds remaining that September afternoon, William Jewell College needed help.

And linebacker Tim Johnson helped, along with teammates Wendell McGill and Gary Ainsworth as the Cardinals froze Graceland College's touchdown bid inches from the goal.

After the immediate flush of victory, Johnson celebrated again. For his performance against Graceland the 5-foot-11-inch, 200-pound defenseman was named Player of The Week in

the Heart of America Conference.

"That was probably the biggest honor of my life," Johnson said. "It had been nearly two years since I had pads on and it surprised me that I could still play well."

Johnson's statistics, before Jewell beat Missouri Valley 25-13 Saturday, tell the story of his season: 11 tackles, 72 assists, three quarterback sacks, two recovered fumbles, three pass interceptions, two blocked kicks, one pass play broken up.

Last Saturday he added one more blocked punt that led to a touchdown. Jewell has an 8-0 won-lost record.

His being a student at Jewell is another story. Following graduation from Rockhurst High School where he was All-State, Johnson took his full

scholarship and belongings out to the University of Santa Clara in California.

For two weeks.

"Going to Santa Clara and getting the scholarship was a big thing for my ego," he said. "I jumped at the opportunity to go . . . But I got really homesick."

So he packed his suitcases and returned to independence. The following semester he enrolled at UMKC only to find he missed playing football. That's when he decided to contact football Coach Vic Wallace at Jewell.

"Small college football is



Tim Johnson

great. You really get to know the coaches and the players. And it's close to home," he said.

Johnson also found a starting position with the Cardinals. A freshman, he plays alongside two seniors. It's a position Johnson plays with the experience of his superiors.

"We don't look at Tim as a freshman. He has all the responsibilities of a senior," Wallace said. "He is a tremendous college player. After a few weeks of practice, we knew we had a real good athlete. Tim stops, reads, thinks and tackles with perfect technique."