

Jewell coach likes challenge of game with top-rated team

Either Vic Wallace is eager for a challenge or he's making the best of a situation he can't control. Probably some of both.

At any rate, the William Jewell football coach says he is happy to be playing top-ranked Pacific Lutheran in the opening round of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II playoffs.

Jewell is ranked No. 2 in the NAIA's final poll. But after the top eight teams are determined for the playoffs, the NAIA regards all teams as equal and pairs them in the interest of economics and, if possible, proximity.

Thus the NAIA has created a power showdown in the quarterfinals by matching Pacific Lutheran, 9-0, against William Jewell, 10-0, at 1 p.m. today in Liberty. In other games today, Austin (Texas), 9-1, plays Panhandle (Okla.), 8-0; Westminster (Pa.), 9-0, meets Anderson (Ind.), 8-1; and Dickinson State (N.D.), 7-0, faces Concordia (Minn.), 9-0-1.

"To me, this is the greatest thing that can happen," Wallace said of Jewell's opening opponent. "It's what football is all about — two undefeated teams meeting with respect for each other. I don't know if we're good enough to beat Pacific Lutheran, but we're going to give it the best we've got."

Wallace said cutting his squad to the 42-man limit required by the NAIA for post-season competition was the most unpleasant aspect of the game. He said that 55 to 60 players usually see action for the Cardinals. Wallace made the cut to 41 Sunday, reserving the final spot for a decision after the final workout.

"It was not only the emotional part involved in it, we had to determine priorities as to who would be most valuable in considering Pacific Lutheran's offensive and defensive strengths," Wallace said.

Injuries could also be a factor. Guards Mark Mundell and Mike

Rodgers have been bothered by shoulder-area injuries, although both have been doing well in practice, Wallace said.

Wallace said he is impressed by Pacific Lutheran's overall defense. And Jewell defensive coordinator Dan Griggs said he is impressed by the Lutes' soundness on offense.

"Everything they do, they do well," Griggs said.

Jewell stresses offensive balance. Fernandars "Scoop" Gillespie has rushed for 612 yards on 105 carries

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and Steve Hodges has 601 yards on 103 carries. Marty Hensley has 32 catches for 547 yards and Mike McGill 29 for 522. Quarterback Kelly Groom has been a double threat, throwing for 1,341 yards and rushing for 376.

Pacific Lutheran's top offensive threat is fullback Mike Westmuller, who has rushed for 971 yards.

In event of a tie at the end of four quarters, the teams will use an overtime system to break it. Each team gets the ball at its opponent's 20-yard line and can make a first down while attempting to score a touchdown and conversion or a field goal. If the teams are still tied, the system is repeated until a winner is determined.

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The mythical junior college championship may be decided Sunday afternoon when No. 1-ranked Northeastern Oklahoma A&M, 9-0, meets No. 2-ranked Butler County of El Dorado, Kan. The teams play in the Rodeo Bowl in Arkansas City, Kan.

Concordia to face Dickinson in NAIA play-off

Two undefeated teams will clash in the NAIA Division II football play-off game Saturday at Moorhead when Concordia College meets North Dakota's Dickinson State.

Concordia took the MIAC championship again with a perfect 8-0 record, tying only Moorhead State in a non-conference game. Dickinson (9-0) won North Dakota College Athletic Conference honors.

Other NAIA Division II quarterfinal pairings Saturday send defending champion Pacific Lutheran to William Jewell, Mo.; Anderson, Ind., to Westminster, Pa., and Austin, Texas, to Panhandle, Okla.