

Jewell hopes to stay in playoff hunt with victory over Benedictine today

By Bill Richardson
A Member of the Sports Staff

Safety Paul Taylor, standing on the sidelines with other members of the William Jewell College defensive unit, looked up at the scoreboard clock.

"Seven seconds were left," Taylor said, reliving a numbing emotion. "We had the ball on our own 30. For the first time all day I realized we weren't going to win. Up until then I kept thinking that somehow we were going to pull the game out. We always seemed to before."

One more play and it was all over. William Jewell, which hadn't lost a regular-season game since 1979 and was the top-ranked team in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II football poll, had been beaten by unheralded Mid-America Nazarene 9-7. The defeat last Saturday in Olathe plunged the Cardinals from first to ninth in this week's poll and endangered their chances of making the eight-team Division II playoffs starting Nov. 20.

"It was a pretty empty feeling," Taylor said. "It was like when we lost to Austin in the semifinals of the playoffs last year. If we can come back and sneak into the playoffs, it may be the best thing that happened to us. It was a real eye-opener and hurt for about a day, but it's something everybody left behind us Sunday."

To stay in the running for the playoffs, William Jewell will have to win its final two games against Benedictine College at 7:30 tonight in Atchison, Kan., and against Tarkio College on Nov. 13 in Liberty. The NAIA playoff field will be picked.

"The Benedictine game means everything now," Taylor said. "We're looking at it as the last game of the season. We've still got high hopes of making the playoffs. This will be the most physical game we've ever played."

"Like our games with Missouri Valley, the Benedictine games are always hard-hitting. Benedictine is coming off a loss, too, and I'm sure they're going to want to get us."

Jewell offensive tackle Ralph Yeater said the Cardinals' thoughts this week have been directed entirely toward the Benedictine game.

"We've put last week behind us. We've had a good week of practice, and everybody is fired up," Yeater said.

"Everybody's got something to prove, that we should still be No. 1."

We're going to have to give everything we've got to beat Benedictine. We have to. They're a good team, a strong team."

Benedictine dropped from 13th to 18th in the NAIA Division II poll after a 14-11 loss to Panhandle State of Oklahoma last Saturday. The Ravens, 6-2, saw their playoff hopes ended.

William Jewell, 6-1, may be without junior receiver Jimi Reed, who

missed the Mid-America game because of an arm injury. Reed is the Cardinals' leading receiver with 687 yards on 33 catches for a 20.8 average.

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Jewell rallies, overhauls Benedictine

By Bill Richardson

sports writer

Atchison, Kan.—Two big second-half touchdown plays lifted William Jewell to a 32-27 victory Saturday night over Benedictine and rekindled the Cardinals' hopes for a spot in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Division II football playoffs.

Darrell Schwabe's 51-yard punt return in the third quarter and Steve Hodges' 72-yard run on an off-tackle play with 9 minutes, 9 seconds left were the big plays for Jewell. The Cardinals rebounded from a 9-7 upset loss at Mid-American Nazarene a week ago and boosted their record to 7-1.

Jewell, which dropped from first to ninth in the NAIA ratings after the loss, now stands a good chance of making the Division II eight-team playoffs. Westminster of Pennsylvania, one team rated above the Cardinals, lost Saturday. The top eight teams make the playoffs after the final games of Nov. 13.

The Benedictine game was a must situation for Jewell, which trailed the Ravens 21-6 early in the third quarter and again 27-25 just before Hodges broke loose.

"It's just too close," Jewell quarterback Kelly Groom said after the wild-scoring thriller with the Ravens, who dropped to 6-3. "They sure gave us everything we could handle. After last week, we couldn't let it (another loss) happen again. The guys reached down deep and pulled this one

out."

Groom sparked the Cardinals attack with his option running, gaining 75 yards on 22 carries. His runs off the option set up the big play by Hodges. It was a basic off-tackle play after Groom had faked the option.

"Kelly had been keeping on the triple option, but on that play, he gave it to the dive back," Jewell coach Vic Wallace said. "This is the first game we've featured the option."

Hodges wound up with 116 yards on 18 carries. He scored once and Groom scored twice on 1-yard runs. Schwabe's punt run-back and field goals of 40 and 29 yards and two conversions completed the Jewell scoring.

Benedictine stunned the Cardinals in the opening 5 minutes when tailback Pat Stueve romped 75 yards on a double reverse. The Ravens offset Hudgson's two first-quarter field goals with an 11-yard touchdown pass from Terry Torline to Tom Bachkora in the second quarter for a 14-6 lead at the half.

Torline's 1-yard sneak put the Ravens on top 21-6 in the third quarter. Jewell moved 85 yards with Groom scoring from the 1 on its next possession, then Schwabe found a lane down the left for the punt return score.

After Jewell went ahead 25-21 on a 75-yard march, the Ravens rebounded on an 89-yard march, capped by fullback Bill Riddick's 16-yard touchdown run.

The big play by Hodges and Jewell's defense did the rest.