

KCI CONFERENCE SHOWDOWN

JERRY KEUHN
Reporter

Fresh off a satisfying and smooth 31-0 Homecoming victory over a previously undefeated Cass-Midway team, the West Platte football team does not have any time to relax with what is being hailed as a powerhouse Class 2 Lawson team coming to town.

The No. 1-ranked Cardinals are 4-0 after a 30-6 victory over Lathrop last week, and also have solid wins over Class 3 Smithville and Cameron. Last year, the Cardinals finished at 9-3 overall with a quarterfinal loss to Hogan Prep and were the KCI Conference champions with a perfect 6-0 record. Also, the Cardinals are one of the few teams in Missouri to run the Wing T offense, which features a lot of misdirection and play action passing with potential runners and receivers in motion.

“We had a good night tonight defensively, but we have a lot of work to do before Friday night because of their Wing T,” West Platte coach Danny Brown said. “There are so many teams running the spread now like us, but Lawson has always ran the Wing T and they have ran it since their kids were in seventh grade. Also, on defense, they have really defended the pass a lot better the past few years than they used to.” Add all that together and the Jays are sure to have their claws full this Friday night. However, dedicated Missouri high school football fans know they should never count the Jays out, especially on their home field in Weston. There is just too much West Platte football history to consider — while the Jays haven’t beaten Lawson since 2003, they have also won the state championship twice while the Cardinals have merely come close.

“We’re 3-1 this season with our only loss coming to the No. 1-ranked team in Class 1,” said West Platte coach Danny Brown. “We’ve played Lawson well the past couple of years and we have always said the KCI Conference prepares us for later in the season.”

There’s also one more thing: last year, the Jays took the Cardinals to the wire and almost pulled off a big upset despite 395 Lawson rushing yards before West Platte quarterback Ryan Humes suffered a wrist injury in the game’s waning moments. Lawson held on to win its Homecoming game 25-17, and it was Humes’ last game as quarterback for the season, something he has not forgotten.

“It was really a season-ending injury for me in a game we could have won and it could have been a big motivation for the team for the rest of the year,” Humes said. “I want to show them how we have improved. Defensively tonight (against Cass-Midway) we could not have played any better, but we have some work to do offensively. We need to go into the game against Lawson and play the way we are capable of, and if we do, anything can happen.”

If the Jays want to pull off the upset, they will have to find a way to stop senior all-conference and all-district quarterback Joe Kassanavoid, who has made a verbal commitment to Kansas State and was also an all-state safety on defense last year.

“Joe has done a really good job of making decisions this year and knock on wood, we haven’t had a turnover with our passing game yet,” said Lawson coach Todd Dunn.

“Last year’s game against West Platte was typical of the last several years when it has come down to a touchdown or two,” Dunn said. “They have knocked us off a few times in the past and we haven’t played very well in Weston for awhile, so we want to get over that hump.”

Dunn said his team has four running backs it uses almost equally, including senior David Noblet, juniors Ethan Deardeuff and Ian Swarts, and sophomore Zac Mathews. On defense, he said the man to look out for is sophomore nose guard Devin Mellon, who is big and strong and has allowed Lawson to improve its ball-stopping ability.

Jays coast after weather clears

Cass-Midway came to Weston last week with a 3-0 record and was on the verge of receiving some statewide buzz for its accomplishments, but the Jays came on strong after a wet and sloppy first half and took care of business as needed with a 31-0 Homecoming win.

While the Jays had a 10-0 lead late in the second quarter, they had struggled with the passing game in the rainy conditions. Humes finished the game with a lower than usual nine completions on 25 passing attempts for 136 yards, and threw two interceptions. However, he was able to run for 141 yards as the Jays picked up 190 yards on the ground, and he completed a 40-yard touchdown pass to Roe right before intermission. Steven Wheeler also ran for 44 yards, while Roe had three catches for 80 yards and Tyler Grindstaff had three catches for 35 yards.

In addition to Roe's 40-yard field goal in the first half and his normal kicking and punting duties, he also attempted a pass which came close to being completed for a large gain and ran for a 5-yard touchdown run in the third quarter. The Jays scored 14 points in the second half to put the game away in front of a large Homecoming crowd that did not let the rain chase it away. It could have been even worse for the Vikings if a late touchdown run of almost 70 yards by freshman backup quarterback Brett Grindstaff had not been called back because of a penalty.

The real story of the game for West Platte may have come from its defensive play, however, as the defense forced five fumbles and recovered three of them — two by Zach Oberdiek and one by John Clouser. Kyle Elder was the leading tackler with 11 tackles. The Vikings ran the ball 28 times but accumulated only 44 rushing yards, and while their passing game had more success with 171 yards, it also gave up interceptions to Humes and Tyler Grindstaff.

"We didn't really execute as well as we could have offensively, but the defense loves to play in that rain," Brown said.

JAYS 31, CASS-MIDWAY 0

CM	0	0	0	0 - 0
WP	7	10	7	7 - 31

First quarter

WP: Ryan Humes 6 run, Erick Roe kick

Second quarter

WP: Roe 42 field goal

WP: Roe 40 pass from Humes, Roe kick

Third quarter

WP: Roe 5 run, Roe kick

Fourth quarter

WP: Tyler Grindstaff 17 pass from Humes, Roe kick

Lady Pirates' streak grows with two more wins

Citizen Staff Report

The Platte County volleyball team is looking like a force to be reckoned with.

The Lady Pirates improved to 14-0-1 after two more victories and did it the same way they have racked up all their other wins — with solid defense and exceptional hitting.

In short, Platte County is playing together and taking care of business.

“I feel like we are really doing a nice job of focusing on each opponent and controlling what we can control from our side of the net,” Platte County coach Jan Patterson said.

Platte County traveled to Grain Valley Monday and came home with a hard-fought 27-25, 28-26 victory. Morgan Johnson and Chandrika Brewton had five kills apiece, while Molley Scanlon had 20 assists. On Sept. 20, Platte County moved to 3-0 in Midland Empire Conference play with a 25-15, 23-25, 25-7 victory at Smithville.

After two slugfests, the Lady Pirates ran away in the third game behind the serving of Scanlon, who ripped off 12 straight service points. Scanlon also did a good job running the offense with 28 assists. Johnson had 10 kills and five stuff blocks. Lyndsie Sellars and Cheyenne Verdoorn had seven kills each. Overall, Platte County converted on 84 percent of its attacks and also played solid defense — Verdoorn had 14 digs, while Amber Whitmer had 12.

Platte County was set to play at St. Joseph Benton Thursday before traveling to the Grandview Invitational this weekend.

NP, WP softball teams looking for wins

Citizen Staff Report

It was a strange day of ups and downs for the North Platte softball team at the Hamilton Tournament Sept. 22.

The Lady Panthers (9-10) started the day with a 12-2 pasting of St. Joseph LeBlond, as Bailee Testorff gave up only three hits and struck out seven batters. That was more than enough for North Platte, which scored nine runs in the fourth inning with two outs. Leading the way was Dakota Hellyer, who went 5-for-5 at the plate with two doubles and finished the game with nine consecutive hits in nine at-bats and nine RBI in three games.

Testorff took the loss in the second game to Hamilton, 7-3 in six innings, in a game which North Platte coach Ron Resler said a time limit hurt the Lady Panthers' chances.

Then things went downhill in the third game, as Testorff had a tired arm and could not take the mound again for North Platte. Resler used four Lady Panthers to pitch in relief —Hellyer, Martin, Hunt and Tara Bledsoe — but Gallatin beat North Platte 15-0 in three innings.

The results were better for the Lady Panthers Sept. 20 as they pulled out a 6-5 victory over KCI Conference rival East Buchanan. North Platte scored the winning run in the sixth inning when Meghan Dillee advanced to third on a passed ball and then went home on an RBI groundout by Lindsey Stubbs. Hellyer was 4-for-4 with two triples and Buckler was 2-for-4 with an RBI.

While North Platte won the game, it also lost a promising player in freshman Alexandria Sirmans, who suffered a hairline fracture of her tibia while chasing a foul ball and is out for the season.

The Class 2 District 16 tournament is slated to be held in St. Joseph next week.

Lady Jays still struggling

The West Platte softball team continued its struggles last week and is looking to get back in the win column again after falling to 1-13 overall and 0-3 in the KCI Conference.

The Lady Jays played Saturday in the Mid-Buchanan tournament played at Eagles Field in St. Joseph, and lost all four games — 10-0 to Maryville and by identical 7-2 scores in the three preceding games to Mid-Buchanan, Trenton and King City.

“In the King City, Trenton and Mid-Buchanan games, we had opportunities to stay in the game but we couldn’t get the hit to drive in the run,” said West Platte coach Zane Tanner.

The West Platte defense was able to catch a runner in a rundown and Alyssa Ovaitt turned an unassisted double play at second base. The Lady Jays had 12 hits in four games, including four from pitcher Morgan Schimmel.

The Lady Jays were shut out in two other games earlier in the week, a 3-0 loss to Plattsburg Sept. 20 and an 8-0 loss to LeBlond Sept. 17.