

Win gives YSU top position

by Bill Snier

With the regular season now completed, and a conference championship wrapped up, the YSU Penguin Express now sets its sights on the national play-offs.

The Penguins moved out of a tie with Akron for the MCC championship to sole possession of the title with a 19-3 victory over Western Illinois at Macomb, Illinois Saturday.

The victory practically assured the Penguins of a post-season playoff berth which could come as early as today. At least three sites, possible four, will be named today with the corresponding teams making up half of the field. The remainder of the field will be named next week when the regular season ends for the rest of the teams in Division II.

Insiders feel that YSU will be named as a site with Falcon Stadium serving as the battleground for the Penguins and a to-be-determined opponent. At this point, the Penguins have the best record in their region with only one loss. Eastern Illinois, who fell earlier at the hands of the Penguins, is second in the region with two losses and one game remaining against YSU's last opponent, Western Illinois.

The Leathernecks proved to be a formidable foe for the Penguins, playing high-flying YSU to a standoff throughout the first half.

Neither team could generate much in the way of offense in the first half with the Penguins being plagued by two costly fumbles and two interceptions.

It was after the second interception by Bill Sibert, his sixth of the season, that the Leathernecks drove to the only score of the half.

A pass from quarterback Kevin Conolty to split end Jerry Holloway went for 41 yards to the Penguins' seven yard line. But the Penguin defense held their ground and Western settled for a 26-yard field goal by Rick Vock to assume a 3-0 lead at halftime.

With the Penguins' offense struggling, the coaching staff decided to make a change. Junior quarterback Bill Fink, who lost his starting job in the opening game last year to Keith Snoddy, took over as Penguin signal-caller. Fink, who so far this season has seen very little action, took the Penguins on a scoring drive as soon as he left the bench. The drive covered 60 yards in ten plays with Fink going the final twelve around right end.

On their next possession, the Penguins moved 51 yards in eleven plays with all but one play on the ground. The only pass covered the final eleven yards with Fink hitting Jim Ferranti for the tally. The touchdown catch by Ferranti, his ninth of the season, broke the single-season touchdown catch mark of eight held by two receivers.

Western Illinois then began to move on a drive of their own. But a pass interception by Pat Durina, his third of the season, threw a monkeywrench into the Leatherneck's hopes.

A poor punt by Brian Spotts gave the Penguins outstanding field position at the Western 25 with just over four minutes remaining. The Penguins rushed seven times to get into the end zone with Fink going up the middle for the final yard for the final 19-3 advantage.

It was an emotional scene both on the field and in the locker room as shouts of "MCC Champs" and "We're Number One" went up from Penguin players, coaches, and about 150 fans who made the trip to Macomb to witness the record-setting ninth victory.

Head coach Bill Narduzzi summed up the true emotion of

Champs

(Cont. from page 8)

the moment when he told his troops: "Number One - you're champions and you earned it! Number two - our season isn't over, we've got a season that's just starting! We're only three hard-working weeks away from not only being MCC champs, but national champs!"

The first week begins next week and ends with a game on Nov. 25. Where it will be played and who the Penguins will match up against on their road to victory may be decided today. A tribute to the players and coaches who made YSU football "more than a game, an experience" will appear in Friday's *Jambar*.

Cont. on pg. 12