

- Monday, August 15, 2005

Section: Sports

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Publication: Stevens Point Journal

PREP FOOTBALL

Amherst, T-C to play in Madison

By Nathan Vine

Journal staff

The Tri-County and Amherst football teams may not be favorites to reach the state championship this season, but they will get to play at Camp Randall Stadium.

The Penguins and Falcons will take the field for a Central Wisconsin Conference Large Division matchup at the University of Wisconsin on Saturday, Oct. 8 as part of the annual Badger Classic. Kickoff is at 12:30 p.m.

"It's going to be a lot of fun," Tri-County junior Dylan Goodwin said. "I don't think anyone is really that nervous, just excited that we are going to play down in Madison."

A team must apply to the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association to play at the Badger Classic and be willing to give up a home game for that opportunity. Football coach John Sherman said it was a good trade-off for his team.

"Looking at our schedule, that probably was going to be our homecoming game," Sherman said. "But this is such a good opportunity and a big deal for these kids that you have to go if you get the chance, because you probably won't get to play someplace like this again."

The opportunity to play in Madison is especially important to both schools, who are looking to improve their fortunes after struggling to reach the postseason in recent seasons.

Tri-County, which qualified for its first postseason berth in 1998, has posted a 13-39 record since.

Amherst, meanwhile, has posted an 18-37 record over that same period, including its own first playoff appearance in 2001.

"Hopefully, this will motivate everyone on the team," senior Jim Blanke said. "Getting the chance to play in Madison should make everyone hungry to get back to the playoffs and then get down there at the end of the season."

Amherst coach Brian Toelle said the school is planning to lease a coach bus and having a breakfast at the school before heading to Madison, something he hopes will add to the experience for both players and fans.

"This is a big deal for our team, and we hope it will be a major event for our community," Amherst coach Brian Toelle said. "We really want to give it the atmosphere of a college game."