1954-55

NO FOOTBALL

BASKETBALL  Coach Hal Cuff  12-8  SMJCC
Conference Champions (9-1). The Blue Devils will have six returning
lettermen including: Ken Pedersen, Marvin Winslow, Gary Hanson,
Chuck Barkee, Dean Erickson, and Jim Wolfe. Austin would lose its first
two non-conference tilts to Virginia JC 79-55 and 74-65 to Hibbing Junior
College. Dick Dahl would lead them in scoring in both contests with 11
and 20 points. The Blue Devils would pick up their first victory of the
season with a 69-61 conference win over Rochester and the outcome
indicated Austin could be a threat for the conference title. Center Gary
Hanson led the way with a blazing scoring pace of 25 points, followed by
three other is double figures; guard Rick Hubbard had 14, Dahl with 12
and Dale Hamilton with 11 points. Chuck Barkee would thrill the fans
with a length of the court shot he connected on to end the first half and
give the Blue Devils a 34-30 halftime lead. Austin led 53-38 after three
quarters and Austin’s defense was the difference in the victory. Hal
Cuff’s team would drop a non-conference game to Waldorf 75-64 and the
loss was the third in four tries as the game was tied nine times before
Waldorf’s final spurt put the game away. Barkee would lead them with 19
points, 13 coming on free throws. This would be Dale Hamilton’s last
game as he would drop out of school. Austin began play after the holidays
by blowing a 17 point lead to Hibbing and losing in overtime 73-67. It
appeared the Blue Devils had an upset in their pocket as they led 54-38
after three quarters. But for three and ½ minutes Austin could not score
and with two minutes remaining the score the led by two points, 60-58.
Chuck Barkee could of won the game with two made free throws (4
seconds remaining) but could only make one sending the game in
overtime. Rick Hubbard would lead the scoring attack with 20 points.
Austin would lose again to Virginia JC 82-62 against a very big
Greyhound unit. Barkee had 20 followed by Gary Hanson who finished
with 10 points. The loss was the fifth in six starts for the Blue Devils.
Austin would lead the SMJCC parade, thanks to an ambitious 80-72
triumph over favored Worthington, and run it conference record to 2-0.
Balanced scoring and a determined defense turned the tide for the Blue
Devils. Coach Hal Cuff called it “the most encouraging performance of
the season”. Five members scored in double figures for AJC, Barkee had
19, Hubbard (16), Dahl (12), Ken Pedersen (11), and Hanson had 10
points. Austin would defeat Dr. Martin Luther 88-64 and Concordia JC
86-71 to run its undefeated record in the conference to 4-0. Once again
balance scoring and tough defense would be the difference in both
contests by the Blue Devils.
This would set up a conference showdown with Bethany for bragging rights at the top and Austin would come away with their fifth straight conference win 76-67 over the Vikings. Austin led by as many as 16 points and was led by Chuck Barkee’s 21 points. The game was won at the foul line as Austin would shoot 26 of 38 while Bethany only could convert on 17 of 35 attempts. Bruno Wilinski, the NJCAA’s leading scorer in the nation, had 32 which is his average. The Blue Devils would make it five in a row with a non-conference win over Mason City 80-71. Barkee would score 25, followed by Hubbard’s 18, Hanson’s 15, and Dahl who had 12. Austin would turn to the free throw strip for the choice of triumph as they defeated Worthington 80-78 to remain undefeated in conference play. The Blue Devils dropped 26 of 29 as they were outscored 32-27 in field goals. Austin had three players in double figures with Barkee setting the pace with 27 and right behind him was Hubbard with 19 and Marv Lenz, replacing the ineligible Dick Dahl at the forward position. Bethany would make a return trip to Austin and hand them their first conference loss as Bruno Wilinski would score 31 to lead his team to victory, after trailing the Blue Devils 62-51 going into the fourth period. Hubbard (22) and Hanson (21) would be Austin’s top scorers in defeat. Austin would defeat Waldorf 78-61 to set up the conference showdown with Rochester to decide the conference title. Chuck Barkee, who was sidelined the past two games with an injury, clinched the SMJCC title for the Blue Devils with a rebound and basket in the last six seconds and pitched in with 22 points. Hanson played a good game at center and had 18, followed by Dahl with 10 points. Austin has two games remaining but the outcomes will have no bearing on the race. The would defeat Concordia 57-56 and Dr. Martin Luther 82-63 to close out their regular season with a 9-1 conference mark and a 11-6 regular season total. Hal Cuff’s team would receive a bid to compete in the eight team Region 13 Junior College Tournament for a berth in the NJCAA national tournament at Hutchinson, Kansas. They will play without the services of Gary Hanson, their regular center, who was ruled ineligible to compete because of the year tournament rule. The Blue Devils would advance to the semi-finals with a 65-64 triumph over Ely in round one of the tournament. With his team trailing by one point 64-63, Chuck Barkee would knock down two free throws with 30 seconds to go to climax the thrilling tussle. He would lead all scorers with 22, followed by Dick Dahl with 16 and Rick Hubbard who contributed 12 points. Austin won the game from the foul line as made 23 against 12 for Ely. Powerful Eveleth would sidetrack Austin 73-52 in one semi-final contest in the Region 13 tournament. Eveleth had too many guns for the SMJCC champions who were playing without center Gary Hanson. Only two Blue Devils would reach double figures as Barkee scored 16 followed closely by Hubbard with 15 points. Austin would close out its season with a consolation loss to Virginia JC 63-51 for fifth place. Virginia led by one at halftime 37-36 but after that the Blue Devils were never in the game.
Chuck Barkee would score 29 points in the losing effort for his team. They would end up with a season record of 12-8 and SMJCC champions. 

Roster Included:
Chuck Barkee  Gary Coonradt  Dick Dahl
Dean Erickson  Gary Hanson  Rick Hubbard
O.C. Huff  Marv Lenz  Bob Nelson
Ken Pedersen  Don Quirin  Don Ryks
Team Manager:  Tom Ator
Assistant Coach:  Al Lehrke

Cheerleaders:  Beverly Anfenson, Joan Bacoh, Carol Ihrke, Julie LaVine

**TENNIS**  Coach Bill Evans  **SMJCC Champions**  Austin Junior College won the tennis tournament by scoring 12 points with victories in the singles and a semi-final loss in the doubles. Gary Eppen defeated teammate Don Miller in the singles. They teamed together to take second place in the doubles. Worthington placed second with Bethany third.

**GOLF**  Coach Bill Evans  SMJCC runner-up  John Schiltz was the SMJCC medalist with rounds of 40-37-40= 117. His teammate Bob Nelson would place third overall with an 127 score. Others competing for Austin were Pederson (141) and Bucklin (151). In team competition, Rochester would win the title with a 533 score with Austin second (536), followed by Bethany, Dr. Martin Luther, and Worthington.