Moore, Tucker excited for Shrine Bowl opportunity



Louisburg's Austin Moore (left) and Kiefer Tucker will represent the East side of the state Saturday during the Kansas Shrine Bowl in Dodge City. They will be joined by Louisburg head football coach Robert Ebenstein, who is an assistant coach on the team.

The Kansas Shrine Bowl is one of the premier all-star football games as it pits the best high school seniors from each side of the state.

As it turns out, Louisburg High School is going to have two representatives.

Austin Moore was selected to join the East squad back in December along with Louisburg head coach Robert Ebenstein, but the Shrine Bowl rules state that only one player from each school can be chosen – that is unless an opening comes up shortly before the game.

So when an opening became available, Kiefer Tucker, who was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball for Louisburg, got a text from his high school coach.

Tucker is going to get one more chance to play alongside his

former teammate and coach as he was selected as a replacement to play in the Shrine Bowl and practiced with the East team earlier this week in Ottawa.

“Being selected to play in the Shrine Bowl is a great honor and I was smiling pretty big when I got the text from Coach E saying there is a spot open for me,” Tucker said. “I’m excited to be able to go up against great talent.”

Moore, who won first team all-league, all-state and player of the year honors following his senior season last fall, will be one the East’s top players on defense. He will start at linebacker and is looking forward to the challenge of going up against the West.

“The defense we are running is a 3-5 and I will be one of the ‘dog linebackers,’” Moore said. “The dog linebackers are to the outside of the middle backer. I’m just really excited to represent Louisburg again on Saturday and to play another football game.”

Tucker, on the other hand, will see a lot of time on the offensive side of the ball. He is going to play at the guard spot after originally starting on the defensive side and will be coached by Ebenstein, who is working with the offensive line.

Tucker is looking forward to suiting up one final time with his teammate and coach, as they will each go their separate ways after this game.

“Being able to play with Austin one last time is one of my favorite parts about this coming weekend,” Tucker said. “The last time we were on the field together, Austin’s season was taken

from him early (broken collarbone) and to be able to play with him again means a lot to me. One top of that, to be able to get coached by Coach E one more time is a pretty great thing. To be able to end my high school career with both of them right by me will mean a lot."

Moore feels the same as the three Louisburg representatives have gotten a chance to relive some of the Wildcats' past successes.

"It has been really fun being out on the field with Coach E and Kiefer one more time," Moore said. "We've been talking about all of the fun times we've had over the past four years, and it has definitely made me miss playing for Louisburg even more."

Although the game is what Moore and Tucker have been preparing for, they both also realize this week is more than just a game.

The Kansas Shrine Bowl is an all-star high school senior, East vs. West, football game put on each year in Kansas, by the Kansas Shrine. It is a 501(c) 3 non-profit charity that produces annual events and related activities, with net proceeds benefiting Shriners Hospitals for Children. The Kansas Shrine Bowl has sent over $2M to Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Notable alumni of the game include current Oakland Raiders All-Pro Wide Receiver Jordy Nelson, NFL Hall of Famer Barry Sanders, former

Kansas State and Kansas City Chiefs Linebacker Gary Spani, former Big 12
Defensive Player of the Year and Super Bowl Champion Linebacker Mark Simoneau
and many others.

Both Moore and Tucker traveled from Ottawa to Dodge City yesterday and will spend the rest of this week preparing for the game. They
will also get the opportunity to meet some of the patients from the Shriners
Hospital.

“I’m just honored to be selected because the Shrine Bowl is more than just a game,” Tucker said. “On the day where we meet some of the kids,
I hope to be able to spread a few smiles and share some laughs with them.”

Kickoff for the game is set for 7 p.m. on Saturday at Memorial Stadium in Dodge City and the game will be streamed at www.kansasshrinebowl.com.