

Stadium Stop
Week 5 by Scott Goodheart
Double-header special
Frankfort Wildcats 64 @ Blue Valley Rams 52

First I need to apologize in advance as I got to the game to discover I didn't have my camera with me. So if anyone from Randolph-Blue Valley or Riley County has pictures which they would like to share please feel free to email me at scott_goodheart@hotmail.com.

RANDOLPH--It was yet again another homecoming game and another Friday night under the lights on the always exciting 80 yard in length by 40 yards wide, 8 man fields. When I got there it was standing room only, literally. I got there a little after kickoff and already had a nice crowd. The field is built down in a pit and the press box is built into the side of the hill. I did discover some bleachers as I walked to the other side of the field, hiding behind the press box to the south.

This was a big game for the fact that this was Manhattan's Radio State B104.7 Country's game of the week and what a game it was! These two teams are Twin Valley League rivals which are only about 35 miles away. It is probably one of the prettiest drives you can find, if you enjoy scenic routes. As far as the game, I love going back to watch 8-man games, there is something about when you play it in high school; you just have to have an itch for it. I've been told numerous times that 8-man football isn't football, all the haters can say what they want, but I love watching offense and high scoring affairs.

Don't be thrown off by the score yes, this is a football score not basketball. If you love offense, then this game was for you! Frankfort went into intermission with a 58-22 lead. The Rams came fighting back in the second half in front of the Blue Valley home crowd. The Rams racked up 30 points to the Wildcats 6, but the comeback fell short as time would run out for the Rams. This is a typical example of 8-man games, how it's not over until it's over. This wasn't the only high scoring game in the area, league foe to the north in Washington County as they hosted Pawnee City (NE) in a Kansas-Nebraska shoot-out. Unfortunately the Indians of Pawnee City were too much for the home squad of Hanover. A few more teams to discuss is the Chase Kats which put up 103 points on Northern Plains rival Wilson having a combined score of 171 total points, setting a new Kansas record. One final team to discuss is the Wildcats of Moscow, which is almost as far southwest part of the state that you can get. Moscow is the Class 1A Defending State Champions in the 4x400 Meter Relay and it seems to show on the scoreboard this year for the Wildcats. So far this year, Moscow is averaging 76 points per contest.

The Rams are in a large, competitive small school Twin Valley League conference. This is a large geographic area stretching through most of Northeast Kansas and is arguable one of the most competitive leagues out of small schools in the state. They also have a tremendous league basketball tournament which serves as a large amount of income for member schools. The league consists of Axtell, Baileyville B&B, Bern, Centralia, Clifton-Clyde, Frankfort, Hanover, Linn,

Onaga, Valley Heights (Blue Rapids), Washington County, Wetmore, and Blue Valley. When a state tournament in volleyball or basketball comes around, feel free to go ahead and see how many TVL schools are in it, because I'm pretty confident there will be quite a few. Although Blue Valley may not have a dominant sports history their location is favorable for an area with a population increase and plan on this school and community continue to grow.

Game 2

Rossville Bulldogs 18 @ Riley County Falcons 6

RILEY-- As I drove from Randolph to Riley it takes about 15 minutes. I asked a gentleman from Randolph how to get there exactly and told me to take Highway 77 south then turn west on a Riley County Blacktop back-road and to look for the lights. He nailed it on the dot. It was a beautiful glow from a distance. Riley County High School, home of several great collegiate and professional athletes, from this mid-sized 3A school located in Northwest Riley County; the Falcons have a strong tradition in athletics

Riley County High School consists of two towns: Leonardville and Riley. The high school is located in between the two towns on Highway 24. The Middle School and High School are located at the campus with the elementary school in Riley. Something that has come to my mind around the Manhattan area there are several consolidated school districts and the majority have new buildings located in between the two main towns in the school districts. A few of these schools are Riley County, Valley Heights (Blue Rapids and Waterville); and Rock Creek (West Moreland and St. George). Maybe these schools are successful for being located nearing a growing population, but having state of the arc buildings for students to be proud of and not trying to get rid of the idea of the old rivalries and now just having one school, one team. This is a plan which I wish more schools would consider looking into, I realize the cost of construction is absurd but will an older school really keep up with what the district may need? Not only that to consider, but how will the towns people react? Will they be upset for not getting the high school in their building, or where games maybe played on Friday nights? There are several factors which could be taken into consideration.

A couple of schools that come to mind which have great setups in various parts of the state the first one being Fairfield (consisting of Langdon, Arlington, Abbyville, Sylvania, and Turon) is based out of western Reno County. You can be driving on a Reno County blacktop back road and there will be a shelter belt with a pasture, then a school right next to them. Another example, is in the southwest corner portion of the state is Southwestern Heights involving the communities of Kismet and Plains, as you are driving from Meade to Liberal there is a beautiful facility right along U.S. Highway 54; but back to Riley County.

Riley County has had numerous state championships in a wide variety of sports. The first title would start a large string of championships in Cross Country starting in 1994 then would put together 3 Boys Championships. The Girls have also has success with having a 3-peat of their

own state championships from 1996 to 1998. Along with the Girls Cross Country title in 1998, they also hung another banner in the gym for Track and Field Champions of 1998. The Lady Falcons basketball team won the class 3A State Championship in Hutchinson in 1999 and 2005. The Football teams have had success although never to find a state championship. Riley County is also one of the largest schools to play golf in sand greens division in the state. Although you've got to admit it still says something when your school has two players in the National Football League. 10-year veteran Jon McGraw of the Kansas City Chiefs and Super Bowl Champion Jordy Nelson of the Green Bay Packers both call Riley County home. Both players played for the Falcons, and then later went on to Kansas State for legendary coach Bill Snyder. Jordy can be found coming home often if not at Leonardville Golf Course playing a round of golf or at a K-State practice just checking out his alma mater.

The Mid East League has been the same conference for quite some time, and has six well-known schools. State highway 24 serves as the main route for transportation getting to a league school for activities. The league consists of Rossville, Silver Lake, St. Mary's, Riley County, Rock Creek, and Wabaunsee in Alma, which is the furthest south school approximately 13 miles to the south of Wamego. Looking at the league resume is quite impressive; there are several state champions out of this league, where often many sub-states usually consist of a "league tournament" due to the set up of post-season assignment.

If you're looking for a place to eat and want a bang for your buck, Nelson's Landing Restaurant and Sports Bar is the place to meet friends and make new ones. It can be after a Falcon Athletic Event or just meeting friends in the middle. There are numerous people who drive from Manhattan, just for the delicious food. When you hear the name Nelson and are connecting the dots, it is relation to Jordy Nelson. It's Jordy's parents, Alan and Kim Nelson whom own it. With daily food specials to a full bar selection this place is great for lunch or dinner. It also has large varieties of rooms, from lunch atmosphere, a bar, a dinner side with large dance floor, pool table and projector which can be found. There is also a recently added party room side which can be served for Christmas parties, graduation, and several other events of your needs.