

**Stadium Stop**  
**Week 8**  
**Royal Valley 39, Wamego 20**



Pictures taken by Kay Hodison also thanks to Shawn Seematter for his help with the info below.

The Royal Valley Panthers played the Wamego Red Raiders in the second game of district play on a beautiful night in mid October. It was also senior night for 11 Royal Valley seniors who had a great impact on the Royal Valley football program during their four years. Once the emotions of Senior Night settled and the game began, Royal Valley jumped out of the gate to a quick 6-0 lead, but it didn't last long as Wamego struck back and tied it at 6-6. A short time later Royal Valley went back up 12-6, but Wamego wouldn't go away easy and tied it at 12 all. The Panthers eventually pulled away and took a 33-12 lead into halftime where they kept a comfortable lead the entire second half. There wasn't much action in the second half as each team scored an additional touchdown and Royal Valley won 39-20. Royal Valley heads 15 minutes north to play Holton this Thursday in a battle of county rivals. Both teams are 1-1 in district play, with the loss coming against Hayden, so the winner will advance to the playoffs and the loser will stay home. Royal Valley is 5-3 this season and looking for its first trip to the playoffs since the '05 season and first under head coach Jason Grider who took over the program starting with the '06 season. Royal Valley won its first league-title in school history last year after winning the newly formed small schools division of the Big 7 League.

Royal Valley is a 4A school of just under 300 students in southern Jackson County, just north of the State's Capital City of Topeka. The school district is a consolidation of Hoyt, Mayetta, and the Prairie Band Potawatomi Indian Reservation. Hoyt and Mayetta had their own separate schools until they consolidated to make Royal Valley in the early 1970's. The high school (9-12) and elementary school (K-4) are located in Hoyt which is about 15 minutes north of Topeka. About five miles further north in Mayetta is where the middle school is located (5-8). The Reservation is located just west of Mayetta and is home to the Early Childhood Education Center. The Reservation is also home to the Prairie Band Potawatomi Casino and Resort and the newly finished Firekeeper golf course. Royal Valley is a district on the rise because of the close proximity to Topeka and the nearby casino which attracts many job-seekers, but it's still very much one of the State's unique small town communities that thrives on its high school football.

