

Amazing night of Plainsmen football seen by 3,000

By Brooke Pankonin

Sixty Years Ago

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The biggest news in Perkins County during Halloween week 60 years ago was the football game. Below are excerpts from different news articles which ran the following week:

“The Ogallala Indians, a “Class B” team, rated by some sport writers as the most outstanding team in western Nebraska, were outclassed last Friday evening by the Grant Plainsmen before a crowd of over 3,000 howling fans on the local turf, the largest crowd ever to witness a game here.”

“Grant Plainsmen upset the dope sheet Friday night at home with a hard running offense and a tough defense to topple the state’s second rated Class B Ogallala Indians 19-7.”

The starting lineup for the Grant Plainsmen coached by Ed Haenfler included: M. Norman, M. Lehl, K. Schumacher, L. Poppe, R. Ramsey, W. Maupin, R. Barry, B. Brown, L. Holaway, L. Kowalski, D. Heuermann, L. Mosel.

“With quarterback [Mike] Lehl keeping his team on the ground, Grant marched 60 yards to pay dirt. The Grant field general mixed up his single wing plays with finesse as he let his fullback Wendel Maupin explode through the middle of the line and then sent his fleet halfbacks Dick Ramsey and Roger Barry sweeping inside and outside of the ends.”

“Grant moved the ball by power to the Ogallala 20 with three first downs. Lehl then caught the Indians napping as he sent Barry wide to his left on a weak side end sweep, and the swift Plainsmen back raced into the end zone unmolested.”

“The crowd had hardly settled back in the bleachers when Grant held Ogallala for downs....”

“With third and ten to go Lehl made a beautiful fake to Barry....pitched out to Maupin....Maupin swept to the north sidelines, received two bone crushing blocks from Maynard Norman and Ramsey and galloped 57 yards down the sidelines to score.”

“In the fourth quarter Grant spent most of the time on defense with Ogallala offense moving like a steamroller in midfield, but once down inside the 20 yard line, Grant’s great line stopped the Indians cold.”

“Twice the Indians drove down inside the Grant 20, and twice they were stymied by such defensive standouts as Lawrence Poppe, Larry Mosel, Lyle Holaway and Larry Kowalski.”

“With four minutes remaining in the game Barry brought the fans to their feet once again..... Barry on the second play from scrimmage raced to his right....cut back up the middle....Lehl and Kowalski cut down the Ogallala secondary and Barry was in the open. He turned on the steam....to slip into pay dirt untouched.”