

### By LaDonna Swedberg

*Sports Writer*

The Wallace Wildcats came in to their final game of regular season looking to improve their record and possibly earn a spot in the state playoffs. The defense showed up to make a statement and once the offense got rolling, they too made some noise. A great team effort made for a huge victory for the Wildcats.

As the first quarter unfolded, it looked like the game was going to be a defensive battle. The Wildcats held the Knights to just nine offensive yards and they in return, only allowed the Cats to come up with 10 yards of offense.

Things picked up a little in the second quarter but penalties and turnovers plagued both teams. Eustis-Farnam was the first to get on the scoreboard. After recovering a fumble on the Wallace 15 yard line, they needed just three plays to find the end zone. Jordan Wetovick went eight yards for the touchdown to put his team up 0-6.

The Wildcats were quick to respond. Taylor Doell ran the ball for a 28-yard gain on the first play of the possession and then John Marquardt connected with Landon Swedberg for a 31-yard touchdown pass. Eric Koop added the two-point conversion and just that quick Wallace was leading the game.



The Knights had little time left in the half and they wanted to get the momentum back before halftime but Tanner McCoy had other ideas. He charged through the line to knock the ball out of the quarterback's hand and Mark Jameson was right there to recover it.

With just a couple of ticks left on the clock, Marquardt went back to Swedberg for the long pass and with no time on the clock, Swedberg pulled in the pass for another six points. The Wildcats went to the locker room with a 14-6 lead and a lot of momentum.

The halftime break did not take anything away from the Wildcats; they started the second half right where they left off in the second quarter. Swedberg returned the opening kickoff for big yardage so Wallace began their first drive on the Knights' 29-yard line. Five plays later Swedberg capped off the drive with a two-yard run and six more Wildcat points.

The Wallace defense also came out fired up and they stopped the Knights first drive with a three and out forcing them to punt. The Wildcats wasted no time adding to their lead.

Marquardt once again found Swedberg open for a 40-yard catch and run touchdown. Koop added the two-point conversion and Wallace had a 28-6 lead.

Eustis-Farnam, a little stunned with the way the second half had started, settled down and put together a long drive led by quarterback Wetovick. He ran or passed for every yard of the drive and scored the touchdown as well as the two-point conversion. The third quarter ended with the Wildcats leading 28-14.

The final quarter of the game proved to be the liveliest with five touchdowns being scored; the first quarter was a battle of the defenses and the fourth quarter was the offensive battle.

The first score went to the Wildcats when Taylor Doell caught a short pass from Marquardt then

shook off his would be tackler, and ran 40-plus yards for the touchdown. Koop once again added the two points.

The Knights were only able to get one first down on their next possession and then they turned the ball over on downs giving the Wildcats great field position on the Knights' 27-yard line.

After a holding penalty, Swedberg scampered for 34 yards, a yard short of the goal line. Tanner McCoy had no problem getting the final yard to put the Wildcats up 42-14.

Eustis-Farnam came right back with a score of their own when Wetovick completed a 56-yard pass play to Dustin Koch. The Cats, however, were quick to answer. Koop and Marquardt took turns running the ball until Koop finished the drive with a 10-yard run and Marquardt added the two-point conversion so Wallace once again had a 28-point lead. Eustis-Farnam went to senior Morgan Smith to get their final touchdown. The big lineman moved to the backfield for the last four plays of the Knights final possession. Smith's touchdown made the final score 50-26.

Offensively, John Marquardt led the Wildcats. He carried the ball 21 times for 95 yards rushing and he was five for 10 passing for 153 yards. Landon Swedberg carried the ball 10 times for 74 yards and he had 88 yards in pass reception.

Leading the Wallace defense was Tanner McCoy with 14 solo tackles and two assisted, Landon Swedberg with 10 solo and four assists and Eric Koop with nine solo and four assists.

The victory was huge for the Wildcats as it earned them a place in the state playoffs.

### **Next Action**

Wallace will travel to O'Neill to take on O'Neill St. Mary on Thursday, (today) Oct. 27 at 3 p.m.