

Roles reversed in Wildcat tradition

By JOSIE MUSICO
Staff Writer

The star running back dodges opposing defensive linemen in a sprint to the end zone while the rest of the team stands ready for a reception. Meanwhile, the coach barks orders at players as cheerleaders entertain the thunderous crowd with spirit kicks and jumps.

It's a scene all too common for a fall Friday night at any high school stadium in America.

But if you look a little closer, you'll notice they're not your everyday football players and cheerleaders.

Wellman-Union's athletes switch sides of the field every Tuesday night during Homecoming week for Powder Puff Football, a mock game in which sophomore and junior girls don jerseys and grab a pigskin to compete against a team of their freshman and senior counter-

parts. From the sidelines, a group of unusually-masculine cheerleaders leads dances and chants to keep them fighting.

"The kids think it's a lot of fun," said faculty sponsor Shauna Youngblood. "It pumps them up for Homecoming."

The Wildcats sign up in advance for the roles they wish to perform at the game, including coaches and referees. And as with procedures for Friday's traditional Homecoming coronation, the study body votes on a Powder Puff Queen and King. This year, the crowd roared as Queen Kirk "Bonnie Parker" Martin, a senior, cheerfully accepted her crown from junior "Mr." Rosa Olivias.

Meanwhile before the game, the Powder Puff 'Cats learned their moves and practiced with help from their classmates who more-traditionally wore jerseys and helmets. Because of their busy schedules with classes, homework and other sports,

they were only able to squeeze in a single practice session before the game Tuesday.

"We only had one practice," said sophomore Lexi Olivias. "It was hard work."

Trying out different styles of play gave them an appreciation of the game that they had previously only been able to speculate about while cheering from the sidelines.

"I never really understood football, but when the boys coached us it made a lot of sense," said sophomore Breck Faught. "It helps us as real cheerleaders because we understand the game better."

Freshman Sierra Wheatley agreed, "The plays are way harder than they look."

The battle on the field may be tough, but some of the 'Cats have learned that the real athletic challenges are just away from it. The football-players-turned-cheerleaders found out the hard way that their job involves

much more than just motivating the guys.

"We cheer for them," said freshman Edward Chavez. "It's hard."

"It's embarrassing," added freshman Luis Jaramillo.

And while accustomed to the comfort of loose-fitting jerseys, having to adjust to skimpy cheerleading uniforms isn't much fun, either.

"The suits are kind of tight," said freshman Steve Olivias.

The Wildcats formed the idea for Powder Puff Football about three years ago, after they learned of other West Texas small schools that played the nontraditional sport. Its success will likely ensure that it keeps growing every Homecoming week, according to players and fans.

"It's a tradition, but it's a new tradition," Youngblood said.



Wellman-Union senior Abi Lindsey, right, prepares fellow Wildcat Tori Browne for battle. The 'Cats traded sides of the field Tuesday night for Powder Puff Football.

Cub tennis wins big

Brownfield High School's tennis team earned a 20-2 home victory over Estacado Thursday.

The Cubs had great success over the visiting Matadors in both singles and doubles competition.

"The team got some outstanding play from everyone," said Coach Rich Hammons. "The more veteran players showed tremendous leadership in building up a big lead in doubles, and some of the younger players helped continue the push for a Brownfield victory."

Jerry Alaniz and Daniel Rocha picked up a big win for the Cubs at the top doubles line.

The Cubs also got big wins from their top singles players, Austin Marlow and Terra Benton.

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