

## Bulldogs Advance to Wild West Bowl By Judy Rogers

Seven seniors stepped on the field in Rexford for their last time in a Bulldog uniform for the Sub-State Football game against Pawnee Heights on October 27. This game was to determine who would play in the championship game and who would play for third place in the inaugural Wild West Bowl in Dodge City next weekend.

The Bulldogs gave it their all in this nail-biter game as they had against this team they had defeated early in the season, but their destiny was to play for third place next weekend as the Pawnee Heights Tigers led 42-38 at the end of the game to advance to play for the championship. There aren't a lot of words that express how I feel for my guys right now," said Coach Travis Smith. "They fought so dang hard tonight. We just came up a little short. The season isn't over." The Bulldogs will play for third against Cheylin at 2:00 on Saturday.

The Bulldogs won the toss and received the ball to start the game. Two quick runs by sophomore AJ Camacho put the 'Dogs on top 6-0. Senior Jose Ortiz kicked back to the Tigers. The ball slipped through the Tigers hands and senior Jesus Aragon recovered for the Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs made some good passes but ended the series with a turnover to the Tigers. Senior quarterback Dawson Spresser played some tough defense along with some cooperative tackles by sophomores Camacho and Dylan Spresser before the Tigers' sophomore Kade Scott scored. With a successful PAT, the Tigers led 7-6.

Aragon answered with a long run down to the three yard line. He punched it in on the next play only to have it called back due to a block in the back. The 'Dogs backed up and Dawson Spresser passed off the Camacho who moved to the 11. An pass to the end zone was blocked and the Tigers took over.

Defensive stops by Dawson Spresser and senior Austin Rivera stopped the Tigers on the first down. Aragon stopped the Tigers twice from the one yard line. Unfortunately junior Jeron Schutte went down with a knee injury and the game was stopped for medical care. Following an extensive break, the boys stepped back on the field at 3<sup>rd</sup> and goal for the Tigers. The Tigers quickly scored a TD and a PAT to lead 14-6 with under two minutes to play in the first.

Dawson recovered the short kick and Camacho ran it in for the Bulldogs. A PAT kick attempt hit the goal post but fell back to leave the 'Dogs trailing 12-14 with 1:30 on the clock. The 'Dogs stepped up their defensive with some decisive stops by sophomore Caleb Korte and Dawson Spresser kept the Tigers from scoring before the quarter ended.

The Tigers connected on a pass early in the second to lead 21-12. Back on offense, the Tigers committed two penalties to give the 'Dogs a 30 yard advance. A pass from Dawson Spresser to Korte connected for a third Bulldog score narrowing the gap 18-21.

The 'Dogs defense, led by Dawson Spresser and Rivera, stopped the Tigers, but the 'Dogs fumbled on a tackle which allowed the Tigers to recover. Both teams held tight on defense as the first half ended with the Tigers leading 21-18.

The 'Dogs kicked back to the Tigers to start the third. A tackle by senior Nick Brown knocked the ball loose allowing Austin Rivera to recover for the 'Dogs. Camacho ran in the first play all the way home giving the 'Dogs the lead 24-21 early in the third.

Brown, along with sophomore Miguel Monge, were tackling machines in the third. The Tigers finally broke through with a pass for another touchdown. With a good PAT pass, they regained the lead 28-24.

Dylan Spresser returned the kick to midfield. Korte captured another pass from Dawson Spresser for a first down. A personal foul on the Tigers gave the 'Dogs another first down moving the ball inside the ten. Another run by Camacho put the 'Dogs back on top. Aragon kicked the PAT through the uprights to regain the Bulldog lead 32-28. Another score by the Tigers put them ahead 35-32 at the end of the third.

The final quarter was another exciting 10 minutes of football action. The 'Dogs moved the ball to the 9 yard line, then the 5, but the Tigers recovered a fumble and tried to move to the other end of the field. Camacho and Dawson Spresser repeatedly tackled and broke up passes as they played with ferocity. On a fourth down with six to go, Camacho ripped the ball out of a Tigers' hands and ran to the end zone. With 4 ½ minutes to play, the 'Dogs took the lead 38-35.

With just under two minutes left in the game, the Tigers scored a final time. Despite the Bulldogs efforts to make one more touchdown, they ran out of time and the Tigers won the game 42-38.

The Bulldog fight gave them a total of 87 with Dawson Spresser delivering a record 25 solo and assists. Austin Rivera dished out 15, Caleb Korte 12, Jesus Aragon 11, AJ Camacho 11, Nick Brown 6, Miguel Monge 5, and Dylan Spresser 2. Camacho claimed a combined 293 total offensive yards with Aragon 90, Dawson Spresser 88, Korte 60, and Jeron Schutte 4.

"It was a tough loss," said Dawson Spresser. "It is always hard to lose a close game. Now we need to get refocused for Saturday's game. The third place game will be held at Memorial Stadium in Dodge City with a 2:00 kickoff. The All-State Team will be recognized following the game.