

FRIDAY NIGHT PREVIEW

# Eastern Randolph Up Next For Feisty West Brunswick Trojans

BY DOUG RUTTER

Eastern Randolph pays its first visit to Shallotte Friday night to take on the West Brunswick Trojans in the second round of the state 3A high school football playoffs.

The game features two squads that rolled to easy victories in first-round action last week. West Brunswick (8-3) crushed Northeast Guilford 48-16, and Eastern Randolph (9-2) blanked Fuquay-Varina 63-0.

"This is a much, much better football team than we played last week," West Brunswick Coach Jim Brett said Monday, comparing Guilford's Rams and Randolph's Wildcats.

"They took on a 9-1 team last week and won easily," the coach added. "That tells me they're pretty good."

The Wildcats, who finished second in the Mid-Piedmont Conference this season with a 4-1 record, benefited from good breaks in their playoff opener at Fuquay-Varina.

"Everything went their way from what I saw on film," Brett said.

"They had several interceptions and ran a couple of them back for touchdowns. It was just one of those nights."

West Brunswick, meanwhile, grinded out its 32-point win over Northeast Guilford. The Trojans rushed for 447 yards and got a season-high 218 yards from senior halfback Steve Holmes.

Eastern Randolph scored 239 points during the regular season and gave up 137. West Brunswick, co-champions of the Waccamaw Conference and defending state 2A champions, scored 300 and yielded 135.

The Wildcats, owners of a four-game winning streak, run a wish-bone offense. "They run a lot of option and a lot of dives and quick pitches. They give it to the fullback on some traps," Brett said.

The Trojan offense will try to do against Eastern Randolph exactly what it did last week—run the football. West has rushed for 3,426 yards this season and passed for 582 yards.

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"We're not going to change a thing except try to spread people out a little more on defense," Brett explained. "We used it last week and had some success with it."

The Trojans, who usually play with three running backs and no wide receivers, unveiled a new "spread offense" for one series last week and scored on a 22-yard touchdown pass from Eric Johnson to Steve Holmes.

The new formation, which features one back and two wide receivers, helps create running room inside while allowing the Trojans to use Johnson's running and passing ability.

The junior quarterback has rushed 28 times this season for 200 yards (7.1 yards per carry) and completed

30 of 66 pass attempts for 540 yards and nine touchdowns.

West Brunswick may have to face the Wildcats without two key starters. Senior lineman Phillip Johnson sprained his elbow in last week's game, and sophomore linebacker Kwabena Green suffered a deep thigh bruise.

"We're not sure if they're going to be able to play or not," Brett said Monday. "If we can get these kids healthy I think we can play with this crowd. If not, it looks like we could be in trouble."

Eastern Randolph, coached by Burton Cates, is led by all-state candidate Keke Spinks, a 6-2, 190-pound, senior running back and linebacker. Other top starters include linebacker Rickey King, lineman

Jeff Sorrell and receiver Steve Wright.

Besides Fuquay-Varina, Eastern Randolph has defeated Asheboro (28-6), Southeast Guilford (14-7), Southern Alamance (22-6), James Ragsdale (21-10), Greensboro-Smith (23-0), Eastern Alamance (15-7), North Stanly (35-26) and Jordan-Matthews (27-0).

Eastern Randolph's two losses have come to Burlington city schools. Wildcats lost to Burlington Central (40-20) the first week of the season and later fell to conference foe Burlington Williams (35-34 OT).

The Trojans played their season opener as a win over Hoggard (41-0), Georgetown, S.C., (41-18), South Columbus (45-0), Pender (42-7), Whiteville (28-25), East Columbus (41-12) and South Brunswick (29-20).

West Brunswick's three losses were to West Columbus (7-6), Purnell-Swett (15-6) and Conway, S.C., (25-21).

About 1,400 people turned out for last week's playoff game at M.H.

Rourk Stadium, and Brett said he would like to see more this Friday night. Kickoff is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

The winner of this week's game will host the winner of the Reidsville-Wake Forest Rolesville contest next Friday night in the Eastern North Carolina 3A Semifinals.

WACCAMAW CONFERENCE FOOTBALL STANDINGS

Team	Conf.	O'all	PS	PA
W. Colum.	5-1	8-2	257	94
Whiteville	5-1	8-2-1	277	122
W. Bruns.	5-1	8-3	348	151
S. Colum.	3-3	6-4	184	192
S. Bruns.	2-4	5-6	217	191
E. Colum.	1-5	2-8	152	267
Pend. Cty.	0-6	1-9	65	197

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

- West Brunswick 48, Northeast Guilford 16
  - Reidsville 14, South Brunswick 10
  - Whiteville 30, East Bladen 14
- FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAMES
- Eastern Randolph at West Brunswick
  - Whiteville at Eastern Alamance
- All games start at 7:30 p.m.

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Trojan Coaches—(l-r) Mike Alderson, Charlie Stevens, Head Coach—Jim Brett, Joe Noble, David Arrowood.

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