

# Class 3A favorites face tough tests

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It is only Week 2 of the regular season, but a case can be made for the 3A hierarchy coming into focus after tonight.

Sure, Southridge and Pasco won't play a league game until next week. But with Kennewick playing at Chiawana and Kamiakin-Hanford at Fran Rish Stadium, those two games contain the top three pre-season favorites for the 3A's No. 1 seed coming out of the Mid-Columbia Conference for the postseason.

Moreover, with Hanford's impressive 23-7 win over Chiawana last week, another convincing victory for the Falcons tonight against the Braves would make them the clear-cut favorites in the 3A, especially if Kennewick struggles with the Riverhawks at Edgar Brown Stadium.

Southridge, meanwhile, has a nonleaguer at Lampson with Sunnyside coming to town. However, the game counts for postseason positioning because the Grizzlies will have a chance to swipe one of the Mid-Col's 3A regional berths.

Richland, coming off a 9-7 loss to Southridge, plays at Walla Walla in another league contest, while Pasco heads up to Eastmont to take on a former CBBN foe.

All games are scheduled to kick off at 7 p.m.

**KENNEWICK AT CHIAWANA:** The Riverhawks' biggest problem against Hanford was the run game — starting theirs and stopping the Falcons'.

After giving up 285 yards to Hanford, expect Chiawana's veteran front seven to look more in character against a Kennewick ground game

that averaged 3.6 yards per carry in a tie with Lake City, Idaho.

Kennewick got an impressive game from first-time starting QB Dylan Tennancour, who had three touchdown passes, but its early lead was drawn down thanks to fatigue.

"As the game wore on, we got a little bit tired, and we started making mental mistakes," Lions coach Bill Templeton said. "Hopefully we'll tighten that up here going into Week 2."

**KAMIAKIN AT HANFORD:** Over the previous two seasons, the Braves lost just two games — both to state champion Bellevue in the playoffs. Tonight, they face the possibility of two losses in two weeks coming off an overtime setback against Prosser.

Of course, the offense they will face will be much different. Prosser's short passing game in the spread is second to none, while the Falcons likely will load up running back Jalen DeVine (209 yards) as much as possible.

The key for Kamiakin is to get off to a faster start — just three points in the first half vs. Prosser — which could happen if QB Kylan Robertson continues to play as he did in the second half.

Otherwise, the Braves might be playing catch-up all night, and they are too inexperienced — and the Falcons defense too good — to make that work.

**SUNNYSIDE AT SOUTHRIDGE:** The Suns defense is coming off an incredible effort against Richland in which it allowed just 85 yards and no offensive points.

The Suns will face an interesting challenge in Grizzlies QB Eduardo Salmeron, a make-or-break threat who ran up 130 yards and two TDs on Southridge last year. The Suns also fell victim to Sunnyside's many trap plays up the gut.

"I really feel like we're really better," Southridge coach Tony Reiboldt said. "We're smart, aggressive. We're bigger up front, more physical up front, more aggressive up front."

An effort from the defense similar to last week, along with another strong game from RB

Kadin Diaz (107 yards, 4.7 ypc), and the Suns should be looking at a 2-0 start. But let Salmeron get loose with his improv act, and it will be a long night.

**RICHLAND AT WALLA WALLA:** Bombers head coach Mike Neidhold, a former offensive line coach, is paying special attention to the O-line after a bad game against Southridge.

"Our offensive line is in very capable hands with (assistant coach) Josh Jelinek, but I felt our offensive line did not do very well," Neidhold said. "They've got to get it going. Our offensive line is what we thought would be the group of guys we needed to count on, that we didn't have to worry about. And all of a sudden, that has been my focus."

The big focus is extending some drives on offense to keep the defense off the field after the Bombers faced 90 snaps against Southridge.

Give Wa-Hi RB Jonah Hoe (151 yards, 1 TD) that many snaps, and it could be a long trip home.

**PASCO AT EASTMONT:** Splitting off from the CBBN was supposed to eliminate long bus rides up north. But the Bulldogs are making one of two sojourns from the Mid-Col to the Apple Capital of the World — Chiawana takes on Wenatchee at the Apple Bowl in three weeks.

Last week, Pasco had running woes, getting just 80 yards out of its 32 carries (2.5 per) while giving up 213 to West Valley.

Unfortunately, the Bulldogs will face an Eastmont team that rolled up 274 yards on the ground against Davis while limiting the Pirates to 169 total yards.

QB Sean McNiel could be the key for Pasco. Last week, he completed almost half his passes for 102 yards and wasn't picked off. Eastmont, meanwhile, had five picks against Davis, including three by Trenton Osborn (hint: don't throw his way).

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