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Richland's Nathan Perry runs past Skyview tacklers Josh Seynaeve (44) and Kyle Oman (39) on his way to a touchdown in the second quarter Friday at Fran Rish Stadium in Richland. See a photo gallery at tricityherald.com.

STATE FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

Bombers advance to quarterfinals

Beat Columbia River 21-9

KEVIN ANTHONY

HERALD STAFF

In closing out the regular season with a seven-game winning streak, the Richland Bombers hung some big numbers on the scoreboard.

But a quick peak on the other side of those blowout scores reveals a pretty stalwart bunch on the defensive side, and

on a night when they needed it the most, the Bombers 'D' was at its level best.

Anthony Galat ran for 133 yards and a big breakaway touchdown in the fourth quarter, and Richland's defense turned in one clutch stop after another to lead the Bombers to a 21-9 win over the Skyview Storm in a Class 4A first-round state game at Fran Rish Stadium.

"Give the defense credit," Richland coach Mike Neidhold said. "People talk about the offense and what it does, but

really (defensive coordinator) Mitch Davis and Kimo (VanOelhoffen, d-line coach) and all those guys have done a great job all year."

The Bombers (10-1) advance to the quarterfinals and will have to make a trip to the west side to take on Federal Way (9-2), a 26-20 winner over Skyline.

Richland had been putting up close to 50 points a game over the last seven weeks of the season. But with winds whipping through the spartan crowd at

Fran Rish at 40 mph, neither offense was going to have the vertical game in its playbook.

Instead, it turned into a smash-mouth ground-and-pound with a sprinkling of short passes and screens. And that suited Richland linebacker Hayden Whitby just fine.

"In pregame warmups, I had a really big feeling we were going to be running a lot and it would be a tough game," he said.

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BOMBERS | Galat's 48-yard TD run gives Richland breathing room on Skyview

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It was tough all game for the Bombers offense, with a series of short gains setting up the bigger runs: a 9-yard TD run by Nathan Perry in the second quarter, quarterback Zach Whitby's 11-yard scramble in the third and Galat's 48-yard run score with 4:08 left to play on a twisty, turny experience for the senior back.

"All season, we knew that we had running backs that can break it. I was just lucky enough to get it," said Galat, who ran for 114 yards in the second half. "I was surprised I got it. I was turned around backwards. I was like, oops, oops, better get turned around."

The defense had a few things of its own to get turned around in the third quarter after a marvelous first half. Skyview (6-5) came out with a seven-play drive, tearing off chunks of yards before Michael Knox scored from 11 yards out.

"That second half, they came out and drove 70 yards in a minute and a half," said Hayden Whitby, whose No. 44 jersey seemed to be in on every other tackle. "We didn't come out like we needed to. But the next chance we came out, and the rest of the half we were lights out."

Lights out as in getting back a pair of turnovers with three-and-outs, getting off the field to keep Richland in charge of field position, and making the big play at the right time.

Corner back Jesse Malone broke up a couple of big pass plays, including stripping away a sure touchdown on a slant in the end zone in the first half.

After Galat's touchdown gave Richland a two-score lead with the min-



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Richland's Anthony Galat (42) tackles Skyview's Jacob Dennis (2) on Friday at Fran Rish Stadium in Richland. See a photo gallery at tricityherald.com.

utes counting down, Skyview made one last push, driving 75 yards to the Bombers 5. Earlier in the drive, linebacker Elijah Norris had a sure pick-six in his hands but couldn't hold on. On first-and-goal, he made a diving interception at the 1 with 1:40 left to kill the Storm's comeback hopes.

The Bombers finished with 217 yards on the ground while limiting Skyview to 144 rushing and 281 overall. Zach Whitby was 10-for-17 for 76 yards.

Skyview	0	3	6	0	-	9
Richland	0	7	7	7	-	21

Second quarter
S-FG Braden Hadfield 23, 8:02
R-Nathan Perry 9 run (Darrian Ruiz kick), :58
Third quarter
S-Micheal Knox 11 run (kick blocked), 9:32

R-Zach Whitby 11 run (Ruiz kick), 1:07
Fourth quarter
R-Anthony Galat 48 run (Ruiz kick), 4:08
INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING-S, Knox 20-83, Zac Shomler 6-9, Josh Seynaeve 5-37, Dylan King 1-0, Kyle Oman 1-0, Colton Johnson 1-15, R, Galat 19-133, Bennett Perry 12-46, Peterson 3-8, Phillips 2-5, Whitby 6-25.
PASSING-S, Shomler 19-30-1-137, R, Whitby 10-17-0-76.
RECEIVING-S, Josh Wilkerson 8-52, Jacob Dennis 6-49, King 2-12, Knox 1-minus 3, Noah Bonner 2-27, R, Garrett March 5-22, Gibson McGeorge 1-17, Mason Nelson 2-21, Peterson 2-13.