

# Gonzaga Prep rallies to win

By Thomas Clouse

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Liam Bell, in his first start at quarterback, threw a 21-yard touchdown pass to Nick Johnson late in the third quarter and the Gonzaga Prep defense made it stand up in a 24-21 season-opening victory over the visiting Richland Bombers on Friday night.

The Bombers struck first in both halves to take leads, but the Bullpups fought their way back to secure the win.

"There is room for improvement, but these guys ground out a 24-21 win over a tough program," Gonzaga Prep coach Dave McKenna said. "Richland players should be proud of how



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Nick Johnson (30) is congratulated after touchdown catch.



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G-Prep's Jack Bamis (35) leaps over linebacker Lakota Wills to score a touchdown.

## GONZAGA PREP

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they fought."

Richland coach Mike Neidhold was equally as effusive about the play of the Bullpups.

"We knew these guys were good. They brought out the best in us," Neidhold said. "It was a fun game. They do two or three good things offensively and we had a tough time matching up."

The game started with a flubbed kickoff that gave the Bombers excellent field position.

Taylor O'Toole hit Rhett Levin for a 10-yard pass on fourth down to keep the drive alive. Josh Phillips then scored from a yard out and a 7-0 lead.

The Bullpups again fumbled the ensuing kickoff, giving the Bombers a

short field again.

A pass interference penalty gave the the Bombers the ball at the G-Prep 19. But on third down, Phillips fumbled on the 2-yard line and the Bullpups recovered.

On G-Prep's next possession, Jack Bamis ran 66 yards to the Richland 33. Bell ran to the 11 before two fumbled snaps pushed the Bullpups back and they were forced to punt.

The punt pinned Richland inside its 5. The Bullpups came up with a safety, tackling the ballcarrier in the end zone.

After the kickoff, Bamis sparked a drive with a 38-yard run to the Richland 10 before rushing for the touchdown to give G-Prep a 9-7 lead.

The Bullpups followed that by blocking a punt and recovering at the Richland 21.

After a couple muffed plays, Bell hit

Nick Wood for a 16-yard TD with 10:39 left in the second quarter and a 16-7 lead.

Richland followed with a drive behind solid runs by Phillips, who scored from 7 yards out to close within 16-14 at the half.

Richland opened the third quarter by recovering a fumbled kickoff and eventually took the lead 21-16 when Phillips scored from 9 yards out.

The Bullpups got the ball late in the third quarter and drove again with Bell hitting Johnson for the go-ahead score with Bamis running for the 2-point conversion. The Bullpups defense took over from there and kept Richland from scoring when it got the ball with 2:25 to play.

"I'm proud of these kids ...," McKenna said. "We faced some adversity and everybody responded."

## FRIDAY'S FOOTBALL BOX SCORES

### WASHINGTON

**Gonzaga Prep 24, Richland 21**

Richland	7	7	7	0-21
Gonzaga Prep	9	7	8	0-24

Ric-Phillips 1 run (Wolski kick)  
 GP-safety, tackle in end zone  
 GP-Bamis 5 run (Kutsch kick)  
 GP-Wood 6 pass from Bell (Kutsch kick)  
 Ric-Phillips 8 run (Wolski kick)  
 Ric-Phillips 8 pass from O'Toole (Wolski kick)  
 GP-Johnson 21 pass from Bell (Bamis run)