

Bombers struggle on offense

Defense allows them to stay in game with visiting Bullpups

HERALD NEWS SERVICES

For a Richland Bombers team that has aspirations of a playoff berth about two months from now, it will have to use Friday night's 13-10 season-opening loss to Gonzaga Prep as a big learning experience.

The Richland offense struggled to move the ball all night with any consistency. The Bombers had just three points on offense, as the Bullpups dominated the second half on both sides of the ball.

The telling numbers came in the second half.

The Bombers had just 10 total yards of offense in the fi-

nal 24 minutes, and managed just three first downs — two coming because of G-Prep penalties.

However, Richland stayed in the game, thanks to its stout defense that allowed just one touchdown.

But that TD proved to be the difference in the game.

Quarterback Liam Bell scored on a 2-yard TD run on the first play of the fourth quarter to put the Bullpups up for good.

Richland had a chance to tie the game with under 90 seconds remaining, but Ryan Wolski had his 53-yard field goal blocked.

It was the second time on the night he had a field goal blocked.

Defensive player of the game

Richland's Alex Chapman had two second-half inter-

ceptions, including one he returned for a touchdown that gave the Bombers the lead.

On Prep's second drive of the third quarter, Chapman jumped in front of a Bell pass and returned it 61 yards for Richland's lone TD of the night.

His play with 8:44 left in the third quarter put the Bombers ahead 10-6.

Chapman came up big on the Bullpups' next drive, as the receiver fell down and Chapman was there waiting for Bell's pass.

Drive of the night

With the score 3-3 late in the first half, Prep marched the ball downfield 68 yards on 11 plays in 1:32.

The drive that started on their own 27 yard-line resulted in a Jared Kutsch 22-yard field goal with 14 seconds left before halftime, giving the

Bullpups a 6-3 lead at intermission.

Before that first drive, Prep had just 48 yards of total offense.

Missed opportunity

Richland had a great chance to take the lead late in the first half, after coming up with a fumble deep inside Prep territory.

But the Bombers came up empty.

With the score tied at 3-3, Richland recovered a Bell fumble at the Bullpups' 7-yard line.

However, a run for minus-4 yards and two incomplete passes, and it looked as if Richland was going to have to settle for a field goal.

That never happened, as Conor McKenna blocked Wolski's kick.

Prep then scored on its ensuing drive.