

Bombers rout Falcons



Richland defender John Hardy (59) knocks the ball from Hanford quarterback Desmond Samples (16) on this first-quarter sack Friday night at Fran Rish Stadium. See a photo gallery at tricityherald.com

Bob Brawdy
Tri-City Herald

Richland's defense shuts down MCC's top-ranked offense in 45-7 victory

JACK MILLIKIN
TRI-CITY HERALD

The Hanford Falcons have shown they are, without a doubt, the most improved team in the Mid-Columbia Conference.

Friday night at Fran Rish Stadium, the Richland Bombers showed they might be the best team in the MCC.

The vaunted Richland defense held Hanford's top-ranked offense in check all night, but it was the Bombers offense and special teams that really put on a show in a 45-7 MCC win.

Griffey March got the ball rolling for ninth-ranked Richland (3-1), finding a

seam and returning a Garrett Werner punt 45 yards for the Bombers' first touchdown of the night.

"It's my first one of the year. I wanted to get in end zone," said March, who later added a 17-yard touchdown reception from Paxton Stevens in the second half. "You get a couple good blocks from your teammates and see open grass, and your eyes light up. You just want to get in there."

The Falcons came in as the top-ranked offense in the MCC, but Richland had a plan to shut them down starting with their main playmaker, quarterback Desmond Samples.

The Bombers prevented Samples

from making the big plays that put him atop the MCC in passing and total offense. He came in averaging 215 passing yards and 70 rushing yards a game, but Richland held him to 151 yards passing and minus 22 on the ground.

Defensive end John Hardy was a key to keeping Samples under wraps.

"We knew he was a good quarterback, and we had to keep him inside the pocket," said Hardy, who recorded four sacks on the night. "We also had to make sure our cornerbacks had their receivers covered. They're a big passing team."

Hardy made Richland's first big state-

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BOMBERS | March, Wills each score 2 TDs

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ment on defense, forcing a fumble on his first sack and recovering it at the Hanford 32. The Bombers didn't score, but it sent a message to the Falcons they might be in for a long night.

"It was their homecoming, and we love finishing people's homecoming," Hardy said. "It's my senior year, my last year. I need to play my heart out."

Lakota Wills had another big game for Richland at running back, carrying nine times for 91 yards and two touchdowns.

Play of the game

The game was pretty much in hand for Richland when Kevon Skinner intercepted a Cade Jensen pass in Bombers territory and returned it to the Richland 2 yard line. But on the very next play, Richland cornerback Ryan Piper stepped in front of Joshua Fonner's quick out pass at the 1 and returned it 99 yards for the Bombers' final score.

Special teams standouts

Ryan Wolski had an incredible night as a placekick-

er and punter, going 6-for-6 with a 35-yard field goal and a 71-yard punt. He didn't get much of a chance to boom any kickoffs into the end zone, as the Bombers stuck to pooch kicks to keep the ball away from the Falcons' dangerous kick return men.

Richland	10	21	0	14	- 45
Hanford	0	0	0	7	- 7

SCORING PLAYS
 R - Griffey March 45 punt return (Ryan Wolski kick)
 R - FG Wolski 35
 R - Lakota Wills 37 run (Wolski kick)
 R - Wills 19 run (Wolski kick)
 R - Kyle Whitby 4 run (Wolski kick)
 R - March 17 pass from Paxton Stevens (Wolski kick)
 H - Gavin Slack 52 pass from Joshua Fonner (Woody Page kick)
 R - Ryan Piper 99 Interception return (Wolski kick)

Richland 45, Hanford 7

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STATISTICS
 RUSHING - R, McKlone Elgin 14-48, Whitby 4-10, Wills 9-91, Victor Strasser 1-7, Stevens 1-minus 4, Ben Stanfield 1-1, H, Desmond Samples 6-minus 22, Elwood Davis 9-32, Drezdyn O'Dool 1-0, Fonner 1-1
 PASSING - R, Stevens 13-24-190, Cade Jensen 1-5-1-5, H, Samples 18-31-151, Fonner 6-9-88.
 RECEIVING - R, Rhett Levin 9-63, Wolski 2-39, Alex Chapman 2-17, Elgin 1-14, March 5-89, Ryan Piper 1-9, Adam Weissenfels 1-5, Strasser 1-0, H, Josiah Richardson 8-12, Slack 4-96, Davis 5-27, Tyler Miller 1-5, Kadrick Skinner 2-49, Kevon Skinner 1-22, Joe Gauthier 2-26.