



SARAH GORDON Tri-City Herald

Richland High School's Lakota Wills (45) leaves Moses Lake's Juan Vasquez (53) and Brandon Pankratz, left, in the dust during Saturday's Class 4A state quarterfinal at Lions Field in Moses Lake. Richland won 28-23 and will play Gonzaga Prep next.

CLASS 4A STATE FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS: RICHLAND 28, MOSES LAKE 23

# Bombers rumble into semifinals

Richland will face Gonzaga Prep next weekend for spot in state championship game

Bombers 'D' forces 4 TOs in fourth quarter

QB Paxton Stevens passes for 2 TDs, 191 yards

BY TODD GOODENOUGH  
Special to the Herald

MOSES LAKE

Leave it to a pair of all-Mid-Columbia Conference first-teamers to provide just enough cushion for Richland High School in its Class 4A state football quarterfinal.

The Bombers (11-1) advanced with a hard-fought 28-23 victory over a game

Moses Lake team Saturday at Lions Field.

The win sets up a semifinal showdown against Gonzaga Prep, which gave Richland its only loss of the season. The game is tentatively scheduled for next Saturday in the Tri-Cities.

With a little more than 2 minutes to play and Moses Lake trying to rally from a 21-17 deficit, Bombers cor-

nerback Alex Chapman tipped the ball into the air. Linebacker Brecken Galliher picked it off and outraced the Moses Lake defenders 27 yards to give Richland its final points.

"Alex Chapman jumped the route and tipped the ball into the air," Galliher said. "All I thought about was grabbing it and getting into the end zone as fast as I could."

SEE BOMBERS, 2D

GALLERY

See more photos from the game at [www.tri-cityherald.com](http://www.tri-cityherald.com).

MORE INSIDE

How other area teams fared in their state quarterfinals, 8D

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## BOMBERS

"Just made a real good jump on the ball," Chapman added. "And (Galliher's) been there all year."

Moses Lake quarterback Wes Harrington connected with Ridge Montgomery for a 55-yard touchdown on the next offensive play to provide the final margin.

Richland's defense came up big in the fourth quarter, forcing four turnovers with a four-point lead.

"That's playoff football," Bombers coach Mike Neidhold said. "We said at half-time that the team who came out and executed would win. And I guess that was us."

"Moses Lake was in the quarterfinals for a reason. That's the best team we've played in the tournament."

The Bombers got off to a quick start. On the game's second offensive snap, Lakota Wills took a handoff and went 72 yards for a touchdown.

The Chiefs didn't blink, putting together a 10-play

drive to tie it up when Harrington scored from the 1.

Moses Lake recovered a fumble, and Tanner Hasse connected on a 37-yard field goal to give the Chiefs a 10-7 lead.

As the first quarter wound down, Richland appeared as if it would punt on a fourth-and-1 from its 11-yard line. But during the break, the Bombers had a change of heart. They rolled the dice, and Wills gained 6 yards to give the Bombers a first down.

From there, Paxton Stevens took over. The 6-foot-3 junior had a 22-yard run on a quarterback draw and connected with Chapman on a 48-yard diving catch inside the 5. After a penalty, Stevens found Ryan Wolski from 20 yards out to give Richland the lead for good.

Stevens finished the game 12-of-19 passing for 191 yards and two touchdowns. His second TD pass, a 47-yarder to Griffey

March, put Richland ahead 21-10. March headed up the sideline after initially being covered.

"They stopped the routes," Stevens said about the Chiefs' defense. "We just kept playing."

Moses Lake (9-3) answered with a 30-yard halfback pass from Brandon Griffith to Henry Russaw to lead into the wild fourth quarter.

"(This season) was excellent for us," Chiefs coach Todd Griffith said. "But we expected to win today, and we expected to win next week to go to the Tacoma Dome."

Richland 7 7 7 7 - 28  
Moses Lake 10 0 7 6 - 23

SCORING PLAYS  
R - Lakota Wills 72 run (Ryan Wolski kick)  
ML - Wes Harrington 1 run (Tanner Hasse kick)  
ML - Hasse 37 FG  
R - Wolski 20 pass from Paxton Stevens (Wolski kick)  
R - Griffey March 47 pass from Stevens (Wolski kick)  
ML - Henry Russaw 30 pass from Brandon Griffith (Hasse kick)  
R - Brecken Galliher 27 interception return (Wolski kick)  
ML - Ridge Montgomery 55 pass from Harrington (pass failed)

STATISTICS  
RUSHING - R, Wills 22-121, Kyle Whiteby 10-27, Stevens 4-48, ML, Draven Nevarez 22-91, Harrington 9-37, Isaiah Thomas 4-16.  
PASSING - R, Stevens 12-19-0-191, ML, Harrington 11-20-2-116, Griffith 1-1-0-30.  
RECEIVING - R, Alex Chapman 5-86, Whiteby 1-1, Rhett Levin 1-25, Wolski 1-20, Galliher 1-4, March 3-55, ML, Russaw 3-32, Thomas 2-19, Matt McCullough 1-12, Matt Vasquez 1-5, Griffith 3-21, Montgomery 2-57.



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Richland running back McKlane Elgin (28) is tackled by Moses Lake's Derick Close (50) and Mario Yepiz during Saturday's Class 4A state quarterfinal at Lions Field in Moses Lake.

## BOMBERS CHEER TEAM'S QUARTERFINAL WIN



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Richland High School's student section celebrates a touchdown Saturday during the state quarterfinal football game at Moses Lake High School. Richland won 28-23 and will play next week in the semifinals. See more photos at [www.tricityherald.com](http://www.tricityherald.com)