

LITTLE GUY, BIG PLAYER

Richland High School's Griffey March might just be the big factor when the Bombers face Moses Lake today in the quarterfinals. **Page 1D**



BOB BRAWDY Tri-City Herald

Richland's Griffey March (3) was named the Mid-Columbia Conference's All-Purpose Player of the Year this week. March and the Bombers take on Moses Lake at 1 p.m. today in the Class 4A state quarterfinals.

PREP FOOTBALL STATE QUARTERFINALS

March: Little man, big heart

“YOU CAN'T MEASURE HOW BIG HIS HEART IS. IF I HAD TO GO DOWN AN ALLEYWAY, I'D LOOK AT HIM AND SAY 'COME ON, GRIFF.'”

Richland coach Mike Neidhold

Multi-talented threat leads Richland vs. Moses Lake today

March was named MCC's All-Purpose Player of the Year

He led MCC in receptions each of the past two seasons

BY JEFF MORROW
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The Richland Bombers football team has been dominant this season, sporting a 10-1 record and using big players such as Lakota Wills, a large offensive line

and a harrasing defensive unit to overwhelm opponents.

But when the Bombers take on the Moses Lake Chiefs at 1 p.m. today at Lions Field in Moses Lake in the Class 4A state quarterfinals, one of the smallest guys on the field might just

be the biggest factor.

Griffey March, at just 5-foot-8 and 160 pounds, has been all over the field this season.

He led all Mid-Columbia Conference receivers with 43 catches for 537 yards and four touchdowns. He hits like a ton of bricks from his spot in the defensive secondary. And he had the most punt return yardage in the conference with 214 over 20 returns.

For all of this, March was named the MCC's All-Purpose Player of the Year ear-

lier this week and was a first-team all-conference selection at wide receiver and defensive back.

"It's well deserved," said Richland coach Mike Neidhold. "He does a little of everything for us. He's a

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MARCH

physical corner. He's the receiver we look to to run our offensive system. There is nothing he won't do, and there is no job too small."

You might call March driven.

He's part of a group of seniors this year who finished the 2014 season with a bad taste in their mouths of a 4-6 record.

"After last season, a lot of us were unsatisfied at how we went out," said March. "A lot of the offseason was spent getting together and building relationships. I mean, our coaches can push us all they want. It comes down to the players and how bad they want it. Lakota started it. He's the one that said we've got to buy into this."

This is a different Richland team because of that.

The defensive unit takes pride in shutting opponents down. March is part of that in the secondary.

"We're a pretty solid unit," March said. "Our front seven does a lot against the run. It's tough to run against us."

But what's really fun is to watch how that unit runs to where the ball is. Players don't stop until the officials blow the whistle.

March estimates because

of that, the Bombers have gotten anywhere from 8 to 10 extra turnovers this season.

On the receiving end, March has been a star. Last season as a junior, he led the MCC with 67 catches for 721 yards.

This year hasn't been as productive with the 43 catches, but the wealth has been spread out among numerous receivers such as Rhett Levin and Alex Chapman.

Still, March is the go-to guy when the ball is thrown.

"It's amazing, the things he does both on and off the field," said Bombers quarterback Paxton Stevens.

"He's a really good blocker. He's strong and tough. And his patterns, he's right on them no matter what. Even when he gets pushed off his route, he finds a way to get back on them. I always know where he'll be."

That's on the football field. March also plays baseball for Richland, and no, his parents didn't name him after Ken Griffey Jr.

"My full name is Griffith, but everyone has always called me Griffey," said March. "I really love football. I think it's the aspect of playing the game you may not play as much. In sum-

mer baseball, you get to play every day. In football, there are only so many games. You have to cherish it."

He does, and guys like Neidhold appreciate that.

"You can't measure how big his heart is," said Neidhold. "If I had to go down an alleyway, I'd look at him and say 'Come on, Griff.'"

March said he'd be there too.

"I don't worry about the size factor," said March. "It's whoever wants to get it the most."

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