

Sports

FRIDAY 4A PLAYOFFS | RICHLAND 37, CENTRAL VALLEY 0

Bombers enforce no-fly zone vs. CV

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Mike Neidhold loves it when a plan comes together.

This week, the Richland football coach was hoping his team would jump out to a quick lead so Central Valley's supremely talented kicker, Ryan Rehkow, would have little effect on the game. Instead, the Bombers' three-score lead at halftime forced the typically run-first Bears to throw the ball early and often.

"That's everything. That makes them have to throw the ball; it takes them out of their game plan," Neidhold said. "We knew that they would have a hard time running the ball, and the longer this thing went, the more times the ball would be in the air. That worked to our advantage with our DBs making plays and us putting pressure on their guy."

And the Bombers (10-0) certainly had the advantage, intercepting CV quarterback Conner DeGeest four times — five total takeaways — and beating the Bears 37-0 on Friday night at Lampson Stadium to advance to the state tournament.

"It was an all-out great effort, and I mean, hats off to the guys, we were flying around," said junior Josh Mendoza, who intercepted DeGeest twice and had a 12-yard reception on offense. "We watched a lot of film on these guys, so we knew kind of what they



BOB BRAWDY Tri-City Herald

Richland's Josh Mendoza gets the corner ahead of Central Valley's Braedon Orrino during Friday's playoff game at Lampson Stadium.

were going to do. But yeah, hats off to our linebackers and our DBs for playing a great game and giving it everything they had."

Richland, ranked third in the state, will face Sunny-side in the first round of the state tournament next week.

Trailing 14-0 early in the second quarter, the Bears (7-3) trotted out Rehkow for a 51-yard field goal that had the potential to turn the tide of the game. But junior Adam Weissenfels made a game-changing play of his own as he came off the left side of the CV line and blocked the kick.

In Richland's 21-20 overtime win over Kamiakin on Oct. 7 — the Bombers' most recent trip to Lampson Sta-

dium — Weissenfels made a game-winning field goal block.

"Adam Weissenfels in Lampson Stadium — every time he comes here with the idea he's gonna block a kick," Neidhold said. "That was probably his best play of the year right there on special teams. And that kicker (Rehkow) is good, he gets the ball up. Adam got to the corner, got his hand on it, and kept that zero on the board."

Weissenfels kicked a 21-yard field goal later in the second quarter to give the Bombers their halftime lead of 17-0. He went 3-for-4 on his extra points and was stellar in pass coverage from his spot at cornerback.

Gaven Brasker had a few huge plays for Richland, but the biggest was his 90-yard punt return for a touchdown after the Bombers held the Bears to a three-and-out on the first drive of the second half to make the lead 23-0.

Parker McCary scored a short touchdown run near the end of the third quarter, then Ryan Piper caught a touchdown pass from Paxton Stevens in the fourth to put the score at its 37-0 final.

Ben Stanfield was the primary offensive weapon for Richland, gaining 145 total yards on 15 touches.

Stevens completed just nine of his 18 pass attempts, but he managed to hit seven receivers. He threw two touchdowns and two interceptions.

"It was fun, it was a great time," Stevens said. "A couple times the ball got a little away from me, but I learn from those mistakes. And we got the 'W,' so we had a great game."

Central Valley	0	0	0	0	0
Richland	14	3	13	7	37

SCORING PLAYS

R — Alex Chapman 28 pass from Paxton Stevens (Adam Weissenfels kick)
R — Ben Stanfield 1 run (Weissenfels kick)
R — FG Weissenfels 21
R — Gaven Brasker 90 punt return (kick failed)
R — Parker McCary 2 run (Weissenfels kick)
R — Ryan Piper 12 pass from Stevens (Weissenfels kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING — CV, Braedon Orrino 19-93; Brayden Hamilton 1-3; Hunter Chodorowski 1-0; Conner DeGeest 3-(minus 11); team 1-(minus 18). R, Stanfield 9-116; Victor Strasser 3-26; McCary 9-17; Jared Whitby 7-24; Tyler Fishback 3-17; Cade Jensen 1-11; Stevens 1-(minus 7); team 2-(minus 2).

PASSING — CV, DeGeest 16-41-4-137. R, Stevens 9-18-2-139.

RECEIVING — CV, Billy Ames 3-45; Nathan Bannon 2-20; Micah Mason 2-19; Correy Quinn 2-18; Austin Tomlinson 2-17; Jase Edwards 1-5; Orrino 3-(minus 1); team 1-7. R, Gaven Brasker 1-45; Alex Chapman 2-35; Stanfield 2-29; Josh Mendoza 1-12; Ryan Piper 1-12; Kody Kjarmo 1-10; McCary 1-(minus 4).

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MID-COLUMBIA REPLAY

On this day in ...

1981: Mark Bircher passed for 185 yards and five TDs, while Kyle Kafentzis rushed for 104 yards, as Richland shut out Moses Lake 42-0. The Bombers finish the

regular season at 7-1 in the Big Nine Conference (8-1 overall) and head to Spokane to play Shadle Park in the first round of the state playoffs.