

# Sports



SARAH GORDON Tri-City Herald

Southridge's Hunter Spiva is brought down by Pasco's Izmael Mercado (2) after a bad kick during Thursday's football game at Lampson Stadium in Kennewick. **See more photos at [www.tricityherald.com](http://www.tricityherald.com).**

## PREP FOOTBALL

# MCC powers set for showdown

**Chiawana's dynamic rushing attack will meet a stern test against Kamiakin's stout defensive front. Hanford hosts Wa-Hi, and Richland travels to Kennewick as conference play begins.**

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Andrew Vargas has torn through opposing defenses this season, but he and the Chiawana Riverhawks will face their toughest test thus far when they take on the Kamiakin Braves on Friday at Edgar Brown Stadium.

Through two games, the

senior running back Vargas has averaged a staggering 11.1 yards on his 47 carries and has crossed the goal line nine times. Kamiakin's defense has yet to have a point scored against it while holding opponents to a Mid-Columbia Conference-best 2.78 yards per play in its nonconference games.

Unstoppable force, meet immovable object.

"We still have to get the rest of the offense rolling, but we're pretty confident," Vargas said. "I know Kamiakin, they held me last year to like 115 yards, but I'm feeling confident this year."

While the two nonconference shutouts have built hype for the Braves' defense, Riverhawks coach Steve Graff said he was most concerned about containing Kamiakin's offensive weapons — mainly quarterback Zach Borisch, tailback Jethro Questad and wide receivers Isaiah Brimmer

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*Kamiakin coach Scott Biglin on QB Zach Borisch*

and Darreon Moore, all of whom are seniors. The best chance for the Riverhawks (2-0) to neutralize the Braves' dynamic attack, which has scored 86 points in its first two games, will be to hand the ball to Vargas on offense and let him and the big, experienced Chiawana line grind out the clock and shorten the game, Graff said.

"It's going to be important for us to keep their offense off the field, to have long drives, make sure we score when we do have the ball," Graff said. "Because they can score at any time, they have all those explosive guys on offense. Hopefully we'll be able to slow them down defensively."

When the Braves (2-0) have gotten the ball into Borisch's hands this year, he's done some special things with it. He leads the conference in completion percentage (34-for-50, 68 percent) and is tied with Hanford's Garrett Horner for the most touchdown passes (8). He has also yet to throw an interception.

"This year, we kind of looked at him and said 'you've got to be the guy,' whether it's throwing the ball or running the ball," Kamiakin coach Scott Biglin said of Borisch. "His decision making has been outstanding so far. Of course, he's a 17-year-old kid; he's going to tend to make mistakes, and when he does,

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# SHOWDOWN

we've got to learn to correct them and move on from that."

Kamiakin and Chiawana played to a scoreless first-half tie when they met in Week 5 last season, but the Braves' offense erupted in the second half en route to a 35-7 victory. Graff said the team that comes out on top Friday will be the one that wins the battle in the trenches over the course of four quarters.

"I think it's going to come down to the guys up front, it usually does when two good teams play," Graff said.

Like the rest of the games this week, kickoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.

### AROUND THE MCC WALLA WALLA AT HANFORD:

Two of the MCC's top quarterbacks will square off as Horner's Falcons (2-0) host Mitchell Lesmeister's Blue Devils (1-1).

Horner began the season in a battle for the starting quarterback job, but has come out slinging through the nonconference schedule, throwing for a league-high 572 yards with eight touchdowns to lead Hanford to wins over Davis and Moses Lake.

The multi-talented Lesmeister has let his legs do

the talking for the most part, as he has ran for 290 yards — second best in the conference — with a couple of touchdowns on 35 carries. He's also thrown for 300 yards and a score.

**RICHLAND AT KENNEWICK:** The Bombers (2-0) will put their Class 4A No. 1 ranking on the line when they travel to Lampson Stadium to take on the Lions (1-1).

Richland senior receiver Alex Chapman has emerged as one of the top weapons in the MCC, as he has the most receiving yards in the conference (234) and has caught three touchdown passes from senior quarterback Paxton Stevens. Chapman also has two interceptions on the defensive end, tied for the conference lead.

Kennewick's revitalized rushing attack has yet to find much of a footing, as it ranks seventh in the MCC at 82.5 yards per game. Sophomore quarterback AJ Templeton showed a lot of improvement in the Lions' Week 2 win over Cleveland, going 12-for-20 for 195 yards passing with three touchdowns.

Other local games include Connell at Kiona-Benton, East Valley at Grandview, Selah at Othello, Quincy at

Prosser, River View at College Place, Wahluke at Columbia-Burbank, Warden at Royal, Touchet at Almira/Coulee-Hartline, Tri-Cities Prep at Irrigon, DeSales at Dayton-Waitsburg and Liberty Christian at Mabton.

Pasco (0-2) and Southridge (1-1) played the MCC opener Thursday night at Lampson Stadium.

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