

# Sports

## PREP FOOTBALL

# Vargas, Whitby, Spiva receive top all-MCC honors

Tri-City Herald

It has been a senior year to remember for Chiawana's Andrew Vargas, Richland's Brigham Whitby and Southridge's Hunter Spiva.

Vargas, Whitby and Spiva received the biggest honors when the Mid-Columbia Conference announced its 2016 all-league football teams Tuesday.

Vargas, who rushed for 2,783 yards and 42 touchdowns on 323 carries this season, was named the MCC's offensive player of the year.

Whitby was chosen as the offensive lineman and defensive player of the year.

"It feels pretty good," Whitby said. "I'm just really thankful for having a chance to get those."

Spiva was selected as the conference's special teams player of the year for his kicking and punting prowess. The first-team kicker went 32 of 37 on extra-point attempts and was 4 of 5 on field-goal attempts. Spiva punted 30 times for 1,037 yards, or 34.6 yards per punt.

Whitby's double honor did not surprise Richland coach Mike Neidhold.

"You can't block him," Neidhold said, "and he moves you the other way when he's blocking you."

High praise for a first-team offensive and defensive lineman measuring out at 6 feet and 275 pounds.

"There are some guys that are bigger that are getting recruited by, you know, Washington," Neidhold said. "There's a kid at Skyline and one at Graham-Kapowsin that are being recruited nationally. But they're 6-6 and weigh



Vargas



Whitby



Spiva

300 pounds, and if you could proportion Brigham out to 6-6, he'd be right up there with those guys."

Meanwhile, Neidhold was named the coach of the year for the second consecutive season. The Bombers (12-0) will face Skyview in the Class 4A state semifinals at 3 p.m. Saturday at Lampson Stadium.

"I think it's a tribute to our staff and not me," Neidhold said. "What that means is that we have great people, great coaches and great men that are on board and have the same vision for our kids."

Vargas said he wasn't really keeping track of how many yards he had this year for Chiawana, which lost to Skyview in the first round of the 4A state playoffs.

"My main goal is just to win," the first-team running back said. "Having a lot of yards is nice and all, but winning is the most important thing."

The offensive line, which included all-leaguers Josh Alvarez, Anthony Reisch, Ford Powers and Julian Benitez, cleared a path for Vargas numerous times during the Riverhawks' 9-2 season. He rumbled for 8.6 yards per carry.

"That was probably the best feeling this year, just

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knowing that they'll always have my back 'cause they know I'll always have their back," Vargas said. "When I was running behind them, I always felt comfortable. I wouldn't want to run behind any other line."

Vargas said Chiawana's 35-13 victory over Kamiakin in Week 3 stands out most from this year's games.

"Our whole team, we were just all fired up, first game of league," Vargas said. "All cylinders were going on our team. Our line was just doing outstanding. I had one of my best games, most yards in one game (417)."

Chiawana and Richland combined for 15 of the 28 first-team selections. Kamiakin, which will play two-time defending state champion Eastside Catholic on Saturday in the 3A semifinals, landed five first-team picks. Southridge had three first-team players, Walla Walla and Kennewick each scored two, and Hanford had one.

Richland's Alex Chapman and Kamiakin's Darreon Moore both made the first team twice, at defensive back and wide receiver. Chiawana's Alvarez was first-team OL and DL.

### 2016 ALL-MCC FOOTBALL

**Offensive Player of the Year:** Andrew Vargas, sr., Chiawana. **Offensive Lineman of the Year:** Brigham Whitby, sr., Richland. **Defensive Player of the Year:** Brigham

Whitby, sr., Richland. **Special Teams Player of the Year:** Hunter Spiva, sr., Southridge. **Coach of the Year:** Mike Neidhold, Richland.

### First team

**DB:** Hayden Carrasco, sr., Chiawana; Alex Chapman, sr., Richland; Adam Weissenfels, jr., Richland; Darreon Moore, sr., Kamiakin. **DL:** Josh Alvarez, jr., Chiawana; Brigham Whitby, sr., Richland; Jax Lee, jr., Richland; AJ Vongphachanh, so., Chiawana. **LB:** Caleb Weber, sr., Chiawana; Alex Bayuk, sr., Kamiakin; Victor Strasser, jr., Richland; Corey Bibe, sr., Southridge. **OL:** Josh Alvarez, jr., Chiawana; Anthony Reisch, sr., Chiawana; Brigham Whitby, sr., Richland; Wyatt Musser, sr., Kamiakin; Brendon Villasenor, sr., Kennewick; Dontae Powell, sr., Richland. **QB:** Zach Borisch, sr., Kamiakin. **RB:** Andrew Vargas, sr., Chiawana; Zayid Al-Ghani, sr., Southridge. **TE:** Carter Davis, sr., Walla Walla. **WR:** Alex Chapman, sr., Richland; Darreon Moore, sr., Kamiakin; Joe Gauthier, sr., Hanford. **P:** Bryar Jensen, sr., Walla Walla. **K:** Hunter Spiva, sr., Southridge. **Kickoff return:** Keyshawn Owens, sr., Kennewick.

### Second team

**DB:** Trent Simpkins, sr., Chiawana; Josh Mendoza, jr., Richland; Brycen Kelly, sr., Southridge; Sam Kori, sr., Southridge; Drew Sanderson, sr., Kamiakin. **DL:** Brennan Barberich, sr., Walla Walla; Hayden Larson, sr., Kamiakin; Anthony Reisch, sr., Chiawana; Eric Staybrook, jr., Southridge. **LB:** Garrett Guffey, sr., Richland; William Harshaw, sr., Richland; AJ Wiegand, jr., Hanford; Andrew Fridley, sr., Kennewick. **OL:** Adam Boggs, sr., Walla Walla; Ford Powers, jr., Chiawana; Julian Benitez, jr., Chiawana; Brock Wellsfry, sr., Walla Walla. **QB:** Paxton Stevens, sr., Richland. **RB:** Jethro Questad, sr., Kamiakin; Ben Stanfield, sr., Richland; Ronny Loomis, sr., Kennewick. **TE:** Russ Masterson, sr., Southridge. **WR:** Josh Mendoza, jr., Richland; Isaiah Brimmer, sr., Kamiakin; Blake Loftus, sr., Kennewick. **P:** Hunter Spiva, sr., Southridge. **K:** Ryan Lowry, so., Chiawana. **Kickoff return:** Sam Hoe, sr., Walla Walla.

### Honorable mention

**DB:** Austin Albertin, sr., Kennewick. **DL:** Braden Powell, jr., Richland; Moses McAninch, jr., Kennewick; Dimitri Fonti, sr., Hanford; Kyle Kirby, sr., Richland. **LB:** Carter Davis, sr., Walla Walla; Dillon Crawford, jr., Kamiakin. **OL:** Edwin Romero, jr., Walla Walla; Gavin Cooper, jr., Hanford. **QB:** Mitch Lesmeister, sr., Walla Walla. **RB:** Brennan Barberich, sr., Walla Walla. **TE:** Jake Stanfield, jr., Richland. **WR:** Brady White, sr., Hanford; Benson Smith, jr., Kamiakin. **K:** Bryar Jensen, sr., Walla Walla. **Kickoff return:** Trent Simpkins, sr., Chiawana.