

Skyview football team is turning early losses into postseason victories

Storm's challenging non-league schedule is key to success



Skyview's Brody Bamum throws the ball as Lake Stevens' Matt Sevaio tries to intercept in the football 4A state quarterfinals at Kiggins Bowl in Vancouver Saturday November 19, 2016. (Natalie Behring for the Columbian)

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The four teams in the Class 4A state football semifinals can be divided into two groups — the undefeated league champions and Skyview.

But the Storm's 9-3 record masks their strength and confidence heading into Saturday's semifinal against No. 3 Richland (12-0) in Kennewick.

Skyview stacked its non-league schedule with quality opponents. In fact, all five non-league foes advanced to the postseason.

And that doesn't even mention the battles the Storm endured in the 4A Greater St. Helens League.

"I've said it once, and I'll say it again: We have the best league in the state," Skyview quarterback Brody Bamum said. "Every team in our league should be in the playoffs. It's just that our league is so small that we don't get more spots to the playoffs."

Only Camas and Skyview were granted postseason berths from the 4A GSHL. Now, both are in the state semifinals.

"Only two of five team in our league get to go to the playoffs," senior Cole Grossman said. "That's a shame because our league is tough."

Bamum added: "Undoubtedly, the talent in our league is off the charts."

Even before Skyview began league play, the Storm were battled-tested.

After a season-opening win over Sunset of Beaverton, Ore., Skyview lost to Seattle schools Eastside Catholic and O'Dea.

Eastside (11-1) is ranked No. 2 in Class 3A, while O'Dea (12-0) is No. 1. Both teams will be playing in the 3A semifinals this weekend.

Skyview then posted big non-league wins over Mountain View and Columbia River before falling to Camas. Camas is No. 1 in 4A and will play in the other state semifinal against No. 2 Sumner on Saturday.

"We're glad we played those tough teams in September," Skyview coach Steve Kizer said. "We weren't so glad when we were 1-2 or 3-3. But we wanted to be challenged, and we got that."

After the loss to Camas, the Storm have run off six consecutive wins, including three in the playoffs.

Each team Skyview has beaten in the postseason had a better record than the Storm — Olympia (7-2), Chiawana of Pasco (9-1) and Lake Stevens (11-0).

Two of those wins came on the road. So travelling back to the Tri-Cities this weekend will not be daunting for the Storm.

"We got our schedule set up to do this, and it's paying off," Bamum said. "We're prepared for the playoffs and we're making a run at it."