

Sports

FRIDAY FOOTBALL

Richland shuts out Kamiakin in MCC test

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Of all the possible outcomes talked to death this week in anticipation of Friday night's game between the Richland and Kamiakin high school football teams, this one sure didn't seem likely.

After a slow start on offense, the Bombers dominated on both sides of the ball to rout the Braves 33-0 at Fran Rish Stadium, picking up their first shutout in the sixth week of the season.

"Never thought it would be a shutout, just wasn't on our radar at all," Richland coach Mike Neidhold said. "It's a tribute to our



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kids, and our defensive staff had a great plan.

"A shutout against Kamiakin, it just doesn't happen very often, and tonight it was our night."

That surprise is warranted.

Last year, Kamiakin took Richland down to the wire, and then a little past it, eventually falling in overtime, 21-20, because of an extra point that was blocked by Adam Weissenfels.

Couple that with the fact Kamiakin came into this game undefeated and ranked No. 2 in the MCC in both scoring and total offense

(both behind Richland), and this had the makings of a barn burner.

But that was on paper, and Richland's defense came to play on the biggest, brightest stage in the MCC — the natural grass at Fran Rish.

"We feel on top of the world right now," said senior lineman Jax Lee, who recorded both of the Bombers' sacks. "I'm just so happy with how we played, what we accomplished and how we executed on defense. Not just me, but the backers, the DBs, they all did their jobs. And, as expected, when you do your job, you get a zero."

It wasn't like the Braves (5-1, 3-1) were completely out-manned. Defensively, they pretty much shut



NOELLE HARO-GOMEZ Tri-City Herald

Richland's Sammy Cervantes (24) tries to break away from Kamiakin's defense while running with the ball Friday at Fran Rish Stadium.

down the Bombers on their first four possessions and forced three takeaways on the night, and in total they gained 278 yards of offense.

But the mistakes and missed opportunities piled up. A couple turnovers, too many drops and

empty trips to the red zone allowed the game to get out of control.

"We didn't capitalize on anything this game," Kamiakin coach Scott Biglin said. "We dropped a

SEE RICHLAND, 2D

FROM PAGE 1D

RICHLAND

lot of balls, missed a lot of reads. We had our opportunities in the red zone, four or five times, and we couldn't capitalize on them. ... They (Richland) are a good team, and when you don't take advantage of those things, they do that to you.

"But we've still got a great team, and we're gonna reflect back on this and hopefully we can learn from it like we did last year from our Chiawana game (a 35-13 loss)."

Despite running for his life in the early going, Richland senior quarterback Cade Jensen threw for 241 yards and three touchdowns in the first half, before turning into a game manager after halftime and finishing with 16 of 28 passing for 264 yards with two picks. But really, it was the rushing attack that allowed the Bombers (6-0, 4-0) to operate on offense, highlighted by Parker McCary's 22 carries for 110 yards.

The success on the ground quelled Kamiakin's pass rush in the first half, and let the Bombers keep the clock rolling the second.

"I think tonight's success is due to us being able to run it better than we have in the past couple weeks, and against a pretty stingy Kamiakin defense," Neidhold said. "Parker was Parker tonight. He did his whole 'I'm not going to quit running' thing. ... He's a workhorse, he can carry it 25 or 30 times a game if need be."

Richland drove 95 yards on its fifth possession of the game and scored on a 14-yard pass from Jensen to Cody Sanderson to open the scoring with a minute to go in the opening period. Then, after a quick fumble recovery, the Bombers went 47 yards in three plays and used an 18-yard pass to Weissenfels to make it 14-0.

Jared Whitby dragged three Kamiakin defenders on the final 10 yards of his 44-yard TD run to cap Richland's first

drive of the second quarter, and the Bombers made it 27-0 before half on a 58-yard catch-and-run by Nathan Mitchell. The deficit was big enough to put the game into cruise control for the final 24 minutes.

Freshman Tuna Altahir was electric as Kamiakin's change-of-pace back, leading the Braves with 67 yards on just nine carries.

"He's been awesome," Biglin said of Altahir. "We've been trying to limit what he does just because he is a freshman, it's tough on a 13-, 14-year-old kid trying to go against these men that are 18. But he's done a great job for us. He's going to get more touches as the season goes on, and he's going to be a special one for us in the future."

Kamiakin QB Payton Flynn unofficially completed just 17 of his 46 passes for 201 yards with an interception, to Weissenfels.

KAMIAKIN ABSENT FOR ANTHEM

When "The Star-Spangled Banner" played at Fran Rish, the Braves were still in locker room.

That drew some ire from the crowd, but Biglin assured the team's absence was the result of a miscommunication because the game was being televised, and in no way intended to be a protest.

"They referees told me to come out 5 minutes later than what you normally do, that's what you're told to do," Biglin said, "and they did the national anthem without us."

"I was pretty mad when it happened, because that was not our intention at all. We salute the flag, we're all for it. ... We're not about that, and I hope everyone can understand it was a miscommunication."

UP NEXT

Kamiakin: Takes on Kennewick at Lampson Stadium.

Richland: Makes the lengthy trip to Walla Walla, which is coming off its second win of the season, 26-7 over Pasco.

Kamiakin	0	0	0	0	—	0
Richland	14	13	0	6	—	33

SCORING PLAYS

R—Cody Sanderson 14 pass from Cade Jensen (Adam Weissenfels kick)
R—Weissenfels 18 pass from Jensen (Weissenfels kick)
R—Jared Whitby 44 run (Weissenfels kick)
R—Nathan Mitchell 58 pass from Jensen (kick failed)
R—Casey Perryman 5 run (kick failed)

STATISTICS

RUSHING — K, Talmage Jacobson 12-24; Tuna Altahir 9-67; Payton Flynn 4-(minus 14). R, Parker McCary 22-110; Whitby 8-61; Perryman 5-22; Tsega Macduff 2-7; Tyler Fishback 1-1; Jensen 4-(minus 19).
PASSING — K, Flynn 17-46-1-192; Colten Chelin 0-1. R, Jensen 16-28-2-264.
RECEIVING — K, Benson Smith 5-69; Champ Grayson 5-46; Chelin 4-27; team 3-52. R, Mitchell 2-69; Josh Mendoza 2-64; Weissenfels 3-57; Cody Sanderson 2-27; Sammy Cervantes 2-20; Connor Faucheux 1-13; Ryan Piper 1-9; McCary 1-2; team 2-9.

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SPORTS

Richland tramples Kamiakin, 33-0, in a surprise shutout six weeks in 1D

