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G-Prep comes up short against Richland



COLIN MULVANY/THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Gonzaga's Sam Lockett catches a 37-yard pass from quarterback Connor Halonen during a State 4A quarterfinal on Saturday at Gonzaga Prep.

Weissenfels leads Bombers to quarterfinal win

By Riley Baker
THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Adam Weissenfels had two interceptions, a forced fumble and a 24-yard touchdown reception for Richland as the Bombers defeated Gonzaga Prep 28-21 in the State 4A quarterfinals on Saturday.

Gonzaga Prep had plenty of chances to make big plays, but penalties and five turnovers

were too much for the Bullpups to overcome.

"Too many mistakes and penalties," Bullpups coach David McKenna said. "But they fought until the end, they played extremely hard and I love them and I'm proud of them."

The Bullpups stuck to the run game on their first drive before their first pass play resulted in an 18-yard touchdown. Richland came right back on its next drive to score on a 23-yard reception by Weissenfels.

Richland's defense held G-Prep scoreless for the rest of the first half. With 9 minutes left in the half, Weissenfels intercepted a Bullpups pass at the G-Prep

30-yard line that led to a 1-yard touchdown run for Richland. The Bombers went into the half leading 21-7.

"I knew they were gonna throw a lot of deep balls," Weissenfels said. "I ended up getting a couple picks, just reading the quarterback how our coaches teach us."

In the second half, G-Prep scored a pair of quick touchdowns, capped by a double-reverse trick play that saw quarterback Connor Halonen come up with the 35-yard touchdown reception, to tie the game up at 21.

After that, each team toughened up on defense. As G-Prep

was putting together a drive deep into Richland territory, Weissenfels came up big again with his second pick of the game on the 3-yard line.

"That's what he does," Richland coach Mike Neidhold said of Weissenfels. "He plays hard. He's an undersized guy who's heart is as big as his body. He does that every week, so that's just a normal game for Adam."

After the interception, the ensuing drive for Richland resulted in a go-ahead, 1-yard touchdown run from Parker McCary, who rushed for a total of 165 yards. That score decided the game as the Bombers held on for

the 28-21 victory.

Richland will next play Central Valley on Saturday in the semifinals.

"I saw a lot of fight from our Richland kids and I saw a great effort from the Gonzaga kids. Hats off to their program," Neidhold said. "We'll look at our film and see what we did wrong and get back to work tomorrow and see what Central Valley brings."

Despite the tough loss to end the year for G-Prep, Halonen said the loss doesn't define their successful season.

"We improved every single game and I feel like our offense got more confident as well as our defense," Halonen said.