



BOB BRAWDY Tri-City Herald

Kamiakin running back Luis Salgado keeps a low profile in a Sept. 9 game against Chiawana High School.

Kamiakin clinches Mid-Columbia title with perfect season

BY JEFF MORROW
Special to the Herald

Kamiakin rolled over Hanford 63-28 on Friday night, allowing the host Braves to sweep the Mid-Columbia Conference schedule with a perfect 8-0 record.

Luis Salgado scored on a touchdown run, Henry Mercado fired a TD pass to Payton Graham and ran one in himself, and Graham connected on a TD pass to Fabian Hernandez in an easy victory.

That makes Kamiakin 8-0 in MCC play (and 8-0 overall), with just a non-conference game at Sunnyside this coming Friday night.

It's the first time since 2012 that Kamiakin had either won the MCC title or earned a share of that crown.

In 2012, the Braves shared the MCC crown

with Kennewick and Hanford, all with 5-2 conference records.

In 2011 and 2010, Kamiakin was the 3A Division champion of the Big Nine Conference, with 7-0 records both seasons.

And it looks like the 4A regional playoffs are set: in the MCC, Kamiakin is the top seed, while Richland is No. 2, Chiawana is No. 3, and Pasco is No. 4.

The Greater Spokane League's top three 4A seeds are Gonzaga Prep (7-0 GSL, 8-0 overall) at No. 1, Central Valley (6-1, 6-2) at No. 2, and Lewis & Clark (3-4, 3-5) at No. 3.

On Tuesday, Nov. 2, Lewis & Clark will play Pasco in a play-in game — with the winner taking on Kamiakin on Saturday, Nov. 6.

Meanwhile, Richland and Central Valley will meet (date, time and location to be determined), and Chiawana will travel

to Gonzaga Prep for the third state berth.

In the 3A postseason, Kennewick will be the top seed out of the MCC, while the winner of Thursday's Walla Walla at Southridge contest will be the No. 2 seed.

After this weekend's contests, the 32 teams qualified for the 3A state playoffs will be ranked for the weekend and matched up (32 at 1, 31 at 2, etc.) for playoff games Nov. 5-6.

SCORES AND HIGHLIGHTS:

KENNEWICK 27, CHIAWANA 10: Kennewick High senior Myles Mayovsky led his visiting Lions over Chiawana at Edgar Brown Stadium on Friday night.

The workhorse running back had 31 touches, rushing for 140 yards on 29 carries (scoring on two 11-yard touchdown runs),

and catching two passes for another 77 yards.

As a linebacker, Mayovsky led the Lions defense too, collecting six tackles and a pressure on Chiawana quarterback JP Zamora.

Even though the winning the Mid-Columbia Conference contest was important to Mayovsky and the Lions (6-1 MCC play, 7-1 overall), it doesn't change their playoff status. They'll still be the top Class 3A seed out of the MCC.

"It's already playoff season for us," said Mayovsky. "(Beating Chiawana on Friday and Richland next week) is 100 percent the key for us. We need to win these two games. We got Chiawana tonight. Hopefully we can do that against Richland."

Two weeks after losing 34-20 to Kamiakin — "that was like a flick to our nose," said Mayovsky

— the Lions have worked their way back into a team to be reckoned with.

"We want to turn things up," said Mayovsky. "Coach Aff (Randy Affholter) has been hard on us since that loss."

Affholter said he has a purpose.

"We're just trying to get the kids prepared and focused for the games," said Affholter. "We talked about this type of team (Chiawana) is the kind of team we'll play in the tournament."

To beat Chiawana on Friday, Affholter said he wanted the Lions to establish the run. That they did with what Mayovsky accomplished.

Zamora got the Riverhawks (4-3, 4-4) on the board first by marching Chiawana's offense 79 yards on seven plays, culminating in a 4-yard TD pass to Darion Johnson.

But the Lions answered in their first series, going 65 yards in 10 plays and Mayovsky scoring his first 11-yard TD run — knotting the game at 7-7.

Chiawana re-took the lead on the next series, as Michael Kot kicked a 37-yard field goal.

It wasn't until there was 1:31 left in the first half that Kennewick took the lead for good, when Lions quarterback Dayton Davis connected with Erick Mora on a 6-yard TD pass and a 14-10 halftime lead.

Davis would finish with 176 yards passing with two scoring strikes.

"Dayton has really stepped it up this year," said an admiring Mayovsky. "All of his hard work this past summer is basically paying off."

In the second half, Kennewick opened the third quarter with a 15-play, 83-yard scoring drive. Davis connected with Simeon Howard on a 22-yard touchdown pass and a 21-10 lead.

Howard also had a good game. The senior caught 5 passes for 79 yards, had a fake punt that gained 24 yards, added two tackles (one for loss), a pass breakup, and an interception.

Chiawana's Zamora was harrassed enough that he finished 9-for-20 for 95 yards. He did add 61 yards rushing. But he was forced to run as Kennewick's secondary and linebacking

corps did a good job of blanketing Riverhawks receivers.

Perhaps the Lions' best defensive effort came with its offense. That long third-quarter scoring drive chewed up 8 minutes and 13 seconds of time out of the gate.

In all, Kennewick had the ball 29 minutes and 51 seconds. Chiawana had it for 18:09.

That didn't give Zamora — who has committed as a preferred walk-on to UCLA — much time to do anything.

"Our defense did a great job," said Chiawana coach Scott Bond. "But how many times did they have third-and-long and we gave it up?"

Eight times, to be exact — and a fourth and long situation to boot.

Linebacker Luke Leavitt led the Riverhawks with seven tackles (one for loss) and a quarterback sack, while teammate Lane Hedrick, a defensive lineman, added six tackles.

RICHLAND 40, SOUTHRIDGE 24: The host Bombers — playing at Lampson Stadium as construction work is being done on Fran Rish Stadium — scored 34 second quarter points to pull away.

Cameron Kitchens passed for 209 yards and three touchdowns in the win. Seth Shook caught two of those TD passes, while Landon Charlton rushed for 96 yards and two scores. Elijah Rodriguez added 89 yards rushing and a TD, plus a catch for 32 yards.

Lucien Cone was the big spark for Southridge, rushing 21 times for 139 yards, and catching three passes for 50 yards. James Rush added two touchdowns runs for the Suns.

HERMISTON 63, PASCO 35: Chase Elliott had his hand in eight touchdowns for host Hermiston, giving the team its first win of the season.

Elliott had five TD passes, rushed for two more, and had an 85-yard interception return for another score.

The two teams combined for 1,037 total offensive yards.

WALLA WALLA 45, RIDGELINE 0: Jake Humphrey rushed for 244 yards on 28 carries, scoring three touchdowns.