

Sports

Kamiakin remains unbeaten; Kennewick stops Richland

BY JEFF MORROW

Special to the Herald

The preliminaries are complete for high school football.

Now it's time for the main event: the postseason.

In the Mid-Columbia Conference, quarterback Henry Mercado tossed six touchdown passes in Kamiakin's 54-19 non-conference win at Sunnyside on Friday night.

That gave the Braves a perfect 9-0 regular season (8-0 in MCC play).

Meanwhile, Kennewick clinched second place on Saturday with a 27-7 win over visiting Richland.

So come this week six of the nine MCC teams have a postseason game in which they could advance to the state championship.

In Class 4A, Kamiakin will face the winner of a Tuesday play-in game that features Pasco at Lewis & Clark (6:30 p.m., Union Stadium in Spokane). Kamiakin will play that winner at Lampson Stadium on Saturday, time to be announced.

Richland will be the MCC's second seed in 4A, and the Bombers are set to play Central Valley. Details have yet to be set.

And Chiawana will be the No. 3 seed from the MCC, traveling to Spokane for a 6 p.m. game Friday at Greater Spokane League top seed Gonzaga Prep.

In Class 3A, Kennewick will play Saturday in the state's Round of 32, awaiting the winner of Tuesday's play-in game between Central Kitsap and Timberline. Kennewick's game time has yet to be set.

Meanwhile, Southridge's 21-0 win over Walla Walla on Thursday clinched a Round of 32 playoff berth, as the Suns became the second 3A seed out of the MCC.

Southridge will travel to play at Bellevue at 7 p.m. Friday.

SCORES AND HIGHLIGHTS

KAMIAKIN 54, SUNNYSIDE 19: Mercado's numbers were impressive: 22 for 37 for 310 yards passing, and those six TD passes.

Fabian Hernandez caught two TD passes and had six catches for 110 yards, while Payton Graham added eight catches for 101 yards.

Luis Salgado had a big game for the Braves, rushing 13 times for 79 yards, catching 3 passes for 42 yards, scoring four touch-



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Kamiakin quarterback Henry Mercado during a Sept. 9 game against Chiawana High School.

downs, and collecting five tackles (one for loss) at linebacker.

Sunnyside quarterback Logan Rodriguez passed for 303 yards and three TD passes. Noah McNair caught four passes for 111 yards, while Brent Maldonado added seven receptions for 108 yards and two TDs.

KENNEWICK 27, RICHLAND 7: Randy Affholter stood inside the Kennewick locker room after his Lions shut down visiting Richland on Saturday, reminding his players of what is to come.

"The games to remember," he told his squad, "are played in November

and December."

But this victory over the Bombers was pretty memorable for the Lions, who finished second in the MCC standings with a 7-1 conference record, 8-1 overall.

Kennewick senior quarterback Dayton Davis finished with a 12-for-20 passing performance for 233 yards and three touchdown passes.

Offensively, the Lions just hung on to the ball — their time of possession was 31 minutes, 23 seconds, to Richland's 15:37.

"(Defensively) we just couldn't get off the field in the third quarter," admitted Richland coach

Mike Neidhold, whose team is 6-2 MCC, 7-2 overall.

Defensively, after Bronson Childs, who led Kennewick's defense with 7 tackles (2 for loss), the Lions leaders were spread out. DB Andre Breedlove had 4 tackles and a pass breakup; Mayvosky, at linebacker, added 4 tackles (one for loss); DB Austin Stoddard had 3 tackles (one for loss), and a cover; and LB Kellen Weibel added 2 tackles (one for loss), a quarterback sack and a pass breakup.

Richland's defenders had some big numbers by virtue of being on the field so long. Landon Charlton had 8 tackles, a forced fumble and a fumble recovery; Kalani Steward added 9 tackles (2 for loss); and Isaya Galvez had 7 tackles (one for loss), a fumble recovery and a cover.

CHIAWANA 63, PASCO 7: The host Riverhawks won the annual Gravel Pit bowl, taking advantage of four Bulldog turnovers.

Ian Mohl scored three touchdowns for Chiawana — two rushing scores, and a 60-yard kickoff return. JP Zamora had 135 yards passing, with 82 of them going to Marco Elizondo for a touchdown play.

SOUTHRIDGE 21, WALLA WALLA 0: The Suns defense forced four Blue Devils turnovers en route to the shutout Thursday at Lampson Stadium.

Albersh Kuwa scored on two 2-run touchdown runs in the first half, and Lucien Cone finished the scoring with a 47-yard TD run in the second half for Southridge.

Cone finished the game with 113 total yards — 69 yards rushing on 9 carries, and 44 yards of two catches.

HERMISTON 22, HANFORD 21: Chase Elliott connected on a 50-yard touchdown pass to Caden Hottman with 3:07 left in the game, leading visiting Hermiston to a win over the host Falcons.

Elliott finished the game with 283 yards passing and three TD passes.

Kevin Hester led Hanford with 143 yards rushing on 19 carries and three touchdowns.

MCC FOOTBALL FINAL STANDINGS

Kamiakin 9-0 MCC, 9-0 overall

Kennewick 7-1, 8-1

Richland 6-2, 7-2

Chiawana 5-3, 5-4

Southridge 3-5, 4-5

Walla Walla 2-6, 3-6

Hermiston 2-6, 2-7

Pasco 2-6, 2-7

Hanford 1-7, 2-8

Oct. 28: Southridge 21, Walla Walla 0

Oct. 29: Chiawana 63, Pasco 7; Hermiston 22, Hanford 21; Kamiakin 54, Sunnyside 19.

Oct. 30: Kennewick 27, Richland 7

Tuesday, Nov. 2: 4A regional play-in:

Pasco vs. Lewis Clark, Union Stadium,

Spokane, 6:30 p.m. (Loser out)

4A regional playoffs: Pasco/LC winner

at Kamiakin; Central Valley at Richland;

Chiawana at Gonzaga Prep (6 p.m., Friday).

3A Round of 32 regional playoffs:

Central Kitsap-Timberline winner at

Southridge at Bellevue, 7 p.m., Friday.

Non-playoff crossovers: Ferris at Walla

Walla, 6 p.m., Friday; Ridgeline at Hermiston, 7 p.m., Friday.

Jeff Morrow is former sports editor for the Tri-City Herald.