



TONY OVERMAN toverman@theolympian.com

Kennewick senior wide receiver Simeon Howard (center) is comforted by sophomore teammate David Wacenske as time expires on the Lions' 17-13 loss to the Bellevue Wolverines in Saturday's 3A football state championship game in Puyallup. At left is senior lineman Santos Flores.

# Kennewick's run ends in 3A state title loss to Bellevue

BY JEFF MORROW  
Special to the Herald

Kennewick's exciting post-season run to a state football championship fell just short on Saturday, as the Lions lost to Bellevue 17-13 in the 3A title game at Sparks Stadium in Puyallup.

"We had a great year," said Kennewick head coach Randy Affholter, whose team finishes the season with a 12-2 record.

"We can't complain about it. Three times we came over the hill (the Cascade mountains) and played the 3, 2 and 1 seeds. And we were 4 points short of winning the state title."

The No. 6-seeded Lions had a great three week run, beating No. 3 O'Dea 27-21 at Seattle's Memorial Stadium in the state quarterfinals, then stopping No. 2 Eastside Catholic 14-7 in the state semifinals, before falling to top seed Bellevue in the finals.

Bellevue's Wing-T offense caused Kennewick's defense problems with its misdirection, and the Wolverines rolled up 380 yards of total offense — all gained on the ground.

Bellevue's William Wang led the way, carrying the football 33 times for 243 and two touchdowns. Wang averaged 7.4 yards a carry, and as a team, the Wolverines



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Kennewick senior wide receiver Austin Stoddard sits on the turf as Bellevue players celebrate a late-game interception.

averaged 6.7 yards a carry.

Still, it was a one-score game because Kennewick was able to keep Bellevue out of the end zone at key times.

The Wolverines jumped out to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter, as Wang scored on a 2-yard run and Wiley Bryant kicked a 21-yard field goal.

But Kennewick wasn't going to fold, as the Lions marched 69 yards in eight plays following Bryant's field goal to score a touchdown.

Lions senior Myles Mayovsky plowed in from the 2 for the touchdown, cutting Bellevue's lead to 10-7.

In the third quarter,

Wang found an opening in the middle of the line and raced 64 yards for a touchdown, giving Bellevue a 17-7 lead.

Again, Kennewick answered back.

Kennewick quarterback Dayton Davis flipped Mayovsky a screen pass at the Lions 33. Mayovsky turned upfield, then cut hard to the left while breaking a few tackles.

Suddenly, he had a wall of blockers to escort him to the end zone for a 67-yard touchdown play.

"I saw everyone coming at me so fast," Mayovsky told the Herald. "It was wet and slippery out there. But it was awesome."

The snap was fumbled on the extra-point attempt, and Kennewick cut Bellevue's lead to 17-13 with 1:56 left in the third quarter.

Still plenty of time left.

But that was as close as the Lions could get, as the Wolverines defense kept Kennewick away from the end zone in the fourth quarter.

Bellevue's Colin Miller had a diving interception of a Davis pass with 3:28 remaining at midfield, and the Wolverines were able to run out the clock for the win to finish 14-0.

Despite the disappointment of the loss, Affholter was happy about the Lions' entire season per-

formance.

"These kids have done everything we've asked them to do this year," said Affholter. "I thought when we started the season we had a good shot (of getting to the state title game). I thought we had some good kids who bought into what we were doing."

And the Lions — and 4A state semifinalist Kamia-kin — opened some eyes on the west side of the quality of play in Eastern Washington.

"You better believe there is some good football played on this side of the state," added Affholter. "Our league (the Mid-Columbia Conference) prepares you for the season."

Mayovsky finished the game rushing 24 times for 83 yards, and he caught two passes for 73 more yards.

Davis finished completing 7 of 14 passes for 146 yards.

"We had our chances to win," said Mayovsky. "Right now, I'm in a mood. I hate losing. But it really was a great season."

Defensively, Mayovsky led Kennewick from his linebacker position with 13 total tackles (7 solo), while defensive back Simeon Howard added 9 tackles (7 solo), David Wacenske had 10 total tackles (5 solo), and linebacker Bronson Childs finished with 9 tackles (3 solo).

Bellevue's Wang finished his season with 2,069 yards rushing and 25 touchdowns.

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