

PREP FOOTBALL

Bolt strikes big for Mustangs football

Junior QB throws four TD passes as Prosser offense enjoys a big day

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YAKIMA, Wash. -- Tanner Bolt pitched the ball around Zaepfel Stadium like an expert marksman Saturday afternoon, connecting on 21 of 31 passes for 255 yards and four touchdowns and during one stretch in the second half completed eight in a row.

So, like a good junior should, the first thing he talked about after Prosser's 31-0 quarterfinal humbling of Ellensburg was the running game.

"Our offensive line and running backs were awesome," Bolt said. "We were physical up front, and that running game made us a lot more balanced. Being two-dimensional was huge today."

Bolt wasn't trying to be politically correct, he was spot on.

Prosser's young quarterback actually threw for more yards when the CWAC rivals met last month in league play, but with a mostly ineffective ground game — 60 yards on 18 carries — the Mustangs had trouble sustaining drives and ultimately fell 27-26 in overtime.

In Saturday's rematch, with some personnel changes on the line that resulted from the loss, Prosser nearly tripled its rushing production with six backs combining for 164 yards on 46 carries. Thomas Niemeyer and Kolby Swift were moved into the right side of the

line, and all-leaguer Riley Lusk was back at guard after missing the first game on Oct. 16.

“We had to make some changes up front and fortunately we have selfless kids who are all about the team,” said Prosser coach Corey Ingvalson. “Having that running game makes us more physical, and today it gave us exactly what we needed.”

With the complementary piece intact, Bolt and his receivers took off, accounting for all four touchdowns with a variety of short and deep routes. Bolt hit Javier Diaz on a slant over the middle for a 15-yard score in the first quarter, and then the offense and defense worked together for a two-score, 42-second barrage early in the second period that essentially settled the matter.

Bolt connected with Roy Borrego on a 35-yard sideline fade at the 10:58 mark and, after Michael Kernan’s interception on the ensuing play, Prosser went right back to the same play with Bolt finding Borrego for a 16-yard score at 10:16. Ellensburg’s defense was much tighter on Borrego’s second grab, but Bolt’s throw and the catch were also better.

“If you’re going to play man (defense) on us, we’ll go for it,” Bolt said. “We saw that, and it was worth a shot again. Getting those two quick scores back-to-back was big for our momentum.”

Bolt added a fourth score in the third quarter, hitting Kernan out of the backfield for a 25-yard tackle-breaking scamper that extended the margin to 28-0. It was Bolt’s 38th touchdown pass of the season, and Kernan was his eighth different receiver in the game.

“Ellensburg is a great team and you can’t beat them just throwing the ball,” Bolt said. “Having the running game today was the biggest thing that helped us. The way the defense has picked it up and now our running game is going strong — we’re ready for next week and to keep this season going.”