

Prosser junior quarterback Bolt battle back from struggles

By Scott Spruill - Yakima Herald
sspruill@yakimaherald.com

YAKIMA, Wash. -- Prosser's coaching staff studied the film, found a potential weakness and committed fully to a plan.

And then Tanner Bolt went out and threw four interceptions.

But instead of completely unraveling, the plan not only endured its setbacks but prevailed spectacularly as the Mustangs romped to their 33-21 victory over Sedro-Woolley in the Class 2A state semifinals Saturday at Zaepfel Stadium.

That's what this Prosser team does — endure and prevail.

Two of Bolt's picks halted drives in the opening period, the third came on the first possession of the second half and the fourth thwarted a drive in the final period. But everything else was spot on and there was plenty.

Seeing an opportunity against tight and congested interior defense, Prosser's coaches called for Bolt to work the edges at tempo with short- to medium-range routes on the perimeter. The junior quarterback, who rolled out and threw on the run frequently, responded by completing 29 of 47 passes for 312 yards — all season highs.

"Playing with our pace would be our biggest advantage, and with so many (Sedro-Woolley) players in the box we pride ourselves on being able to throw it," explained Prosser coach Corey Ingvalson. "With that pace we hoped in the third and fourth quarters they would wear down and then we'd run it.

Prosser's first 10 offensive plays were passes and the Cubs picked off two.

But Bolt and his receivers just kept coming.

On Prosser's first six possessions, Bolt connected on 8 of 18 passes and trailed 14-6. On the next nine possessions he was 21 of 21 for 207 yards as the Mustangs pulled away.

"Those four interceptions — I'm sure glad these guys have my back," he said. "Maybe I forced it a little early, but they made some great plays on the ball, too. It got better and I got in a rhythm. The plan was to roll out and go outside a lot, and I knew I'd be throwing a lot. It just took a little while to settle in. Still, though, four picks. That can't happen."

Bolt connected with 10 different receivers as Javier Diaz hauled in nine receptions for a season-high 155 yards and Kason Blair grabbed six for 61 yards.

"They like to play five, 10 yards off, so we threw a bunch of short stuff," Diaz noted. "That kind of game is fun."

Bolt is 29 yards from reaching 3,000 for the season and has 40 touchdown passes. Like his team, Ingvalson likes how his quarterback sheds adversity and moves on.

"With the amount of times we were going to throw, I knew there would be some mistakes and their DBs would make some plays," the coach said. "There was only one pick that I was mad about, other than that he kept fighting. Tanner has been really good about playing each play and living in the moment. He has a setback and moves on. That's the way this entire team has been. Whatever happens, they're ready for the next play.

Next up, playing for a state championship.