

Prosser WRs find fresh approach on offense

Coach Ingvalson uses 'pod' approach to keep offense fresh

9 Prosser receivers have caught at least 1 TD pass

Mustangs will face Tumwater for 2A state title Saturday

Even before he coached his first game for the Prosser High School football team, Corey Ingvalson had a vision for the Mustangs' offense.

Here's the gist of it: Stop us if you can.

Ingvalson's vision included not just a smart, athletic quarterback who can deliver the ball, but a virtual clown car of receivers that just keeps coming at you offensively.

His vision was realized this year with a system that employs two "pods," each a platoon of four receivers that alternates every three plays during the game. The idea was to maintain a fast pace in Prosser's prolific air attack while still allowing his receivers a chance to recover.

"(The receivers) have been good about a team-first attitude," Ingvalson said. "Sometimes statistics are sacrificed, but we feel it helps us on our explosive plays. That's evident in our yards per catch. We have three guys (Kason Blair, Javier Diaz and Roy Borrego) with over 600 yards receiving and (the same) three guys with at least eight touchdown catches.

"But everyone in both pods has at least one catch for a touchdown."

Ingvalson noted that the pod approach is good for the defense, on which most of the players are either starters or significant contributors.

"To be able to play four quarters at a high level — which is important to us — and when you're going as fast as we are, these guys need a break," Ingvalson said. "I got the pod idea from some colleges, especially the air-raid offenses. I really

bought into the idea and thought it would be the best thing for our offense moving forward.”

The first pod consists of Blair, Borrego, Diaz and Jay Dee Munn, who have combined for more than 100 catches, 2,000 yards and 27 touchdowns. The second pod of Logan Hamlin — who replaced the injured Justin White — Luis Fernandez, Ky Swift and Eddie Zepeda doesn’t have such lofty numbers — Zepeda leads the pod with 14 catches for 210 yards and two TDs — but quarterback Tanner Bolt knows he can count on anyone in the group to deliver in the clutch.

“There are guys you like to see in 1-on-1 coverage. If I see a certain guy 1-on-1, I’m going to try to get it to him. But we have so many great guys. We’re like that all over the board. If teams want to go 1-on-1 against anyone and press, we’re good with it,” said Bolt, who has passed for more than 3,000 yards and 40 touchdowns this season. “We have so many great receivers. You can read both sides of the field and pick your poison. So that’s very nice as a quarterback.”

Bolt said the team bonded over the summer, attending the Boise State camp and lighting things up with 7-on-7 drills. That helped the Mustangs pick up the nuances of Ingvalson’s offense.

“Even before spring, we were lucky to play some 7-on-7 by ourselves, which really helped to learn the plays,” Bolt said. “Then we got with coach Ingvalson, who does a good job teaching schemes. Then we got our reps over the summer.”

Romaine Smith, the Mustangs’ receivers coach and former Eastern Washington University receiver, appreciates that Prosser’s receivers don’t get caught up in a battle of egos. He remembered a game against Quincy (a 55-0 Prosser win) in which Diaz recognized a mismatch and called a play that would put the ball in Blair’s hands while he blocked downfield.

“He comes to the sideline and said: ‘Hey, coach. Call that play. I want to block the corner again,’ ” Smith said. “This is a wide receiver coming off the field asking for a play where he can block somebody. That’s the best way to describe this group. They’re all trying to succeed.”

Players are often rewarded for that type of sacrifice. Diaz had his moment in the spotlight Saturday during the Mustangs’ 33-21 win over Sedro-Woolley in the Class 2A state semifinals at Zaepfel Stadium in Yakima. The gritty senior caught

nine passes for 208 yards, including a 71-yard touchdown catch-and-run he broke after a downfield block by Borrego.

“It’s a big thing for us. If we don’t get the ball, that’s the first thing we look for — a chance to get a block for your teammates,” said Borrego, who also had a touchdown catch in the semis. “I was in the right place to do it for Javy at the right time. As soon as one of the players gets the ball, I sprint to try to get a block. They do the same for me.”

Blair made sure to add that the receivers can’t do it without the other players on the field. If all you can do is throw the ball, defenses will catch on quickly and adjust.

“To keep our passing game going, we need to feed the big guys inside and keep our running game going. That will keep them honest in the secondary,” Blair said. “It’s all about scoring touchdowns. We run, we pass. If Roy catches it or Javy catches it, it doesn’t matter to anybody else.”