

2A football: Riley Lusk, Prosser hang on to beat Tumwater

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By [Sandy Ringer](#)

Special to The Seattle Times

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The senior lineman smothered a fumble at his own 10-yard line with 30 seconds left to preserve Prosser High School's 22-15 victory over top-ranked Tumwater in the Class 2A state championship game Saturday at the Tacoma Dome.

It was a wild finish to a game involving two tradition-rich programs and gave the Mustangs their fifth title, but first since 2007. Prosser (13-1) also avenged a narrow semifinal loss to Tumwater in 2013, when Lusk was a sophomore starter.

“As a kid I've dreamt about this,” said Lusk, with a bloodied nose and tears in his eyes. “I've dreamt about it for a long time, and it's a dream come

Tumwater (13-1) had an opportunity to foil that dream after Cade Otton provided some late-game heroics for the second week in a row, forcing and recovering a fumble at the Prosser 37 with 1:09 to play.

Otton's late recovery against Archbishop Murphy in the semifinals helped the Thunderbirds come from behind and reach the championship game.

This time, though, they fumbled it back after driving to the 10 as quarterback Spencer Dowers was hit by Kolby Swift. The ball squirted in the air and the 6-foot-1, 245-pound Lusk grabbed it. He had the ball stripped, but was able to fall on it.

"I just saw the ball pop up and it landed right in my arms," Lusk said. "It got knocked out again and I landed on it again. I had the biggest grip on the ball. I'd never let go of that ball in my life. I got punched, I got kicked, I didn't know what was going on, but this is mine. I got the ball and we got the win."

Junior quarterback Tanner Bolt completed 21 of 35 passes for 280 yards and three touchdowns, the last with 19 seconds left in the first half as Prosser opened up a 22-8 lead.

"Growing up in Prosser, it's a football town, this is what you dream about," he said, recalling the school-boy days of playing football at recess with many of these same teammates. "When you're playing, you're dreaming about playing for a state

title. Playing for Prosser with the great tradition we have, the legacy we have, we really take pride in continuing that and I think we did that today.”

Coach Corey Ingvalson is in his first year as head coach, but played for the 1999 championship team and was an assistant to legendary Tom Moore on the 2007 team that won. He credited his defense, which forced five turnovers (four interceptions).

“If there’s a better defense in the state, I’d like to see it,” he said.

Hall of Fame coach Sid Otton was bidding for his sixth championship and first since 2010. Instead, the T-birds lost in the final for the third time in the past four years.

“That was a great performance by Prosser,” he said. “Two great teams having at it. We made a few too many mistakes on offense.”