

Prep Football: Mustangs advance to state with win over WV - Spokane

Prep Football

Yakima Herald-Republic

PROSSER, Wash. - With its offense running understandably cold in frigid conditions Tuesday night, Prosser turned up the heat defensively against West Valley of Spokane at Art Fiker Stadium. The Mustangs forced seven turnovers, held the Eagles to 95 yards of offense and rode Isaiah Sanders' three rushing touchdowns to a 25-12 play-in victory to advance to the Class 2A state playoffs.

Prosser travels to Clarkston, which defeated Ephrata 21-14 on Tuesday, for a first-round contest at 1 p.m. Saturday. With temperatures dipping below freezing, and with winds amplifying the wintry conditions, neither offense got much going Tuesday. Prosser, which has scored more than 40 points seven times this season, was limited to 237 yards of offense. West Valley, meanwhile, had trouble just getting the ball snapped.

The Eagles had eight fumbles - most coming from the quarterback unable to handle the shotgun snap from center - and fifth-ranked Prosser was able to pounce on four of them. Even when West Valley's offense wasn't derailed by botched snaps, the Eagles were stymied.

"Awesome defensive performance," Mustangs coach Benji Sonnichsen said. "We got some guys back healthy and we just played lights out. We beat them up front, dominated the line of scrimmage like we wanted to and we just made play after play." The Eagles, who finished the season 5-5, mustered just 11 yards rushing and the 12 points were the lowest output for West Valley since a season-opening loss to Lakeland of Rathdrum, Idaho.

Prosser (9-2) intercepted West Valley quarterback Hunter Wright three times, and Javier Diaz returned one of pick for a 36-yard touchdown in the fourth quarter. "We

caused a lot of havoc up front and that was the gameplan - getting after them," Sonnichsen said.

Sanders, who had been sidelined late in the season, provided all the offensive punch Prosser needed. The senior had 20 carries for 75 yards and had two scoring runs of 6 yards and another from a yard out. "We came out and knew that the wind was going to be here, so we had to run the ball a lot," Sanders said. "I knew coming back that I had to give everything I got because of the playoffs, and I have trust in my offensive line and I wouldn't have done anything without them."

Clarkston is 9-1 and ranked ninth. The Bantams were the Great Northern League champs with their lone conference rival East Valley. "You know it's a three-hour bus ride and a quick turnaround, but it's a quick turnaround for them," Sonnichsen said. "And I just think that this team wants to keep going."

West Valley-Spo. 0 6 0 6 - 12

Prosser 7 6 6 6 - 25

Pro - Isaiah Sanders 6 run (Javier Diaz kick)

Pro - Sanders 6 run (kick failed)

WV - Jace Malek 1 run (kick failed)

Pro - Sanders 1 run (kick failed)

Pro - Diaz 36 interception return (pass failed)

WV - Tevin Duke 6 run (kick failed)

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING - West Valley, Hunter Wright 4-(minus 13), Malek 13-35, Connor Koker 3-(minus 2), Hunter Ferguson 4-(minus 1), Duke 4-14, Martin Herford 3-(minus 20), Michael Chan 4-(minus 2). Prosser, Sanders 20-75, Adrian Lochrie 12-51, Thomas Niemeyer 5-31, Kason Blair 3-19, team 1-(minus 2).

PASSING - West Valley, Wright 9-18-3-84, Chan 0-3-0-0. Prosser, Blair 4-10-1-53, Tanner Bolt 1-7-1-9.

RECEIVING - West Valley-Spokane, Christian Medlin 1-11, Duke 2-36, Taylor Morton 3-15, Malek 2-15, Alex Hall 1-7. Prosser, Cardell Jones 2-38, Sanders 2-18, Michael Kernan 1-6.