

Cougars take Civil War!



Ash Gibson (42) attacks the Lava Bear defense on Friday night helping lead Mountain View over Bend 27-26 in the 2007 Civil War game.

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In a game built up around its offensive stars, the 27th annual Civil War came down to one defensive stand.

Mountain View held on for a thrilling 27-26 victory Friday night at Bend High's Punk Hunnell Stadium, stopping the Lava Bears' two-point conversion try with 23 seconds left in the game.

"It was the tale of two games," said Mountain View coach John Nehl, whose team led 27-0 at the half before giving up 26 straight points after halftime. "I sure liked the first half better."

After dominating the Bears for two quarters, the Cougars (6-0 Intermountain Conference, 9-0 overall) came out flat in the second half, turning the ball over twice and going three-and-out on two of their first three possessions.

But Mountain View came up big when it had to, knocking down Bend quarterback Beau Walker's two-point conversion pass in the end zone and then recovering an onside kick to hang on for the victory, claiming sole possession of the IMC championship.

“We stepped up and figured out how to do it,” said senior Mountain View linebacker and running back Ash Gibson. “It was an amazing game with a great atmosphere, but we have to play better than that.”

With an estimated 6,000-plus fans in attendance, the IMC title bout had the air of a state-playoff matchup.

Gibson finished the night with 208 rushing yards and two touchdowns on 37 carries in addition to throwing a 17-yard touchdown pass to Josh Young.

“I don’t care if it’s 5A or 6A, Ash Gibson’s the best running back in the state,” Bend’s Beau Walker said. “And on defense, he’s all over the field.”

Despite trailing 27-0 at the half, the Bears (5-1 IMC, 7-2 overall) gave themselves a chance at victory by scoring 26 points in the third and fourth quarters. After compiling just 29 yards of total offense in the first two quarters, Bend came alive after the intermission, racking up 200 yards in the game’s final 24 minutes.

Walker was especially impressive after a rocky start, completing nine of 15 passes for 90 yards and two touchdowns in the second half.

“I felt good about what we did in the second half,” said Lava Bear coach Craig Walker. “We’ve got a great feeling going into the playoffs.”

There was no doubt that Craig Walker was going for two points after Bend drove 80 yards in three minutes to get the Bears within one point of the Cougars.

“We’d talked about it about three plays before,” said the veteran Bend head coach, whose team put together a 14-play touchdown drive to make the score 27-26 after Mountain View missed a 30-yard field goal. “We’d had a fourth down and converted ... and had practiced that specific play in practice for two-point conversions.”

Beau Walker looked for tight end Clint Schumacher before throwing into traffic across the middle when Cougar linebacker Mike Warsaw knocked down the pass and ended the Bears’ comeback attempt. Bend tried an onside kick on the ensuing kickoff, but Warsaw again came through in the clutch, falling on the loose ball.

“It was on the ground on some guy’s legs and I just grabbed it,” Warsaw said. “I knew we’d won it when they whistled it ‘white ball.’”

In addition to the IMC title, the Cougars also clinched a home game in the second round of the playoffs. After sitting out week one of the postseason with a bye, Mountain View will host No. 3-ranked Sherwood in two weeks.

The Lava Bears, with the IMC’s No. 2 seed, will travel to Portland Interscholastic League champion Madison, also in two weeks.