

Cougars Fall to Fourth Ranked Century



Century quarterback Kody Butcher, left, gives a stiff arm to Mountain View's Luke Cesar during the Jaguars' 33-21 win on Halloween night at Hillsboro Stadium. - Photo by Michal Thompson / The Argus

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by Steve Poehler

For Halloween, Logan Kotzian dressed up as Barry Sanders, and the Century defense wore costumes resembling the vaunted "Steel Curtain" of the Pittsburgh Steelers, ala the 1970s.

Figuratively, of course.

But they might as well have.

After all, Kotzian went untouched 65 yards for a touchdown on the Jaguars' first play from scrimmage. In the meantime, the Century "D" held the vaunted Mountain View offense in check for most of the night.

The end result: A commanding 33-21 victory for the Jaguars in the regular-season finale Friday night at Hillsboro Stadium.

"The line did a great job," Kotzian said of his scoring run, which put Century up 6-0 with 9:57 to go in the opening quarter. "I came through the hole, and it was just open."

Because both teams had already been locked into their respective playoff positions, the Class 5A nonleague contest officially didn't have any bearing.

Don't tell that to the players, however, as the match-up featured the fourth-ranked Jaguars (9-1) and the No. 5 Cougars (7-2).

With a potential preview of a state semifinal contest between the squads looming in the postseason, as well.

"Century's a good football team," Mountain View head coach Steve Turner said. "They've got a really strong defense, and they've got a lot of good athletes."

The victory wrapped up the best-ever regular season for the Jaguars, who earned the No. 2 seed of the Northwest Oregon Conference with a 5-1 mark.

After a first-round bye, they will open the postseason Friday, Nov. 14, at Crater, while the Cougars also received a bye and are scheduled to host Friday's winner between Silverton and Hilhi in Round 2.

"Ever since that Sherwood loss (19-7 on Sept. 26), we've been coming back strong, and right now, we're hitting our peak," said Century quarterback Kody Butcher, whose club has won five in a row since its lone defeat to the current third-ranked and NWOC-champion Bowmen (9-1, 6-0). "So we're on a roll right now, and this game is definitely a big confidence booster for us heading into the playoffs."

Indeed, the win came against the Intermountain Conference champions from Mountain View, which prior to Friday had lost just once, while outscoring its opponents 264-91.

That all changed on Halloween, however, as Kotzian broke loose for a game-high 91 yards and the momentum-sparking score, and Butcher added 67 yards on the ground with two touchdowns, in addition to 78 yards through the air and one TD.

Also, the Jaguars' defense gave up 294 yards passing -- but a whopping minus-four yards rushing, with three sacks and a pair of interceptions by Tre' Moreland and Dillon Garcia.

"He's so fast," Century head coach Bill Smith said of Kotzian. "If he gets to the open field, if someone's chasing him, they're not going to catch him."

The Jaguars, behind a solid running attack that racked up 251 yards, jumped ahead 13-0 early in the second quarter and then 20-7 by halftime.

Of course, after taking a 26-7 advantage into the final period, Century had to withstand a furious comeback attempt by the Cougars -- who scored two touchdowns in the fourth to pull within 26-21.

But Butcher capped the win with a 23-yard sprint around the right side and into the end zone with 1:30 left on the clock.

On his way to the sidelines, a pumped-up Butcher got this congratulations from a Jaguars assistant coach: "Way to go, Kody. Way to win us the game."