

Cougars romp to win!



Mountain View's Javier Herrera (67) celebrates after recovering a fumble on Hermiston's first play from scrimmage on Thursday night at **Mountain View**. Hermiston committed seven turnovers in the game. *(Photo by Rob Kerr / The Bulletin)*

Mountain View forces seven Hermiston turnovers in game pitting two of IMC's best

By [Beau Eastes](#) / *The Bulletin*

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The Intermountain Conference football race is clear as mud after Mountain View's 31-16 victory over Hermiston on Thursday night.

The Cougars (3-1 IMC, 5-1 overall), who bounced back from a 7-0 loss to Summit last week, are now tied for second place in the conference with the Bulldogs (3-1 IMC, 3-3 overall).

Led by Pat Cashman's two interceptions — one of which he returned 40 yards for a touchdown — Mountain View forced seven turnovers and handed Hermiston its first league loss of the season. Summit, which defeated Crook County 14-0 on

Thursday night, now leads the IMC with a 3-0 record. The Storm (4-3 overall) hosts Hermiston in two weeks.

“Our front four played tough,” Cashman said about the Cougars’ defensive line which harassed Bulldog quarterback Faafiula Ena the entire night.

“That was the difference in the game. (In previous games) he’s had a lot of time to throw and pick out receivers.”

Mountain View’s defense set the tone for the night on the game’s first play from scrimmage, stripping the ball from Hermiston running back Tyler Green at the Bulldogs’ 27-yard line. The Cougars scored six plays later when Scott McCreery scampered 18 yards around the left side of the line to give Mountain View a 7-0 lead less than three minutes into the game.

“That’s the best game I’ve seen him play,” Cashman said about McCreery’s 240-yard, three-touchdown effort. “He was awesome.”

The Cougars scored two more times in the first half to take a 17-0 lead before Hermiston finally answered with a field goal. McCreery capped a seven-play, 70-yard drive with a 28-yard run with 38.9 seconds left in the first quarter for Mountain View’s second touchdown.

Sophomore kicker Skyler Laughlin extended the Cougars’ lead to 17 points with a 27-yard field goal with 6:02 left in the half.

“Obviously this puts us back in the (IMC) race,” said Mountain View coach Steve Turner, whose team hosts The Dalles-Wahtonka next Friday. “But none of this means anything if we don’t win next week.”

With snow falling during most of the second half, the Cougars burned the clock on offense and created turnovers on defense. Hermiston turned the ball over on its first four possessions after halftime, its misery culminating when Cashman returned his second pick of the night for a touchdown, making the score 24-3 Mountain View with 34.3 seconds left in the third quarter.

“Our defensive coordinator, Wayne Purcell, does such a good job preparing these kids,” Turner said. “He’s been doing it now for three years.”

While Cashman shined on defense, McCreery was the force behind the Cougars’ offense. The senior tailback took several direct snaps from a shotgun formation and carried the ball a career-high 35 times.

In the fourth quarter, McCreery ended any hope of a Hermiston comeback with his third touchdown of the night. On fourth and two from the Bulldog 24-yard line, McCreery, with a great downfield block by Cashman, burst down the left sideline to make the score 31-10.

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