

Cougars move on!



Mountain View's Pat Cashman runs for a touchdown on a 44-yard reception in the first half against Silverton during their Class 5A second-round state football playoff game at Mountain View High School on Friday night.

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Mountain View uses defense to hold off Silverton in second round

Pete Erickson / The Bulletin

The playoff hot streak continues for the Mountain View football team.

With a stifling defense, the Cougars held off Silverton 21-14 in a second-round Class 5A state playoff game Friday night at Jack Harris Stadium.

The victory advances Mountain View to the state quarterfinals for the third consecutive season, and the Cougars will host Jefferson of Portland next Friday or Saturday. The Democrats defeated Marshfield of Coos Bay 22-18 on Friday night.

Quarterbacks Scott Plants and Matt Robertson combined to go 11 of 15 passing for 102 yards and one touchdown for the Cougars. Senior running back Scott McCreery rushed for 90 yards and one touchdown on 21 carries — and blocked a punt for a touchdown early in the game — to lead Mountain View.

Silverton senior running back Nelson Sinn ran 36 times for 191 yards and two touchdowns.

But the Cougar defense stopped the Foxes in every crucial situation.

“Our defense has carried us all year long, and they carried us again tonight,” said Mountain View head coach Steve Turner.

Mountain View (8-2), the No. 1 seed from the Intermountain Conference, appeared to have a comfortable 21-7 fourth-quarter lead over Silverton (7-5), the No. 4 team from the Mid-Willamette Conference.

But Sinn caught a pass in the middle of the field from quarterback Luke Ferguson and broke away from defenders to reach the end zone with 5:49 left in the game. The 39-yard touchdown pass made the score 21-14.

On their ensuing possession, the Cougars fumbled a handoff and Silverton’s Nico Agenbroad recovered. But Mountain View stopped the Silverton offense on fourth down for the third time of the second half when Mason McMahon sacked Ferguson with about three minutes remaining.

Silverton appeared to get one more chance to tie with 1:15 left when Mountain View was forced to punt. But the Foxes muffed the punt, and the Cougars recovered and were able to run out the clock.

“We gave up a couple big plays to a really, really good running back,” Turner said of Sinn. “But when we needed the stops we got them. I don’t know how many stops we had inside our 30-yard line, but those were huge.”

The first quarter was a scoreless defensive battle until McCreery broke through the line and blocked a punt by Silverton’s Justin McClaughry deep in Fox territory with 45 seconds left in the period. McCreery scooped the ball off the field as it rolled toward the end zone and ran it 18 yards for the score and a 7-0 Mountain View lead.

“It just kind of opened up and I just stuck my hand out,” McCreery said of the blocked kick. “Next thing you know I’m in the end zone. I think that blocked punt really got our defense up and got our momentum going.”

The Foxes — trying to advance to the state quarterfinals for the first time since 1993 — answered with Sinn, who broke right up the middle and went untouched

into the end zone for a 36-yard touchdown run on the first play of the second quarter. Sinn had 105 rushing yards in the first half alone.

Midway through the second quarter, Robertson executed a pump fake, then found senior wide receiver Pat Cashman wide open down the right sideline for a 44-yard touchdown pass and a 14-7 lead for the Cougars. Cashman finished with five catches for 76 yards.

Mountain View made it 21-7 on a 35-yard touchdown run by McCreery early in the third quarter. The Cougars then relied on their defense — which entered the playoffs allowing just 13.8 points per game — to secure the win.

Turner said he got a little conservative with his offense in the second half, confident that his defense could get the job done.

“When you have a good defense, you rely on them a little bit,” Turner said. “Maybe I relied a little too much on them, but it worked. You’ve got to have confidence and you’ve got to believe. Our defense has won us ballgames all year long, and they won this one tonight for us.”

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