

PANTHERS

Continued from Page 6A
the left,” Patterson said.

Imbler Head Coach Dustan Adams said the coaching staff has given the players some leeway to make an on-field adjustment if they see the need.

“We’ve got a veteran group of players out there, and sometimes they see things on the field that we don’t necessarily see, so we give them some freedom to make a call if they see something that’s available,” Adams said.

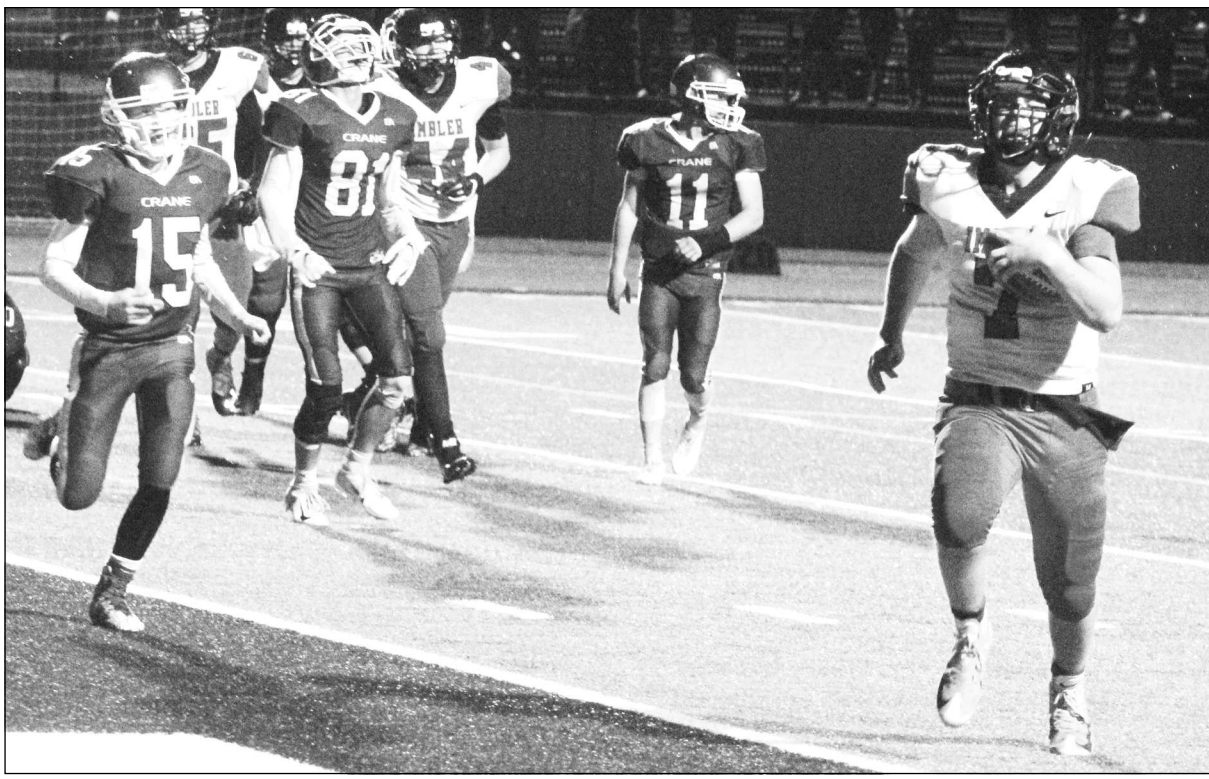
Goodman said, though, the play happened by accident.

“I opened up (to hand the ball off) the wrong way, so I was already messed up right there, and I (thought), ‘I can’t hand it off to him now,’ so I just ran,” he said.

The touchdown capped an afternoon where Imbler’s ball-control offense and stingy defense controlled the contest. The Panthers totaled 319 yards rushing, and 358 yards total, while holding Crane to just 128 yards of offense.

“Our defense played exceptionally well for most of the game,” Adams said. “Our defense kept us in the game.”

Turnovers, though, kept the Mustangs around, as three lost fumbles by Imbler resulted in three touch-



Ronald Bond/The Observer

Imbler’s Chance Goodman, right, scores the game-winning four-yard touchdown late in the fourth quarter of Friday night’s game against Crane. The Panthers earned a state berth with their 30-26 win.

downs — two on short fields, and the third on the runback by Joyce.

“We knew we’d really messed up and we’d given them too much of an opportunity,” Patterson said. “Our mistakes were what kept them in the game.”

Imbler’s defense stood tall throughout and kept the Panthers

within striking distance in the second half. Crane gained just 40 yards after halftime, and Imbler snagged two interceptions — one by Grant Slater early in the third and a second by Isaac Herron on a last-ditch effort by Crane in the closing seconds to seal the win.

“We knew we had to step it up

overall,” Slater said. “We didn’t say anything specifically about defense, but we knew what we could improve on based on the first half.”

Adams added the key for Imbler on offense was the play of its offensive line, which is one of the biggest in 1A with an average weight of about 225 pounds each.

“Wade McDonald, Wyatt Rankin, Wyatt Frost, Blake Frost, those four up front, and then when we bring Carter Burnette in and go (with) a two tight-end set, our offensive line is what has propelled us to where we’re at right now,” Adams said. “I genuinely believe that.”

Patterson added: “That’s hard to stop at the eight-man level. That’s more 11-man size right there. We just run behind those big guys and dare someone to stop us.”

Patterson scored twice in the first half for Imbler, which led 14-12 in the second quarter but went into the half down 18-14 when Crane’s Rixon Doman rushed for a one-yard score.

Imbler (7-2 overall) will hit the road for its first-round game Saturday at Lowell. The contest is a rematch of the 2013 1A state title game, a memorable 88-76 win by the Panthers.

ALSO JOSEPH DISMANTLES MCKENZIE IN SIX-MAN FINALE

The Joseph Eagles football team (7-0 overall) handled McKenzie, 64-31, to claim the de facto six-man championship Saturday night in Madras.

Stats were not available by press time. See Wednesday’s Observer for more on the Eagles’ victory over McKenzie.

COUGARS

Continued from Page 6A
teams plays. We were close. We left some scores on the field too.”

Wallowa’s defense did what no other team has been able to do to the Rangers on their current 29-game winning streak — hold them under 40 points. In fact, Dufur’s point total was its lowest since a 30-24 loss to Sherman in 2016. The Cougars were also the first team since the 2016 championship game to stay within 10 points of the Rangers. Each of Dufur’s last 19 opponents lost by a minimum of 30 points, and a 20th forfeited.

The defensive stinginess was met by Dufur, which managed to contain Wallowa’s own high-powered offense, and the teams went into halftime tied at 6-6.

But Masterson, who for a moment looked to be bottled up on the opening kickoff of the third quarter, found a seam down the left side-

line and pulled away for the go-ahead score.

“When they came out (and scored) on kickoff, that one play hurt us pretty bad,” Wallowa running back Zeb Ramsden said.

The ensuing fumble gave the Rangers the ball at the Wallowa 38-yard-line, and Asa Farrell finished the drive with a 1-yard run on fourth down — his second touchdown of the game — for a 22-6 lead just four minutes into the third quarter.

“Kickoff, kick returns, special teams plays are crucial,” Wallowa quarterback Gus Ramsden said. “If we wouldn’t have let those special teams plays come through, who knows what would have happened.”

Self-inflicted wounds continued to hurt Wallowa in the second half as it tried to rally. A fumble in the third quarter ended a promising drive, and the Cougars were stopped on fourth down in the fourth quarter, which quelled another attempt to draw close.

The Cougars finally got back on the board

late in the fourth quarter on a 43-yard touchdown run by Zeb Ramsden, but Dufur was able to run out the clock.

“We knew what they had, and I’m pretty sure they knew what we had,” Gus Ramsden said. “We’re pretty dang evenly matched. You can’t ask for a better game.”

Wallowa actually marched right down the field on its opening drive, quickly getting as deep as the nine-yard line before Dufur’s defense stood. The Cougars responded in kind by holding Dufur on fourth down on its first drive.

But a big play by Masterson eventually led to the Rangers’ first score. On fourth and long, Masterson caught a swing pass well behind the line of scrimmage, made a defender miss, and scooted 33 yards to set up first and goal. Farrell scored three plays later for a 6-0 lead.

Wallowa pulled even late in the second quarter thanks to two big plays between the brother duo of Gus and Zeb Ramsden. Gus

found a wide-open Zeb on a play-action pass for 43 yards to set up Wallowa in Dufur territory, and four plays later, on fourth and long, Zeb pulled in a deep pass in front of a Dufur defender and scored to make it a 6-6 game with three minutes to play in the half.

“It was just up there. I was kind of surprised,” Zeb Ramsden said of the catch.

Wallowa limited Dufur to 266 yards of total offense. Farrell led the Rangers with 103 yards rushing, while Masterson had 49 rushing and 33 receiving. The Cougars, meanwhile, finished with 315 yards. Zeb Ramsden had 91 yards rushing and 71 receiving. Gus Ramsden finished with 132 passing yards and 50 rushing yards.

“I knew it was going to be a battle. It just came down to a few bad breaks,” Brockamp said.

Wallowa (7-2 overall) will host Falls City in the first round of the 1A state playoffs Friday night. The teams met earlier this season, with the Cougars earning a 54-18 victory.

HUSKIES

Continued from Page 6A

“It’s an honor to be able to make it to state,” Smith said. “Our coach gave us (a) pregame speech (about) all the hard workers in the past (who didn’t have) the privilege to go to state. It’s sweet.”

Smith caught touchdown passes of 43 and 46 yards in the opening half, but Elgin went into the break leading just 16-8 as Enterprise’s ground-and-pound offense kept the game tight.

That changed in the second half.

Smith grabbed an interception on Enterprise’s third play of the third quarter and took it 36 yards for a 22-8 lead to start a snowball effect that turned the game into a rout.

Wyatt Hallgarth scored from five yards out two plays after Simpson tackled Enterprise’s kicker before he could get a punt away. Simpson then scored on the next possession on a 13-yard scramble to make it 36-8 late in the third.

Elgin’s defense played a key role in that. Dawson Larman had a field day in the second half, blasting into the backfield repeatedly to tackle either the quarterback or running back oftentimes before the play could develop.

“I was trying to do my best for everyone out there on the

team, trying to do my best for my coaches, parents — everyone out there,” he said. “(It’s) all for the team.”

His effort helped Elgin limit Enterprise to just 56 yards in the second half. The Outlaws also had 14 plays go for negative yardage after halftime.

“Larman had a great second half. He tore up their interior (offensive) line,” Rysdam said.

Enterprise did get back on the scoreboard late in the third on a 64-yard TD pass from Jacob Amaro to Jericho Peters, but the Huskies’ defense added another score on a 12-yard fumble return for a touchdown by Gage McKay — a play that was the product of Elgin’s relentless pressure at the line — for the final margin.

Simpson finished with 115 yards passing — all to Smith — and 91 yards rushing for Elgin. Hallgarth added 62 yards rushing as the Huskies totaled 196 yards on the ground.

Trace Evans had 125 yards on 29 carries for the Outlaws, whose season ended at 4-4 overall with the loss. His 10-yard run on the opening drive of the game gave the Outlaws an early 8-0 lead before Elgin took control.

“Lack of depth finally got to us,” Enterprise Head Coach Rusty Eschler said. “We

dressed down 13 players. We had two kids at a national convention back East. One’s a starting lineman. Had to do some switching around, putting people in positions they hadn’t played, and that’s how it goes. (The kids tried hard, (but) when you play a big physical team up front like (Elgin) when you’re missing lineman, it hurts.”

The Huskies (5-4 overall) will face a stout test in their opening playoff game as they travel to meet St. Paul Friday. The undefeated Buckaroos are among the favorites to play for the 1A state title.

“We’ll be on the road, we’ll be playing a top team,

but we’re not going to back down,” Smith said. “We’re go-

ing to go work hard. We’re in the playoffs now, so look out.”

The Bulletin

“Walden’s record on constituent services is a good one, helping residents of the 2nd District navigate bureaucracies ranging from the Social Security Administration to the Bureau of Land Management.”

(The Bulletin, 4/21/18)

PAID FOR BY WALDEN FOR CONGRESS, INC.