

SPORTS

Columbia suffers overtime football loss on road at Vancouver's Seton Catholic

■ By Joe Petshow
For Columbia Gorge News

Host Seton Catholic foiled Columbia's come-from-behind, fourth-quarter effort Saturday and then scored on its first offensive play in overtime to edge the Bruins, 28-26, in the Trico League football opener for both schools.

The comeback win spoiled a valiant Columbia effort, where the Bruins overcame a two-score, second-half deficit. It also soured an outstanding performance by Columbia senior Austin Charters, who accounted for 269 yards of offense.

"It was really a story of giving them four extra possessions, and two of them were on our first play after taking over on offense," Columbia Coach Dan Smith said of his team's four turnovers. "You get down in a hole and you start getting out of what your game plan is. You have to claw your way back ... we were really close."

"Like I told my team at the end of the game, I was extremely proud of the way they battled back. We could have hung our heads after going down 20-7 in the third quarter."

The game featured five lead changes, one tie, as well as a four-touchdown, 249-yard rushing

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Coach Dan Smith
Columbia High School

effort by Charters (on 22 carries). His 15-yard TD catch on a fourth-and-10 pass from Garrett Hogberg gave Columbia a 26-20 overtime lead. But on Seton's first offensive overtime play from the 25-yard line, CJ Hamblin threw a halfback pass to Lance Struck to tie the game at 26. Seton then scored on a two-point conversion — a quick pass to the left flat to Elijah Volk, who was met at the goal line by two Columbia defenders, but spun into the end zone.

Seton led 14-7 at the half and took a 20-7 lead with 6:40 left in the third quarter on Volk's 1-yard, fourth-down run. Columbia battled back, as Charters broke free for a 79-yard touchdown with 2:11 remaining in the period, pulling the Bruins within 20-14.

He scored again on a 28-yard run early in the fourth quarter to tie the game, 20-20. On the play, Charters

took a pitch to the left, cut back to the right, broke an attempted arm tackle, then shook free of two Seton defenders at the 24 and continued untouched to the end zone.

Juan Martinez and Chase Colloton helped spring Charters by staying with their blocks 10 and 15 yards beyond the line of scrimmage.

Columbia threatened once more in regulation, but Seton stopped Charters on a fourth-and-1 at the Cougar 6-yard-line with a little more than a minute showing on the game clock.

"Right before that fourth-down stop, our kicker, Chase Colloton had hurt his knee," Smith said. "(Or) we probably would have kicked a field goal in that situation."

Each team had plenty of other in-game adjustments, something Smith said he and his coaching staff expected — in part, because of a lack of practice time and, also, not knowing what to expect from Seton under its first-year Coach Dennis Herling.

One of Columbia's adjustments was when Smith switched Charters from quarterback to running back on Columbia's third offensive possession.

"Going into (the) game we knew we might be making some adjustments," Smith said. "(Charters) had

been my starting quarterback for the last two years. ... We've been trying to find a feature running back this year.

"Without having any summer ball ... we're kind of experimenting right now. And, so, the move (Saturday) was really to see what we could get a spark with. And Austin definitely gave us that spark."

With Charters receiving the football, instead of handing it off, Columbia looked much different than the jittery team which started the game — the one coming off a 475-day layoff (Columbia's last contest was Nov. 1, 2019, a 50-7 shellacking of Stevenson).

Seton also took a few possessions to get its game legs. The Bruins had shut out Seton 42-0 in 2019, but the Cougars served noticed early that this is a new era — with Herling at the helm.

The Cougars took advantage of a short field following a Columbia turnover to open the game's scoring. Quarterback Noah Carlos connected with 6-foot-3 wide receiver Lance Struck on a 13-yard slant pattern with five minutes left in the first quarter. Charters, a sturdy 5-foot-10, 175-pounder, gave Columbia its first lead, 7-6, on a 33-yard run late in the opening period.

Charters took the handoff

running to his right, then cut back to his left to avoid a Seton defender in the backfield and kept angling back against the pursuit en route to the end zone.

"We've got a lot of work ahead of us this week," Smith said, accentuating the positive. "Austin had a good game, an interception and led our team in tackles. ... Chase Colloton, playing at cornerback, he did a really good job of coming up and helping on the run."

"I'm just really excited that we got to play a game again. (Although) one thing that stood out for us: We're not in game shape. We're on the right track. I think we'll be able to right the ship."

The Bruins are scheduled to play their next game 7 p.m. Friday at home against Fort Vancouver. If Columbia's field is not available because the weather, the game might be moved to Seton Catholic's turf field and be played in the afternoon on Friday or Saturday.

Trico Football Scores:

Week 1
Seton Catholic 28, Columbia 26 (OT)
Castle Rock 52, Goldendale 13
La Center 58, Fort Vancouver 0
Ilwaco 12, Stevenson 6 (3OT)

Gorge Sports Schedule

Gorge sports schedules for Feb. 23 through March 4 (as of Feb. 21, schedule is subject to change):

Girls Soccer

Feb. 23
Columbia at Seton Catholic
Feb. 25
Columbia at King's Way
March 2
Castle Rock at Columbia
March 4
Franklin at Hood River; The Dalles at Riverside; La Center at Columbia

Cross Country

Feb. 27
Columbia at Seton Catholic, Vancouver.
March 3
The Dalles at Crook County; Hood River at Pendleton.

Boys Soccer

March 2
Horizon at Damascus
March 4
Riverside at The Dalles; Hood River at Franklin

Football

Feb. 26
Fort Vancouver at Columbia

Volleyball

Feb. 23
Columbia at Seton Catholic
Feb. 25
King's Way at Columbia
March 2
Hood River at Redmond; The Dalles at Pendleton; Columbia at Castle Rock; Dufur at Heppner; Dufur at Ione/Arlington
March 4
Columbia at La Center; Mitchell-Spray at Dufur; Bickleton at Glenwood

Hennessy signs to run at Whitman College



Lucy Hennessy

College in Walla Walla, Wash.

Hennessy finished 30th in the 2019 Class 5A state meet in Eugene. She ran 19 minutes, 53 seconds in that 5,000-meter race.

Hood River's Lucy Hennessy signed a letter of intent to run cross country this fall at NCAA Division III Whitman

That was a one-minute, 38-second improvement over the time she ran the prior week at the district meet and a personal record by more than a minute.

Whitman's women's cross country team won the 2019 Northwest Conference championship.

Whitman College is a nationally recognized liberal arts college in Walla Walla, Washington, that encourages scholarship, creativity, character and responsibility, according to their website.

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&
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3811 Eagle Loop
Odell, OR 97044
(541) 354-3000



1995 12th Street
Hood River, OR 97031
(541) 386-2757