

## Wolverines Prevail Over Mighty Grossmont

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<http://jcfootball.scout.com/2/683655.html>

Despite an early lead, solid special teams and an occasionally brilliant Grossmont defense, a determined young San Bernardino squad rose up to reclaim their home turf against the perennially powerful Griffins Saturday night to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat and hand Grossmont their first Foothill Conference defeat since 2002. It is the first time the Wolverines have prevailed over the Griffins in this century.

The game started well for the Griffins, who jumped ahead 15-0 in the first quarter on the strength of three Brett Haase (6-2, 175 So) field goals and a 30-yard Blake Sutton (6-5, 215 So) touchdown pass to Elijah Brown (5-10, 165 Fr). After the prolific Griffin offensive production of the first quarter, linebacker Brian Ray (6-0, 220 Fr) added a 33-yard interception for another touchdown to post a 21-0 advantage, but the necessity to settle for field goals in the red zone and the uncharacteristic Griff failure to convert either of the points-after on the two touchdowns were ominous signs for the offense.

After what was a disastrous first quarter for San Bernardino, the Wolverine offense had a lot of ground to make up. With 10:15 remaining in the half, sophomore running back Rodney Armstrong (5-7, 165) broke the Grossmont stranglehold by capping a five-play drive with a 19-yard touch down scamper to get the San Bernardino Valley on the board and initiate the come-from-behind victory. Four minutes after the first TD, place kicker Michael Langston (6-1, 185 Fr) booted a 34-yard field goal, followed by the first of the two Mike Stadler (6-2, 210 Fr) touchdown passes to WR Robert Anderson (6-2, 190 Fr), this one a 16-yarder. Then, with no time left on the clock, Langston booted a second field goal from 45 yards, to bring SBVC within one point, ending the half with Grossmont still holding a razor thin edge, 21-20.

In the second half, the vaunted G-House defense didn't make it easy for the Wolverines, scoring two safeties in the third quarter to extend the Griffin lead to 25-20. Only a touchdown would do would do for SBCV, and with 1:07 remaining in the third quarter, Stadler once again dialed Anderson's number for the second TD pass and final score of the game, a 19-yarder, lifting San Bernardino Valley to a bare 27-25 advantage, where the score stood until the final whistle.

The stats for the two teams were almost as close as the final score. San Bernardino racked up 255 total yards to Grossmont's 237. San Bernardino managed 20 first downs to 16 for GC. SBVC recovered 2 of 3 G-House fumbles and lost one, but lost 3 interceptions to Grossmont's zero, for a 4-2 turnover ratio in favor of the Griffins. By the end of the game, San Bernardino held a five minute advantage in time of possession.

Penalties were ugly. Grossmont established a slight lead in this category with 171 yards lost to yellow hankies, compared to SBVC's 165 yards on 20 flags.

Air attacks achieved the most success for both teams. San Bernardino's Stadler completed 20 of 42 passes for 189 yards, 2 touchdowns and 3 interceptions, compared to Sutton's 9 of 25 pass attempts for 145 yards, a TD and no interceptions for Grossmont. After Sutton was injured, G-House backup Dan Lewis (6-2, 238 Fr) hit 2 of 7 for an additional 24 yards, and Andrew Ruiz (6-0, 195 Fr) was 0 for 1, but Ruiz avoided the sacks which befell Sutton and Lewis (1 each).

Stadler distributed the ball to nine different receivers, led by Anderson, who snagged 6 catches for 73 yards and the 2 touchdowns. Sylvester Burel (6-3, 205 So) and Chris Roberts (5-9, 175 So) each caught 4 passes, for 39 and 26 yards, respectively. Likewise, Sutton targeted five GC receivers. Brown led Griffin receivers with 4 snags for 82 yards (47 longest) and added 166 yards in kickoff returns. He was followed by TE Kyle Marsom (6-3, 250 So) with 3 catches for 21 yards and WR Miles McPherson (5-10, 165 Fr) with 2 catches for 46 yards.

On the ground, Jamar Reid (5-10, 200 Fr) led with 45 of the Griffin total of 71 yards, coming on 17 carries. DeShawn Smith (5-7, 173 Fr) led the Wolverines with 35 of the 66 SBVC net yards, followed by Armstrong's 24, including the 19-yard TD run.

Special teams performed well for both clubs. SBVC special teams received special praise from head coach Pat Meech, who was especially pleased with the significant improvement in kick coverage. This week saw no punt or kick returns for touchdowns, and a flawless performance from Langston, who went 3/3 on extra points and 2/2 on field goals. The Wolverines blocked a Griffin PAT for good measure, the only blocked kick suffered by the Griffs this season.

For the Griffins, Brett Haase (6-2, 175 So) hit 3 of 4 field goals to lead his team in scoring. Haase also averaged 60 yards on kick offs and pinned the Wolverines near their own goal line twice with precise punts, allowing the G-House defense to score the two safeties. The return teams did their part as well. In addition to Brown's 166 return yards,

Brandon Washington (5-11, 165 Fr) added another 29 yard kick off return and Chris Smith (6-2, 190 Fr) contributed 59 yards with 4 punt returns, 19 longest.

After the first quarter, the defense kept hope alive for Grossmont, scoring a season-high 10 defensive points and causing 4 turnovers, resulting in the 4-2 favorable turnover differential. Head coach Mike Jordan praised his improving defense, including the outstanding performances of defensive linemen Magnum Mauga (6-0, 289 So) and Ryan Glazer (6-3, 275 So), as well as DB Greg Palmer (5-10, 180 Fr). Coach Jordan also expressed confidence in his offense, but noted that “we have to put together four quarters of football to win games.”

“It was a great team victory for San Bernardino Valley,” exclaimed head coach Pat Meech, who added that “both teams played a heck of a game defensively.” Meech gave credit to the defensive big men in the trenches, both his own and Grossmont’s. Coach Meech was also quick to praise his offensive line, which gave up no sacks to a Griffin defense coming into the contest with five, and made a couple of key third down pushes to assist the runners and keep the offense alive. “As a group, my O-Line really stepped up and improved this week. Despite injuries they covered well for each other,” said Meech.

The Wolverine triumph and Griffin slip throw the Foothill Conference race into chaos, with Desert, Antelope Valley and San Bernardino undefeated in conference play; Grossmont, Victor Valley and Chaffey tied in the middle at 1-1 each; and Mesa, Mt San Jacinto and Southwestern thus far winless. Mesa and SBVC have only played a single conference contest. The rest have played two.

The Griffs next travel to arch-rival Chaffey College to begin their climb back to the top of the Foothill Conference. Before last week’s game, Chaffey was the only conference rival to defeat Grossmont in this century. Kick off is 5 p.m.