## BINGHAM FOOTBALL: Miners 48, Hunter 15





**LEFT:** Daniel Langi celebrates a fumble recover with teammates **Sky Manu** and **Langi Tuifua**. **RIGHT:** Manu breaks free on his interception return

# Miners return home to bury Hunter

Three INT returns and another by punt lead Bingham to an easy victory

By Bruce Smith Matchup

Less than a week after their enthusiastic road win in Colorado, the Bingham Miners came back to earth – at least for a while.

The defense, however, was still feeling the excitement as Bingham took advantage of three pass interception returns for touchdowns en route to a convincing 48-15 non-region win over Hunter Friday night.

Sky Manu, Chase Meservy and Harley Yazzie took back picks for scores. Landen Measom also had a 55-yard punt return early in the game that got Bingham on track. The Miners ended up with few offensive yards than their opponent, but the game was never in doubt.

"Coach (Dave Peck) believes in us defensive backs that we can cover 1-on-1, so he sends blitzes," said Sky Manu, who had a 23-yard return in the first quarter that broke a 7-7 tie. "The touchdown we gave up was a coverage mistake, so we wanted to make up for it. It makes it way easier for our offense because they get more rest."

The teams traded touchdowns three minutes into the game before Bingham (4-0) went on a

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Those kinds of plays demoralize the other team."

- Coach Dave Peck

rampage. Manu and Meservy's returns were part of the onslaught. Scott Nichols and Aaron Marsh also had rushing touchdowns, and Kyle Gearig connected with Dalton Schultz on a scoring pass.

Amazingly, Bingham led 42-7 at halftime but had only 22 more yards.

"Those were huge," Peck said

about the returns. "When you get a pick-six, it totally changes the momentum of the game. Those kinds of plays demoralize the other team. We have some kids that are players and good athletes. Not one guy goes both ways, so we expect them to be good at what they do."

The pace slowed considerably in the second half. Bingham began rotating in some of its 16 freshmen and sophomore players, but the Miners weren't done. Yazzie, a 5-foot-10, 140-pound sophomore, returned another interception for a score in the fourth quarter before Hunter (2-2) rallied for a late touchdown.

"It's a good way to keep our offense from not having to worry about anything," Manu said about

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LEFT: **Dominieke Jones** prepares to take down a
Hunter ball carrier.

RIGHT: Landen
Measom snares a
pass over a Hunter
defender.

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the defensive plays.

Hunter, meanwhile, eventually picked up steam to finish with 57 more yards than Bingham (270-213). However, the scoreboard told the tale. The Miners took advantage of the opportunity to rest Nichols, the team's leading rusher who scored on his only carry, for most of the game.

"We wanted to save his legs and give other kids an opportunity," Peck said. "For us to win region and state, he has to stay healthy. That's what it's all about — doing everything we can to win region and state titles."

Gearig rushed for 83 yards, and Sione Finefeuiaki had 44 for Bingham. Daniel Langi had two sacks and recovered a fumble, and TJ Pulu had the other of Bingham's four interceptions.

Joseph Tiatia scored both touchdowns for the Wolverines.

### **GAME SUMMARY**

Hunter 7 0 0 8 - 15 Bingham 21 21 0 6 - 48

**B** – Landen Measom 55 punt return (Chayden Johnston kick)

H – Joseph Tiatia 27 pass from McKay Medlinger (Nick Hafen kick)

B – Sky Manu 23 interception return (Johnston kick)

**B** – Scott Nichols 34 run (Johnston kick)

**B** – Aaron Marsh 3 run (Johnston kick)

**B** – Chase Meservy 16 interception return (Johnston kick)

**B** – Dalton Schultz 26 pass from Kyle Gearig (Johnston kick)

**B** – Harley Yazzie 50 interception return (kick failed)

H - Joseph Tiatia 4 run (Tiatia run)

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

**RUSHING:** Hunter – Tiatia 17-53, Valu Kupu 5-39, Peter Makalio 4-38, Nathan Uhi 4-3, Tyrel Vixaysack 1-2, Medlinger 6-(-30). Bingham – Gearig 5-83, Sione Finefeuiaki 7-44, Nichols 1-34, Marsh 4-14, Jacob Afalava 1-3, Jordan Evans 1-2, Rus Conder 1-2, Tyler Bland 1-1, Kade Jensen 1-0, Nate Naylor 1-0, Jared Tupou 1-(-2).

**PASSING:** Hunter – Medlinger 8-19-4-165 yards. Bingham – Gearig 3-9-0-49 yards, Evans 1-3-0-16 yards, Ben Boelter 0-1-0-0 yards, Jensen 0-1-0-0 yards, Michael Green 0-1-0-0 yards.

**RECEIVING:** Hunter – Uhi 1-53, Tiatia 2-43, Noah Togiai 3-34, Ikaika Ete 1-28, Vixaysack 1-7. Bingham – Schultz 1-29, Marsh 1-16, Measom 1-16, Naylor 1-4.