

The West Washington football team wasn't especially crisp in any area of their sectional semi-final game last Friday against visiting South Decatur.

The Senators, however, did do enough to get the 29-14 win, and advance to this Friday's sectional championship at Milan.

"At this point in the year it's survive and advance and we are advancing," said West Washington Head Coach Phillip Bowsman. "There are some things to clean up, but it maybe a good thing. This game may be a reality check for next week and will keep us from getting complacent. Hopefully, it helps us re-focus and the kids will understand that we can't win a championship if we don't play for 48 minutes."

Early in the game it looked as if the Senators were going to put the game away.

Senior Austin Green knocked down a SD pass on third and 22, getting his team the ball with 10:47 remaining in the first quarter.

Nine plays and 3:34 later, West Washinton's Tyler Dunn scored on a five yard run. Brenden Grimes kicked the point after touchdown (PAT) for a 7-0 advantage.

Then 26 seconds later, the Senators scored again when Austin Green sacked South Decatur's quarterback in the end-zone for a two-point safety and a 9-0 lead.

A safety is not only worth two points, the defensive team also gets the ball back.

West Washington again went on the march looking for another score, but a questionable call of a catch on the sidelines, seemed to change momentum.

The side-judge ruled that West Washington's Chad Thompson didn't get both feet in-bounds on a catch.

The failed completion eventually led to West Washington turning the ball over on downs.

Bowsman said he felt like that was a big play in the game.

"We were driving and then we had the catch on the sidelines that they called incomplete," Bowsman said. "Then a penalty followed that play and it kind of snowballed and we lost our fire."

The score remained 9-0 until the Senators finally broke through again, this time on a 57-yard touchdown run by Tyler Holliday scored on a 57-yard catch and run.

Grimes missed the PAT, but WW was in front 15-0 with 1:30 remaining in the first half.

South Decatur used that small amount of time to put together a scoring drive of their own and scored on a one-yard run with 7.1 seconds. They converted the two-point PAT attempt and trailed by seven, 15-8 at the half.

The two teams opened the second half with scoring drives.

The Senators used 4:08 off the third quarter clock and scored when Dunn found the endzone from three yards out. Grimes kicked the PAT for a 22-8 advantage.

South picked up where they left off in the first half as it only took them 1:41 to move the length of the field for another touchdown. This time couldn't convert the PAT, but were still hanging around, 22-14.

The two teams traded possessions until Holliday scored again for the Senators on a five-yard pass from sophomore quarterback Cody Maudlin.

Grimes tacked on the PAT and West Washington led, 29-14.

South Decatur never seriously threatened to score again in the game.

One area of improvement for needed for West Washington are penalties. In the first half they were whistled for seven for 65 yards.

“We had too many mental areas tonight, but again, we won the game, so I am not going to beat them up for it,” Bowsman said. “We just need to make sure they don’t happen against Milan.

“I am just really proud of this team. We just want to do whatever it takes to advance and we are going to Milan next week to play for a title.”

The key offensively was the stable of weapons for the Senators. They rushed the ball 46 times for 240 yards.

Holliday, Dunn, Thompson and Sean Keller give them four quality players, who are threats to score every time they touch the ball.

Bowsman said he doesn’t have a preference as to who gets the ball, he just wants to take advantage of the opportunity.

“We want to go with the best matchup,” he said. “We want to get them all the balls because they are all playmakers and gives us a really balanced attack.”

With the win the Senators are 8-3 and will play a Milan team that is also 8-3.

The first two sectional opponents liked to throw the ball, but Milan is the opposite. Bowsman said they are able to throw it, but they do that by running the football.

“We have to stop their run,” Bowsman said. “They are really good off play action. That’s what they did to us two years ago, they did a good job of play action on first down. We’re going to have to be stout up front, fill the holes, and make them drive the field, stay disciplined in our coverage and not fall asleep with the play action.”

Friday’s game at Milan will get underway at 7:30 p.m.