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## No. 4 Spring Valley flat but still handles Nitro 28-12

By [Tommy R. Atkinson](#), Staff writer

Spring Valley coach Brad Dingess was hoping to see some fire Friday.

What the visiting Timberwolves gave their coach was more like a slow burn in dispatching Nitro 28-12 on senior night. A sparse crowd of about 600 attended the Mountain State Athletic Conference matchup at Underwood Field at Nitro High School.

Spring Valley (8-1), which is tied for fourth in the Class AAA state rankings, went three-and-out on its first possession then scored two straight touchdowns for a 14-0 lead at halftime. The Timberwolves turned the ball over just before intermission.

Spring Valley tallied TDs on its first two possessions of the second half for a 28-6 edge early in the fourth quarter and finished with 353 total yards in coasting to the easy victory. The Timberwolves, however, tossed two interceptions and had six penalties, giving Nitro first downs on several occasions.

The Timberwolves, who were coming off an open week, lost to state-ranked Capital two weeks ago at home to snap a seven-game winning streak.

"I'm disappointed after coming off a loss," said Dingess, whose squad most likely locked up home-field advantage in the opening round of the playoffs with Friday's win. "We just didn't have any fire. It felt more like a practice to them.

"Our kids treated it like a practice. They didn't have any enthusiasm. It's tough from some of the bigger games we've had. I was hoping the taste of defeat we had two weeks ago would put a little bit of fire under us."

Zach Wellman gained 103 yards on 13 carries and scored a touchdown for the Timberwolves. Spring Valley quarterback Eric Slayton passed for a score and ran for one and Anthony Evans added a TD each receiving and rushing.

Nitro (1-9) ended its season, one in which the Wildcats' starting quarterback quit after three games and first-year coach Bob Gobel was sidelined with a leg injury for most of the year.

"I couldn't be prouder of them," said interim Nitro coach John Painter, who started the season as an assistant. "When you're 1-9, that's the biggest job as a head coach to get these kids ready.

"These kids fight. We thought all week long this was one of the better football teams we've faced. They're big and strong up front. I couldn't believe the effort they gave."

Zach Cloxton passed for 173 yards with no turnovers and Ethan Clark added a rushing TD for Nitro. Matt Harmon hauled in three passes for 70 yards.

Nitro started five sophomores and two freshmen at different times this season.

"I told them early in the year I won't make that as an excuse," Painter said. "We have a very good nucleus to build on and we look forward to it next year."

Reach Tommy R. Atkinson at [tatkin...@wvgazette.com](mailto:tatkin...@wvgazette.com) or 304-348-4811.