When it comes to watching football, as a huge fan of the game, I love the deep pass. I love the vertical bombs and I love the home runs.

Nothing against the running game because I love that too. But, I grew up a fan of the Montana Grizzlies, the Air Read days and of Super Dave Dickenson, so passing is what I fell in love with.

And man can the Southern Oregon Red Raiders, and sophomore quarterback Austin Dodge throw the football.

In Saturday’s 65-34 win over the Montana State University-Northern Lights at Blue Pony Stadium, the Raiders passed, and passed and passed some more. They did it so fast and so often, even I said enough is enough.

I knew going into Saturday’s game that SOU’s up-tempo, four-wide passing attack was going to be a challenge to the MSU-Northern secondary, but even I was shocked at what I saw.

Northern held the Raiders, and Dodge in check early on, even getting a couple of three-and-outs, and bouncing back from a first-play-of-the-game interception to take a 21-10 lead into the second quarter.

But in the second quarter, Dodge got the wind at his back and it was scary from then on. Scary for me, scary for Lights fans and probably a nightmare for the MSU-N defense, which played its heart out all day long.

In the second quarter alone, Dodge stuck a dagger in the Lights as he and his band of Raiders ripped off 28 unanswered points, scored all five times they had the ball, ran 45 plays and rolled up 301 yards of offense.

In some games, that performance happens in 60 minutes of football. SOU’s offense did it in 15.

It was impressive to say the least, with diving catches by Cole McKenzie and Mike Olson, with Dodge throwing perfect, high spirals and deep passes, as well as gunning quick outs and slants. It was so impressive that I found myself saying that Central Washington, the school in which Dodge left to play at SOU, better have one hell of a quarterback if he wasn’t good enough to win the starting job there.

Yes, SOU’s offense was all it was billed to be, all it was hyped up to be, and I was in awe of it.

And that enough is enough comment of mine, well that came twice on Saturday.

The first one was when Northern was able to stop the SOU run with a touchdown with just :36 left in the first half. That score made it 38-27 and would have been a very manageable deficit. But SOU wanted more and the Raiders took it, going 76 yards in just three plays and :36 seconds to take a disheartening 45-27 lead into the locker room.

The second time I said enough was enough was when the Raiders were up 55-34 with under six minutes to play and Dodge threw a perfect fade to McKenzie, the NAIA’s leading receiver for a meaningless one-year touchdown.
Don’t misunderstand me, I’m not accusing SOU head coach Craig Howard of intentionally trying to run up the score, but the touchdown was on a fourth down and the game was well in hand at that point. And at that point, I’d seen enough and as much as I like passing, I didn’t really want to see Dodge hoist it up there anymore.

I will get that pleasure when the Red Raiders come back to Havre in 2014, or even sooner, if I’m able to watch the Lights play in Ashland, Ore., next fall, since Dodge is just a sophomore.

But as much as I was over seeing SOU throw, over and over and over, Dodge attempted 56 passes and threw for 502 yards, I can’t even imagine how the Northern defense felt.

The Lights did all they could. They played hard and they played physical. Even though Dodge and MSU-N’s Derek Lear combined for 1,002 yards passing, it was actually a hard-hitting and physical football game and Northern’s defense was laying plenty of lumber.

But as much as they tried, and as hard as they played, right to the end, the Lights’ defense wore down under the air assault and it just wasn’t to be.

In other words, SOU’s passing attack was simply too much for Northern to overcome, no matter how much heart and fire the Lights played with. And, as Dodge has shown this season, Northern isn’t the only team that’s been demoralized by him and the Raider passing attack this season.

If you want to know what demoralizing is, just ask Eastern Oregon, which was whipped by the Raiders 66-28 just last week.

So at the end of the day, I just have to tip my cap to the Red Raiders, but I’m also going to tip it to the Lights for never quitting. They never, on one single play, gave up, even though the balls just kept flying through the air.

But while I’m being gracious to SOU and its amazing offense, I’m also going to say thank you to the powers that be that designed the new Frontier Conference schedule, because the Lights and Red Raiders only meet once a year.

And while I love watching the passing game, I’m glad I don’t have to watch SOU do it again this season. Enough was just enough.