

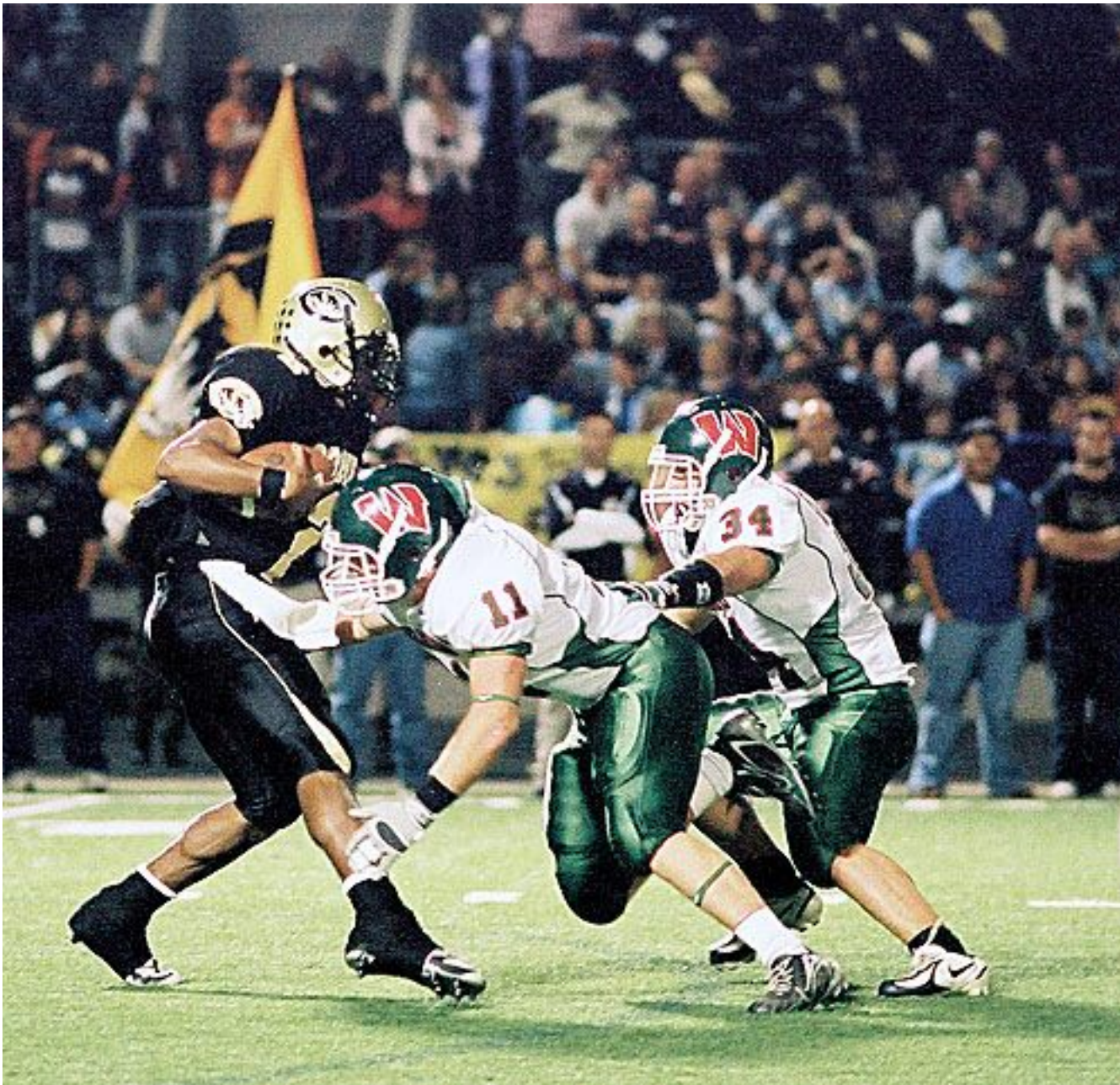


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TV Time: Conroe shutout sets up Lufkin showdown

By: KIM RICHARDSON , Sports editor



The Woodlands dominated Conroe 23-0 to win their second consecutive "rivalry" game in a row last Friday night at Moorhead Stadium in Conroe.

The win sets up the biggest game of the season for the Highlanders and another rivalry game of sorts. The Highlanders are 4-3 overall and 2-0 in district play. Lufkin comes to Moorhead

Kyle Bouthilet and Raymond Cleboski corral Conroe quarterback Chet Reed for a 12-yard loss on third down. The Tigers punted on the next play and Taylor Charbonnet returned the kick for 43 yards and the Highlanders first touchdown. Photo by Kim Richardson

Stadium tonight for a nationally televised game on ESPN2. The Woodlands and Lufkin aren't longtime rivals, but the Highlander-Panther game has decided the district championship the last two years and promises to do

so again this season. That sort of thing will jump-start a rivalry pretty quick.

Lufkin tuned up for the big game by beating Oak Ridge 55-14. The Panthers took College Park out 55-9 in their 15-5A opener

Tonight's game will have an early start at 6 p.m. and the parking lots will be full of TV trucks. Early arrival is advised if you don't want to park at Wal-Mart.

The Highlanders and Conroe exchanged punts to begin the game. On the Tigers second possession Kyle Bouthilet herded Conroe quarterback Chet Reed into a Raymond Cleboski sack and a 12-yard loss. The Tigers punted and Taylor Charbonnet fielded the punt, cut to his left, turned up the sideline and scored untouched.

Derek Depasquale kicked the extra point and The Woodlands had all the points they would need.

After holding the Tigers to three and out, the Highlanders drove to a 30-yard Depasquale field goal that gave The Woodlands a 10-0 lead that stood up until halftime.

On the Highlanders second possession of the second half, Tracy Milo broke off left tackle and sprinted 59 yards for The Woodlands second touchdown. Milo added another touchdown run in the fourth quarter as The Woodlands mostly kept the ball on the ground to eat up the clock.

The Highlander defense dominated the Tigers. Conroe had the ball deep in Woodlands territory three times with opportunities to score. Every time the Highlanders held and forced the ball to turnover on downs. A fact not lost on Woodlands Coach Mark Schmid.

"Any time you shut someone out, it's a great defensive effort and that's what we've seen week in and week out from those guys," Schmid said. "Special teams got us off on a good foot with the touchdown. We had some problems with the kicking game that were kind of surprising. But, those are things we can fix.

"This was our second "Big Rivalry" game in two weeks and I think our kids handled themselves well. We did what we needed to do to win. Conroe's got a good football team. There's not a lot of time to sit around and celebrate the victory. We've got to move on and get ready for a Thursday night game against Lufkin. We're going to enjoy it tonight. But, tomorrow, it's back to work."

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