

Highlanders roll over Oak Ridge 41-7



Oak Ridge receives Charles Agugua (15) collides with The Woodlands defensive back Nick Adamo (7) during second quarter action at Woodforest Bank Stadium in Shenandoah Friday night.

By Mike Taylor

Updated: 10.17.08

SHENANDOAH – The Woodlands kept up its end of a bargain with Conroe High in a 41-7 pasting of Oak Ridge at Woodforest Bank Stadium Friday night.

The No. 6 Highlanders will host the Tigers next week in a matchup of the only two District 14-5A unbeaten.

The Highlanders (6-0, 2-0) held Oak Ridge to 23 yards of total offense in the second half Friday night and intercepted three passes in the third quarter, including Robert Bouthilet's 14-yard return for a touchdown and a 34-7 lead. Nick Adamo and Ryan Cusimano had the other picks, which led to 10 points.

"We kept Oak Ridge out of the endzone except for one time," Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "We created turnovers, which were opportunities for us to score. Really, defensively, we did it all tonight."

Woodlands quarterback Andy McCloud connected on two scoring passes in the first quarter, 14 yards to Ryan Eastman and 29 yards to Rob Irvin, for a 14-0 lead.

The War Eagles countered midway through the second with an eight-play, 61-yard drive. Ryan Cyr hit Jay Buchanan with two passes for a total of 31 yards and Freddie Dotson ran five times for 29 yards, the last a 16-yarder down the right sideline.

But the Highlanders answered quickly, taking only 1:17 off the clock in a three-play, 65-yard drive that sapped any momentum Oak Ridge had earned. Running back Daniel Lasco scored from 51 yards after he took a direct snap and eluded three would-be tacklers for a 21-7 lead. Lasco finished with 144 yards on 13 carries.

Ben Pruitt added two 30-yard field goals, the first on the last play of the first half, to give The Woodlands a 27-7 cushion. McCloud connected with Eastman on a six-yard pass with 11 seconds remaining in the third to finish the scoring. McCloud was 11-of-23 for 169 yards, the three touchdowns and one interception, a Ben Rondon pick late in the second quarter.

Oak Ridge (2-4, 0-2) has lost four straight games after winning its first two. Two of those defeats were against state championship teams from a year ago – Katy and Lamar Consolidated – and the other two against Conroe and The Woodlands, both playoff teams a year ago.

"I'm proud of the way we played hard," Oak Ridge coach Bob Barrett said. "We're still not playing very well, but we're playing really hard. I credit my kids for that."

The War Eagles had an opportunity to cut into a 21-7 lead just before halftime. Oak Ridge drove 36 yards in five plays to the Highlanders' 19-yard line. Woodlands defensive back Aaron Charbonnet then intercepted a tipped pass near the goal line, but an inadvertent whistle canceled out the turnover.

With about a minute to go before halftime, the War Eagles turned the ball over on downs when they were shortchanged by bad spots on third and one and fourth and inches. Both plays – a pitch to the right and a quarterback sneak – seemed good enough for a first down.