

## Woodlands slips past Klein Forest in OT Eagles miss extra point in overtime of one-point loss

By JASON McDANIEL For the Chronicle

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Klein Forest gave state-ranked The Woodlands all it could handle Saturday night at Klein Memorial Stadium. And then Klein Forest quarterback Matt Davis gave The Woodlands some more.

He led the Eagles all the way back to force overtime, but The Woodlands survived after Klein Forest missed an extra point in overtime, winning 32-31 in the Region II-5A, Division I bi-district playoffs.

"I told them congratulations, and when you get into the playoffs, every week could be like this, especially with the road that we have to travel," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "Klein Forest is a great football team.

"So it was great to be able to come out with a win."

The Woodlands (11-0) advances to face Round Rock Stony Point in the area playoffs at 6 p.m. Saturday at Woodforest Stadium. Klein Forest finishes 7-4.

"We played them last year (and lost 21-7 in the area playoffs)," The Woodlands quarterback Trent Eckel said. "They're a really good team and we have to start studying up on them (today)."

The Highlanders scored 22 unanswered points, led 22-7 at halftime and seemed to have the momentum. But that was not the case.

The Eagles came out and pressured Eckel, and with Daniel Lasco banged up after a big hit in the first half, that was a recipe for disaster. The Woodlands scored just three points in the second half — and Davis got hot.

He finished with 173 yards and one TD rushing and 292 yards and one TD passing — most of that coming in the third and fourth quarters.

"In the second half he was just phenomenal," Schmid said. "He kind of took the game in his hands and made things happen. He's a player. And the good thing for Klein Forest: He's a sophomore. The bad thing for everybody else: He's a sophomore."

Davis' 24-yard scoring pass to Lewis Williams cut the Highlanders' lead to 25-23 with 1 minute, 24 seconds left in the game. Then he ran in a two-point conversion to tie the score.

Once in overtime, The Woodlands took the field first, and Eckel (297 yards, two touchdowns passing) hit Randy Knust with a 14-yard TD pass.

Klein Forest answered with Cory Idlebird's 3-yard TD run, but the extra-point try sailed wide right.

## The Woodlands survives OT thriller vs. Klein Forest



The Woodlands' Trent Eckel runs for a touchdown against Klein Forest during Saturday's bi-district playoff game at Klein Memorial Stadium.

**By David Arno**

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KLEIN – No. 3 state-ranked The Woodlands survived a scare in the first round of the Region II-5A Division I playoffs Saturday night at Klein Memorial Stadium.

The Highlanders (11-0) and Klein Forest went overtime before TWHS took a 32-31 victory when the Golden Eagles missed an extra-point after scoring a touchdown in the extra period.

The Woodlands will now move on and face the team that knocked them out of the playoffs last year, Stony Point, on Saturday at 6 p.m. at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

"With Stony Point coming here this year, we're really hoping to exact a little revenge on them," The Woodlands head coach Mark Schmid said. "They're a good football team, and the strength of their team this year is their defense. They play great defense...so it'll be a great challenge for us."

With The Woodlands taking their second time-out of the first half at the 3:23 mark in the first quarter on first and 20, it looked as though the No. 1 [HSGridiron.com](http://HSGridiron.com) area-ranked Highlanders may be in trouble.

Klein Forest (7-4) had come out, forced two three-and-outs on the Highlanders' first two drives, and scored first on a long drive.

A previously unimaginable thought, the 14-5A champions saw that their perfect season could be cut short with an early first-round playoff exit if they continued playing the way that they had been.

Down 7-3 and struggling to get anything going on offense, the Highlanders' offense came out and put up 19 points while the defense shut down anything the Golden Eagles threw their way.

After the one-yard run by quarterback Matt Davis put Klein Forest up by a touchdown and a 31-yard Ben Pruitt field goal chipped into the Golden Eagle lead as the first quarter winded down, The Woodlands' offense came alive and began to put up the numbers that they're used to seeing this season.

Facing a third and four on the Golden Eagles' next possession after the Highlander field goal, Davis was dropped for a loss as he tried to take it himself for the first down. The ensuing punt on fourth down only traveled eight yards, giving

the Highlanders the ball with good field position.

On the following Woodlands drive, a flea flicker from Trent Eckel to Randy Knust went 53 yards and gave the Highlanders the lead.

Running back Daniel Lasco extended The Woodlands' lead with a 13-yard run that found paydirt.

Two Pruitt field goals of 41 and 31 in the second quarter helped the Highlanders during their second quarter run for the 22-7 lead that the Highlanders took into the locker room at the half.

After The Woodlands built their lead up to 25-7, the Golden Eagles came roaring back and scored 18 unanswered points to tie the game with 1:24 left in the game.

The Golden Eagles' rally started at the end of the third quarter when Davis handed the ball to receiver Damian Payne on a reverse who then found Matthew Cabble for 22 yards and a touchdown to pull within 11 points.

A 36-yard Jacob Decker field goal brought the Golden Eagles three points closer.

With the Highlanders struggling to get anything going offensively, they gave the ball back to Klein Forest for one more shot to tie the game. A 28-yard pass from Davis to Lewis Williams put the Golden Eagles within two, and a Davis run on the two-point conversion tied the game with 1:24 left in the game.

Unable to get anything going on offense still, the Highlanders gave the ball back to Klein Forest with time left on the clock for an opportunity to win the game. The Golden Eagles completed two passes down to the Highlander 35 for a shot at a 52-yard field goal that came up short.

In overtime, The Woodlands scored first off of 14-yard Eckel pass to Knust to put the pressure on Klein Forest.

The Golden Eagles scored in two plays when Cory Idlebird took the ball three yards for the touchdown. On the verge of forcing a second overtime against the No. 10 team in the nation, the extra point went wide right and gave the win to The Woodlands.