

# THE COURIER

OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

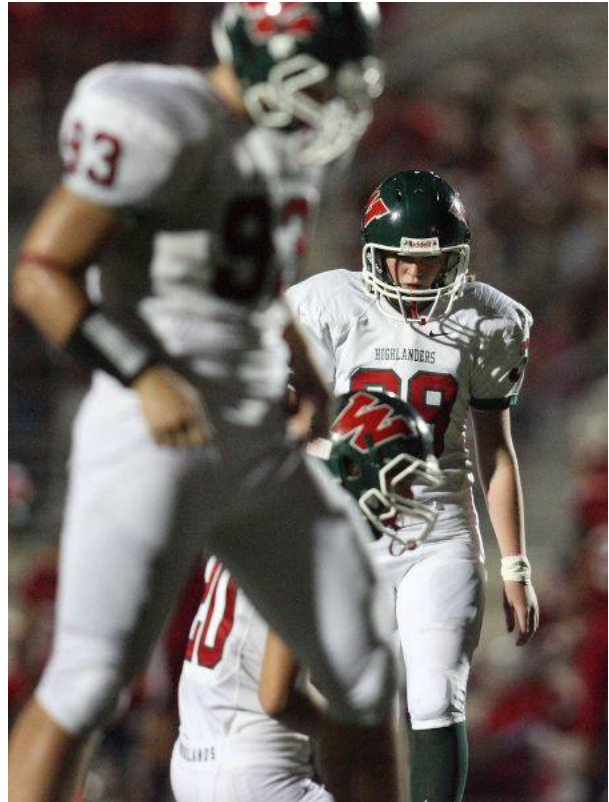
## Highlanders blow out Atascocita in 14-5A opener



The Woodlands quarterback Joseph Schneider maneuvers past Atascocita's Brandon Gamble during Saturday night's game at Turner Stadium in Humble.



The Woodlands wide receiver Blake Webb hauls in a 45-yard touchdown pass during Saturday night's game against Atascocita at Turner Stadium in Humble. To purchase this photo or others like it, visit <http://hcnonline.mycapture.com>.



The Woodlands kicker Meya Bizer prepares to kick for the extra point during Saturday night's game against Atascocita at Turner Stadium in Humble. She made the kick.

**By Keith MacPherson**

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HUMBLE — In the past three weeks, The Woodlands has won an overtime game, come back to win and held off a comeback to win.

Saturday the Highlanders won going away.

The defense lifted The Woodlands to a 35-0 District 14-5A-opening win over Atascocita at Turner Stadium.

The Highlanders (5-0, 1-0) held the Eagles to 104 yards of total offense and only seven first downs.

"Our defense has improved steadily every week," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "They played exceptionally well last week against Tyler Lee. We gave up one big play to them that cost us a score, but other than that we played well. Then tonight we continued to show that improvement, and I'm very proud of the way our whole defensive unit is

playing.”

A day after receiving his Built Ford Tough Player of the Week award, Highlander quarterback Joseph Schneider proved to be another worthy candidate. The senior completed 17 of 27 passes for 242 yards and five touchdowns.

“Every week, Joseph has been a guy we have come to count on,” Schmid said. “Whether he does it through the air or on the ground, he has done a tremendous job. He has become a big playmaker for us and I can’t say enough about his development.”

Highlander running back Daniel Lasco was held out for a fourth consecutive week; instead Jackson LaPlant got his second start after a position change from receiver and ran for 67 yards.

Lasco roamed the sidelines during the game cheering on teammates, but didn’t appear to favor the ankle he sprained in The Woodlands’ season-opening win against Monterrey Prepa Tec.

“We had a tough call this week because (Lasco) was really close to being able to play,” Schmid said. “We decided to keep him out this week and give him the open week (next week) and then the week before Lufkin — essentially two weeks — that would be in both his best interest and our best interest.”

Atascocita (2-3, 0-1) was led by the tough running of Nick Brooks, who had 46 yards rushing in the game while seeing most of his action in a Wildcat formation.

Highlander defensive end Michael Cooper took advantage of Eagle turnovers when he twice pounced on fumbles.

More than half of Atascocita’s first downs came on the game-opening drive, which eventually stalled.

The Woodlands struggled to finish drives in the early going but finely broke through with a quick-strike, 45-yard bomb to Blake Webb late in the first quarter to go up 7-0.

In the second quarter, the momentum turned the Highlanders’ way quickly. Schneider connected on two touchdown passes, the first an 18-yard strike to Max Ward and the second a six-yard hitch to Randy Cooper.

Ward would be Schneider’s top target on the night with five catches for 72 yards, while Webb proved to be the Highlanders’ top deep threat with 95 yards and one touchdown.

The lopsided score late in the game gave The Woodlands a chance to give kicker Meya Bizer a chance to play. She kicked the PAT after the Highlanders’ final score — an 8-yard pass from Schneider to Zack Stewart.

The game was delayed by an hour and a half during halftime due to lightning in the area.