

Miles propels The Woodlands past Atascocita in 14-5A opener



Saturday, September 24, 2011 By Keith MacPherson

SHENANDOAH – Lance Miles is finally feeling comfortable. After a shaky start to the season in which he threw three interceptions in the first game of the season, the senior quarterback for The Woodlands has started to come into his own midway through the season. His new found confidence shined Saturday night as the Highlanders trounced Atascocita 49-10 in their District 14-5A opener led by Miles' three touchdown passes and 252 yards at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

"It feels like all my hard work has paid off," said Miles who completed 12 of 16 passes on the night. "To get that first district win is big. We're trying to defend our district title. As long as we win, I don't care if we're rotating (the quarterbacks) or I'm the starter." Miles had rotated with Cooper Woodyard in the team's first three games, but The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid tabbed Miles the fulltime starter before the Tyler Lee game.

"We made that decision last week before Tyler Lee," Schmid said. "We felt like going into the last district game that we needed to settle on one. Part of the reason why we couldn't get our offense going was because our quarterbacks couldn't get in a rhythm, so we went with Lance after the first rotation last week and he played well. "Tonight as the full time quarterback he did a great job. It was probably his best performance of the season."

Blake Webb caught a 63-yard touchdown pass from Miles with 6:06 left in the quarter and then again gashed the Atascocita defense with a 55-yard touchdown catch on a screen pass with 50 seconds left in the first quarter. Webb, an Oklahoma State commit, finished with 133 yards on four catches for the Highlanders (5-0, 1-0).

Woodyard, who adds depth to the running back position with Miles now starting quarterback, scored three touchdowns on the night on five carries for 139 yards. "(Woodyard) had a big night at running back," Schmid said. "I think we're stating to put all the pieces where they need to be." Woodyard punched it in from a yard-out while playing quarterback in a goal line package to open the Highlanders' scoring and later shot through the Eagles' defense for a 49-yard touchdown run from the running back spot in the second quarter.

Atascocita sophomore running back Jermarcus Jones ran 21 times for 98 yards on the night, but was held scoreless by the stingy Highlander defense. Woodyard burst through for a 77-yard run for the Highlanders' final score of the game in the third quarter.

The Woodlands took advantage of a muffed punt by Atascocita (2-3, 0-1) in the second quarter when Charlie Warren pounced on the Eagles miscue. Three plays later and Miles would find Houston Brown for a 32-yard strike.

Travis Jones caught an 8-yard pass from Grant Ashcraft to put Atascocita on the board with four second left in the half. Jones snuck a toe in while diving out of the back of the end zone for the score. Jones finished with 12 catches for 107 yards on the night. Ashcraft was 14 of 29 passing for 85 yards. Atascocita's Daniel Higdon connected on a 32-yard field goal with 37 seconds left in the game to make it 49-10.