

The Woodlands tops Conroe; Klein Collins next



Saturday, November 5, 2011 By Glenn Sattell

This rivalry used to be electric. From 1990-2003 The Woodlands and Conroe ended its regular seasons against each other in the most anticipated game of the year. That tradition was renewed last year. But like in recent times the 2011 result proved to be no different than most of the last 15 played between the old rivals.

The Woodlands offense scored the first two times it had the football and its defense sandwiched a touchdown in between those as the Highlanders cruised to a 57-0 victory over Conroe Friday at Buddy Moorhead Stadium. It was the fourth consecutive victory for the Highlanders over the Tigers. Since 1996, Conroe has won just twice in this annual rivalry that dates back to 1978.

The Highlanders (9-1, 5-1) enter the Division I playoffs next week as the District 14-5A top seed and will face Klein Collins on Friday at Turner Stadium in Kingwood looking to earn a little respect in the postseason.

"We talked to these kids from Day 1 that they're going to have to earn it," The Woodlands head coach Mark Schmid said. "They're going to have to earn respect, they're going to have to earn the victories. They've bought into that and they believe it. And each week they've gone out and earned it.

"I think we're playing pretty good right now and hopefully that will continue next week."

The Tigers (2-8, 2-4) failed to make the playoffs for the second consecutive season following three previous postseason trips from 2007-09. But head coach Roger Holtkamp took away some positives from the season and will have his troops ready to compete again in 2012.

"Except for two games we were in every game," Holtkamp said. "They did what I asked them to do all year long and they played with heart for a lot of times.

"Our seniors did a good job and finished strong. We got some experience with some young kids. Stedman Bell will be our quarterback leader coming back. We think we can build off of that and our younger guys coming in. We want to do better, we will do better."

But on Friday everything went The Woodlands' way. It was also the fourth consecutive shutout recorded by the Highlanders defense – a school record.

Highlanders quarterback Lance Miles threw four touchdown passes to Blake Webb – three in the first half. Miles completed 12 of 15 passes for 231 yards to give him 1,858 passing yards for the season. He gave way to Ben Kronshage late in the third quarter. Kronshage was perfect in seven passing attempts for 83 yards.

Webb finished with five pass receptions for 135 yards.

The Highlanders took charge early. Conroe's Lamar Hernandez returned the opening kickoff 56 yards to The Woodlands 42-yard line. But Lane LeBouef returned an interception 42 yards on a Tigers' fourth-down pass attempt and the Highlanders were in the end zone seven plays later. Randy Cooper rushed four times for 24 yards in the opening drive, including the final four yards.

Charlie Warren collected The Woodlands' second pass interception in two Conroe drives and returned it 28 yards for a touchdown and the Highlanders held a 14-0 advantage midway through the first quarter.

The Tigers failed in its third possession on a fake punt attempt and Miles made them pay on the following play with a 26-yard touchdown pass to Webb and a 21-0 lead with 5:02 to play in the opening period.

The Highlanders' next possession resulted in more points but only because Miles pooch-punted inside the Tigers' 1-yard line and Robbie Goldschmidt recorded a safety, tackling a Tigers' runner in his own end zone, on the following play.

Webb hauled in a screen pass on the first play following Conroe's free kick and raced 53 yards for a touchdown, extending the Highlanders' lead to 30-0 with 10:17 left in the second quarter.

Against the district's leading defense, Conroe recorded its initial first down with 8:42 to play in the second quarter on a short run from Terrence Leonard. But the Tigers offense could not generate much offense throughout the game, gathering just 31 total yards in the first half and 46 for the game.

Miles and Webb connected for a third touchdown before halftime. Webb took a screen pass and replicated his previous score, this time racing 42 yards for the score. The PAT kick attempt failed leaving The Woodlands' lead at 36-0 with 2:24 left in the second quarter.