

# Woodlands outlasts highly-touted Klein Collins in playoff shootout

By DIDIER MORAIS, Copyright 2011 Houston Chronicle  
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It took [Klein Collins](#) just four minutes and 41 seconds to snap The Woodlands' four-game shutout streak. Despite the blemish, the Highlanders' defense excelled at a critical juncture.

During the last nine minutes of Friday night's game, the heralded unit forced two fumbles — recovered by [Cole Little](#) and [Lane LeBouef](#) — to help The Woodlands outlast Klein Collins 42-31 in the Class 5A Division I Region II bi-district game at Turner Stadium.

The Woodlands (10-1) advances to the area round to play Round Rock Westwood. “(The defense) kept fighting and kept swinging,” The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. “The good thing about it is offensively we were putting points on the board and we gave them a reason to fight. That’s what a team is all about.”

But Klein Collins (8-3) committed self-inflicted mistakes to slide out of contention. With 9:02 on the clock, running back [Marcus Goodson](#) surrendered the first of two late fumbles.

Then, [Ellison Powell](#)'s miscue was especially costly, considering it occurred in the red zone with 4:49 in the fourth quarter. The defeat ultimately capped a disappointing season for the [Tigers](#), who entered the preseason as the Chronicle's No. 1-ranked team.

“We can sit here and shoulda, coulda, woulda,” Klein Collins coach Drew Svoboda said. “We just didn’t make the big plays when it mattered. There were turnovers at the worst time.”

The early portion of the shootout was dominated by two speedsters — The Woodlands wideout [Blake Webb](#) and Klein Collins receiver [Shane Rhodes](#). By halftime, both seniors had burned the defenses to eclipse the 100-yard receiving plateau.

On the game’s first series, Rhodes snagged a screen pass and escaped for a 21-yard touchdown. The senior broke tackles all night en route to catching eight passes for 201 yards and two touchdowns.

But each time the Tigers crossed the goal line the Highlanders responded with the aerial attack. Quarterback [Lance Miles](#) unloaded a 41-yard bomb to an open Webb to secure a 7-7 first-quarter tie.

That was only the beginning of the masterful connection between the two. With Webb blazing through the secondary, Miles wound up slinging three touchdowns of 41, 66 and 49 yards — all in the first half — to Webb.

“(Webb’s) speed is probably the best thing to have,” said Miles, who finished 15-of-25 for 318 yards and four touchdowns. “There’s definitely not a cornerback as fast as him.”

Despite the offensive fireworks, The Woodlands’ defense struggled early on to match that production. After allowing an average of 11.1 points per game entering Friday night, the Highlanders surrendered 24 points by the halftime.

But the Highlanders atoned for the mistakes in the second half.

“We want to play in December and I think tonight was a statement that we made,” Miles said.



## The Woodlands downs Klein Collins



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By [Mike Taylor](#)

**HUMBLE** — The Woodlands has not reached the third round of the playoffs since a run to the state championship game in 2003.

For all its recent regular season success, Klein Collins has not reached that regional round but once, in 2009.

Maybe all the Highlanders needed was to face the Tigers in the first round of the postseason.

The Woodlands and its defense staved off Klein Collins 42-31 after a first-half shootout on Friday night at Turner Stadium to advance to the area round of the Region II-5A Division I playoffs.

The Highlanders (10-1) will play Round Rock Westwood on Saturday afternoon at Waco ISD Stadium. The Warriors beat Austin Bowie 52-20 on Friday night.

After trailing 24-21 at halftime, The Woodlands allowed only one second-half touchdown. In the fourth quarter, seniors Brandon Taylor and Lane LeBouef recovered a pair of Klein Collins fumbles, and Cameron Klapesky made two huge receptions.

Randy Cooper scored on a 20-yard run to give the Highlanders their first lead of the game at the 7:56 mark of the third quarter.

But the Tigers bounced right back with a 10-play, 83-yard drive. Marcus Goodson ran in from 7 yards out to put Klein Collins (8-3) back on top.

The teams then traded punts before Klapesky reeled in a pass from quarterback Lance Miles near the sideline. The senior then spun around his defender and raced into the end zone for what turned out to be the winning score.

"I saw him when I made my break," Klapesky said. "Me and the quarterback had talked about it before. They had been biting on it hard, so we planned on trying to spin out of it and it worked out real good."

Brandon Taylor stripped Goodson four plays later, and The Woodlands moved the ball into the red zone before a holding penalty. Cooper caught a 13-yard pass on second and 22, then Klapesky made another grab and — with the aid of a crushing block by Jayme Taylor — nearly reached paydirt before stepping out of bounds at the 2.

Cooper Woodyard scored out of the Highlanders' goal line package on the next play for the final margin.

"We were down 24-21, and we knew they were getting the ball," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "We talked to the kids that we had to have a stop and we had to have a score. If we had a stop and a score it was going to be a different ballgame, and that's exactly what they gave us."

Klein Collins seemed ready to cut the deficit on its ensuing possession, but Ellison Powell couldn't handle a pitch from quarterback Tyler Stehling. LeBouef recovered the ball at The Woodlands' 9-yard line.

"Those turnovers that we got were huge," Schmid said.

The Highlanders' Blake Webb and the Tigers' Shane Rhodes battled it out in the first half. Webb caught six balls — either deep bombs or quick outs — for 186 yards and three touchdowns of 41, 67 and 49 yards. Rhodes hauled in six passes — mostly short screens — for 113 yards and two scores of 22 and 21 yards.

But his two second-half receptions for 87 yards merely set up Klein Collins' lone score after the break.

"There's no adjusting to No. 4 (Rhodes)," Schmid said. "He's a special cat, and his motor runs at a different speed. He basically made all the plays tonight and in the second half we were able to tackle him and keep him out of the end zone. I think that was the difference."

There was some defense before halftime, with crushing third-down sacks by the Tigers' Christian Snow and the Highlanders' Robbie Goldschmidt.

Both teams punted thrice, but The Woodlands fumbled away its opening possession while Klein Collins' Rhett Peterson kicked a 22-yard field goal to give the Tigers a 24-14 lead 6:04 before the break.

Webb caught a 49-yard scoring strike from Miles two plays later.

"Once we figured it out, they couldn't move the ball on us," said junior linebacker Cole Little, who made a big stop in the backfield when Klein Collins faced third down and 13 on the first possession of the third quarter. "We knew what we had to do and we just went out there and got it done."

"We have good chemistry on defense. Everyone does their job and we just try to go out there and get it done."