



The Woodlands beats Westwood, advances to Region II-5A semis

Saturday, November 19, 2011

WACO – The Woodlands finally got that monkey off its back. Gone are the days of two-and-done, the Highlanders are Region II-5A area champs.

The Woodlands advanced past the second round of the playoffs for the first time since its run to the state finals in 2003 with a 21-14 win over Round Rock Westwood at Waco ISD Stadium on Saturday.

“We’ve played two really good football teams and to come away with wins over (Klein) Collins and Westwood, I couldn’t be more proud for my guys and my coaches,” The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. “Getting that monkey off our backs is a huge, huge weight lift.”

The Woodlands will take on Mesquite in the Region II-5A semifinals at Waco ISD Stadium at 1 p.m. next Saturday.

The Highlanders (11-1) disposed of the Warriors with a high-flying offense and timely defense. The Woodlands piled up 422 yards of total offense and limited Westwood (10-2) to 10 first downs and 283 total yards – 132 of which came on two plays.

“We gave up some points last week (against Klein Collins) so we really wanted to sharpen up this week,” Highlander linebacker Robbie Goldschmidt said. “When you have a defensive line like we do, it makes our job easier. Our secondary is playing great right now, it was a complete team effort today.”

Highlander running back Cooper Woodyard ran for 82 yards on 18 carries and two touchdowns to lead The Woodlands, which came up with 197 yards on the ground.

Lance Miles threw for 225 yards on 18 of 29 passing with a touchdown and two interceptions. The Highlander signal-caller added 66 yards on the ground on 12 carries. “We wanted to be the first team from The Woodlands since 2003 to get past the second round,” Miles said. “We came up here thinking it was a business trip and we took care of business.”

Blake Webb, an Oklahoma State commit, caught six passes for 59 yards for the Highlanders.

The Woodlands held Westwood quarterback Ben Johnson to 46 yards on 17 carries. The speedy quarterback threw for 189 yards on 9 of 15 passing, most of which came on touchdown passes of 55 and 77 yards.

“We felt like (Johnson) was the guy that made their offense tick,” Schmid said. “We knew if we could make problems for him, then we could make problems for their offense. Our defensive players and our coaches did an outstanding job with our game plan.”

The Highlander defense came up big in the fourth quarter with a two monster stops against the Warriors.

Westwood was first stopped short on a fourth-and-5 when Johnson fumbled the ball out of bounds just short of the first down marker in Highlander territory.

Moments before the play, Johnson had made the first down on a fourth-and-inches but was called back on an illegal formation penalty. Play was stopped for nearly five minutes as Westwood coach Anthony Wood pled his case, even going so far as to draw the formation on a piece of paper.

The Woodlands’ ‘D’ came up big again minutes later when the Highlanders forced another turnover on downs with 33 seconds left in the contest and the Warriors in Highlander territory. Johnson fired two incomplete passes following a Goldschmidt sack allowing the Highlanders to take over on downs.

Miles threaded the needle over the middle on a second-and-7, squeezing a pass between Westwood safeties Brad Florence and Brad Watson to find Christian Jauregui in the second quarter. The Highlander wide receiver would slip a defender and take the reception 56 yards for a touchdown to give the Highlanders' their first score of the game.

“We were trying throw the underneath ball out here on the perimeter and they jumped it,” Schmid said. “Lance just did what he’s done all year and found a secondary receiver and put the ball right where it needed to be.”

The Woodlands took over from its own 17 midway through the second quarter before its drive stalled at the Warriors’ 7 with a fourth-and-1. After a timeout, the Highlanders came out ready to go for it with running back Woodyard lined up in a wildcat formation behind center. The one-time quarterback option was able to draw a host of Warrior defenders offside with a hard count.

“We were going to run the power with Cooper and fortunately we got them offside,” Schmid said. Woodyard was rewarded a play later when he took it in from four yards out to give the Highlanders a 14-7 lead.

Johnson eluded pressure to find Ledean Anderson on a screen pass on a third down in the game’s opening drive. The shifty Westwood running back made a move to the left sideline and took 55 yards for a touchdown to give the Warriors a quick 7-0 lead.

Westwood would strike again after halftime on a 77-yard pass from Johnson to a wide-open Desmond Wyatt over the middle. Wyatt would take the pass to the left sideline again where he found his opening.

The touchdown came shortly after a controversial interception from Tyler Logan. The Warrior linebacker took the ball from the hands of Cooper Woodyard on a pass to the end zone on what replays appeared to show as a touchdown. The referees instead ruled the play a touchback on an interception setting up Wyatt’s score.

Saturday’s win was the first over a Round Rock ISD school for a team from The Woodlands in four tries. All previous losses came to Stony Point.

Westwood had reached the area playoffs just one time previous to this season in its 30-year history and has never advanced past the second round.

Westwood's season ends with 21-14 loss to The Woodlands

By [Danny Davis](#)

Saturday, Nov. 19, 2011

WACO — The Westwood Warriors opened the season with hopes of hoisting a state championship trophy at Cowboys Stadium on Dec. 17. That dream, however, died on Saturday.

Senior running back Cooper Woodyard scored twice to lead The Woodlands to a 21-14 victory over the Warriors in a Class 5A, Division I area playoff game. The loss prevented Westwood from advancing to the playoffs' third round for the first time in school history.

"I just hate to see it end," coach Anthony Wood said. "You don't get to coach a group like this too often."

Westwood scored five plays into the game as running back LaDeans Anderson took a screen pass from Ben Johnson and sprinted 55 yards into the end zone. The Woodlands scored twice in the second quarter and took a 14-7 lead into halftime.

Westwood missed on opportunities to stop both of The Woodlands' touchdowns.

On the tail end of a Johnson punt in the second quarter, The Woodlands fumbled right to a Westwood lineman, but the Warriors were unable to recover. Two plays later, The Woodlands quarterback Lance Miles threw a 56-yard touchdown pass to Christian Jauregui.

On its final drive of the first half, The Woodlands faced a 25-yard field goal into the wind, but with the ball at the Westwood 7, the Highlanders decided after a timeout to go for it on 4th-and-1. The Woodlands immediately picked up a first down by drawing Westwood offside, and Woodyard then grabbed the lead with a 4-yard run, with 53 seconds remaining.

The Woodlands took the second half's opening drive into Westwood territory, but Woodyard had a 21-yard touchdown catch wrestled away from him in the end zone by Westwood linebacker Tyler Logan. After a 3-yard run by Anderson, Westwood tied the game with Johnson's 77-yard touchdown pass to Desmond Wyatt.

The teams traded a Highlander interception for a Westwood fumble before Woodyard scored the game-winning touchdown on a 1-yard run with 11:37 left in the game.

Westwood then had two chances to tie the game. The Warriors followed Woodyard's touchdown with a drive that reached The Woodlands 45, but Westwood had a 4th-and-1 conversion negated by an illegal shift penalty and turned the ball over when Johnson was stopped a yard short on the longer conversion attempt. Westwood then started its final drive of the season from its 4 with 3:54 left in the game, and got the ball to The Woodlands 48 before a sack, a short completion and two incomplete passes ended Westwood's chance of a comeback.

The Woodlands (11-1) will play Mesquite next week. Westwood (10-2) ends its season with a school-record 10 wins.

"Our goal all along has been a state championship and it's tough that we didn't accomplish that goal," said Johnson, who has signed to play baseball at the University of Texas. "But we've done some things that no one has done in Westwood's history and I've never had so much fun. I'm going to miss this."