

# THE COURIER

OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY



## Highlanders slip past Garland Sachse late for area round championship

By Jon Poorman  
Saturday, November 19, 2016

WACO - The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said on Thursday evening that his team would have to be "sharp in all three phases" – offense, defense and special teams – to knock off the undefeated Garland Sachse Mustangs.

The No. 4 state-ranked Highlanders (12-0) made just enough plays on a chilly Friday night at Waco ISD Stadium, capturing a 51-40 victory in the Division I Region II-6A area playoffs. The last time The Woodlands possessed a 12-0 record was in 2003 when they went 14-1 and lost to North Shore in the state championship game. With the triumph, the Highlanders advanced to the regional semifinals for the first time since 2013. They'll face off against either Spring (9-2) or Austin Bowie (10-1) in the next round.

Eric Schmid's 20-yard touchdown run with 3:15 remaining iced the victory after the defense came up with a stop on fourth-and-inches just two plays earlier to take over possession.

"It just took the resiliency from our kids," Mark Schmid said. "They never stopped believing, and they always played for the next play. We went down and scored and got the lead, and then got the big fourth-down stop, which let us go down and score again to extend the lead to 11. They kept playing all night, and I couldn't be more proud of their resiliency."

Eric Schmid led the way for the Highlanders' offense, completing 14 of 20 passes for 256 yards and three touchdowns. Dylan Casey caught seven of those passes for 179 yards, including a 23-yard touchdown with 34 seconds left in the first half and a 29-yarder that gave The Woodlands the lead for good with 5:30 remaining.

After trailing 28-14 at halftime, Sachse (11-1) came to life in the second half behind the production of quarterback Jalen Mayden. The junior signal-caller completed 26 of 32 passes for 412 yards and three touchdowns and added 58 yards and two more scores on the ground.

Long touchdown passes of 72 and 64 yards, respectively, to Kelon Wilson in the fourth quarter put the Mustangs ahead on two separate occasions. But both times, the Highlanders were able to answer. Carlos Ramos scored on a 13-yard run to negate the Mustangs' first lead of the game, and Schmid and Casey erased the second.

"We just had to keep doing what we were doing – just trusting our teammates, getting a couple of stops on defense and just keep rolling on offense," Eric Schmid said. "The defense made some huge plays, and so did the offense."

In the first half, Connor Klapesky scored on a 1-yard run after a fumble recovery by Quinn Binney set the Highlanders up at the Mustangs' 5. Eric Schmid connected with Kesean Carter on an 18-yard score, and Carter took a kickoff return 86 yards to the house to account for the rest of The Woodlands' first-half points.

And even though the Mustangs made it a competitive game in the final two quarters, the unbeaten Highlanders were able to hold them off and survived to play another week. "At this point in the season in the playoffs, each week possesses different challenges and tougher opponents," Mark Schmid said. "Tonight, (Sachse) was tougher than what we faced last week (against Mesquite Horn). That's kind of what you expect as you move on."

# Dirty Dozen: Woodlands Highlanders prevail in playoff shootout, improve to 12-0

By Jim East, WOL Sports

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WACO, Texas – The Woodlands Highlanders had eight minutes to either save their season or get ready for a very long bus ride home. What they did, on both offense and defense, was play classic Woodlands football.

The Woodlands Highlanders defeated the Sachse Mustangs 51-40 in their second playoff game of the season. Two late touchdowns and some gut-check defensive stands propelled the Highlanders (12-0) to a 51-40 triumph over the Sachse Mustangs (11-1).

The Woodlands recovered from a series of second-half lapses on defense and special teams to move one step closer to their ultimate goal, a state championship.

Trailing 40-38 with eight minutes left in the game – the first time all season The Woodlands has trailed in the fourth quarter - wide receiver Dylan Casey hauled in a 30-yard pass over his shoulder in the end zone to put the Highlanders on top for good. Casey, the player of the game, caught a pair of touchdown passes from quarterback Eric Schmid.

The Mustangs returned to the field with plenty of confidence that they could reclaim the lead; they'd already scored 26 points in the second half alone. But this time, the Highlander defense was up to the challenge. On fourth-and-one, The Woodlands stuffed Mustang quarterback Jalen Mayden, and the Highlanders took over on downs.

They called a rushing play for Schmid that yielded a first down, and then in a moment of strategic brilliance, they called the exact same play again. This time Schmid ran almost untouched for a 30-yard touchdown that sealed and punched his team's ticket to the third round of the playoffs.

The game started in classic Highlander fashion. They used a wide array of rushers and receivers to build a comfortable 28-14 halftime lead.

Defensive dynamo Michael Purcell set up the first score when he stripped Mayden and Jake Driggers recovered the fumble. That gave the Highlanders the ball in the red zone, and Connor Klapesky eventually punched it in from one yard out.

On their next drive, a 50-yard pass to Casey set up a 15-yard scoring strike to Kesean Carter, and just like that it was 14-0.

The Mustangs got on the board early in the second quarter, but Carter stole their momentum when he took the ensuing kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown.

The teams each scored one more touchdown before halftime, but the Highlanders seemed firmly in control. That control evaporated two minutes into the third quarter when a long snap sailed over The Woodlands' punter's head into the end zone and Sachse recovered.

After that play, Mayden delivered two big body blows to the Highlander defense, a 70-yard touchdown pass followed by a 65-yarder. That second touchdown gave the Mustangs a 40-38 edge, but it was short-lived.

Facing their toughest test of the season, Highlanders saved their best for last, using Casey's touchdown catch and Schmid's scoring run to extend this marvelous season.

## The Woodlands defeats Sachse

WACO- Eric Schmid tossed a 29-yard touchdown pass to Dylan Casey with 5:13 left in the game to erase a fourth quarter deficit as The Woodlands escaped with a 51-40 win over Sachse at Waco ISD Stadium.

The Woodlands (12-0) caught a break early in the game when the defense stripped the ball away from Jalen Mayden at the five yard-line which led to a short Connor Klapesky touchdown. The Woodlands later added an 86-yard kickoff return from Kesean Carter to build up a 21-7 lead.

Sachse began to chip away at the deficit when Jalen Mayden scored on 4th-and-goal then Mayden laced a nice pass to Kelon Wilson who outraced everyone down the field for a 41-yard touchdown to pull Sachse within 21-14.

Sachse (11-1) failed to convert a fourth-and-one at the 43 yard-line then The Woodlands took a 28-14 lead just before halftime when Casey made a nice grab in the corner of the end zone for a 24-yard touchdown.

Sachse stormed back in the second half to take a 40-38 lead behind a couple of long touchdown passes from Mayden to Wilson but The Woodlands regained the lead 44-40 with 5:30 left in the game when Casey hauled in a 29-yard touchdown pass from Schmid. Sachse had a chance to regain the lead late but failed to convert a fourth-and-one at their 34 yard-line. The Woodlands put the game away two plays later when Schmid reeled off a 23-yard touchdown run down the left side.

Sachse's offense put up some incredible numbers in a losing effort as Mayden passed for 417 yards, while Wilson had six catches for 220 yards.

### Scoring Summary

First Quarter		SA	TW
TW	Connor Klapesky 1-yard run (Lockhart West kick) 7:42	0	7
TW	Kesean Carter 18-yard pass from Eric Schmid (Lockhart West kick) 4:13	0	14

Second Quarter		SA	TW
SA	Jalen Mayden 1-yard run (Geoffrey Pace kick) 10:14	7	14
TW	Kesean Carter 86-yard kickoff return (Gingras kick) 9:58	7	21
SA	Kelon Wilson 41-yard pass from Jalen Mayden (Geoffrey Pace kick) 9:20	14	21
TW	Dylan Casey 24-yard pass from Eric Schmid (Lockhart West kick) 0:34	14	28
Third Quarter		SA	TW
SA	Hunter Spears fumble recovery in end zone (Geoffrey Pace kick) 9:39	21	28
TW	Charles Gingras 18-yard field goal 6:40	21	31
SA	Jalen Mayden 10-yard run (Geoffrey Pace kick) 2:05	28	31
Fourth Quarter		SA	TW
SA	Kelon Wilson 72-yard pass from Jalen Mayden (kick failed) 11:12	34	31
TW	Carlos Ramos 13-yard run (Gingras kick) 8:29	34	38
SA	Kelon Wilson 64-yard pass from Jalen Mayden (kick failed) 7:59	40	38
TW	Dylan Casey 29-yard pass from Eric Schmid (pass failed) 5:30	40	44
TW	Eric Schmid 23-yard run (Lockhart West kick) 3:15	40	51

**Matchup***HS*

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1st Downs	23	20
Total Yards	532	363
Passing	417	274
Comp-Att	29-35	15-21
Yards per pass	14.4	18.3
Interceptions thrown	0	0
Rushing	115	89
Rushing Attempts	39	31
Yards per rush	2.9	2.9
Penalties	8-75	5-50
Turnovers	2	0
Fumbles lost	2	0
Interceptions thrown	0	0

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