



Mistakes doom Highlanders

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WACO, Texas - Allen took advantage of two Highlander fumbles in the first quarter en route to a 56-21 Class 5A Division I regional playoff win at Floyd Casey Stadium in Waco Saturday afternoon.

“We knew that they (Allen) were a very, very explosive offense and we were going to have to try to match them score for score. The (first) turnover was big in the momentum game. We had another opportunity, where we blocked the play right and if we run outside, we walk in for a touchdown. If we’d been able to capitalize on those two possessions, I feel it would of been a different first half,” said Highlander Head Coach Mark Schmid.

Allen (13-0) took the initial possession of the game and drove deep inside Highlander territory, but couldn’t capitalize. Allen lined up for a 26-yard field goal attempt, however the snap was fumbled and the Highlanders recovered at their own 6-yard line.

The Highlander turnovers happened on the first two Highlander possessions in the first quarter. On a third-and-2 play from the 11-yard line, Junior quarterback Chris Andritsos was sacked and had the ball jarred loose as the Eagles recovered at the Highlander 11-yard line. The turnover was the first for The Woodlands in nine postseason quarters. Allen took advantage of the fumble two plays later when Eagle Senior running back Jaelen Barlow plunged in from the 1-yard line, giving Allen a 7-0 lead with 7:12 left in the first quarter.

The Highlanders (10-3) got the ball moving on their second possession when Andritsos connected on back-to-back passes to Junior wide receiver Chris Bell and Senior wide receiver Tyler Patrick, respectively. The Woodlands had the ball at the Allen 23-yard line, but the next three plays went for five total yards and another fumble ended the Highlander scoring threat.

Allen responded to the turnover with a 12-play 87-yard drive, capped off by Junior quarterback Kyler Murray connecting on a 7-yard touchdown strike to Senior wide receiver Cole Carter. The score extended the Eagle lead 14-0, with 1:10 remaining in the first quarter.

The Woodlands again got moving on the third possession when Junior running back Patrick Carr took an end-around hand off and raced 49 yards to the Allen 22-yard line and the Highlanders were again threatening the defending Class 5A Division I champions. The Woodlands couldn't move the ball any further and turned the ball over on downs.

The Highlander defense came up with another stop when Allen running back Jaelen Barlow fumbled and Junior Jake Coll recovered for The Woodlands giving them a first-and-10 at the Allen 23-yard line. After the recovery Allen was flagged for a personal foul that gave The Woodlands a first-and-10 at the Allen 12-yard line. The Allen defense stiffened when the Highlanders were flagged for delay of game and Andritsos was sacked on third down.

The momentum changed to Allen when The Woodlands went for it on fourth-and-18 from the Allen 20-yard line and didn't convert. Allen went for the big play and got it when Kyler Murray connected with Senior wide receiver Josh Pettijohn on a 71-yard touchdown pass that gave Allen a 21-0 lead with 8:39 left in the second quarter.

Allen for the game finished with 567 total yards to The Woodlands' 407. The Eagles had five drives start in Highlander territory, scoring on each of the first three. Allen quarterback Kyler Murray finished 16-of-21 for 335 yards, five touchdown passes. Murray also had four rushes for 44 yards, including a 49-yard touchdown run in the second quarter.

The hole was too deep for The Woodlands to overcome as Allen took a 42-0 lead at halftime.

The Woodlands did not quit as they outscored Allen 21-14 in the second half. Junior quarterback Chris Andritsos led an 8-play, 88 yard drive capped off with a 2-yard touchdown pass to Senior wide receiver Jeremy Davis Harper. On the next possession Junior running back Patrick Carr shined with an electrifying 59-yard touchdown run off the left-side. Carr finished with 196 yards rushing on 19 carries. The Highlanders got their final touchdown on a 1-yard quarterback keeper from Senior Dylan Larsen to cap the scoring.

Allen hands The Woodlands worst playoff loss ever



Posted: Saturday, November 30, 2013

By **Jon Poorman**

WACO — The Woodlands players and coaches knew they had to stop Allen quarterback Kyler Murray. But not even a week full of game planning could slow down the Eagles' highly-touted signal-caller.

Murray completed 16 of 21 passes for 335 yards and five touchdowns without an interception as the No. 2-nationally ranked Eagles ended the Highlanders' 19th straight playoff appearance with a 56-21 victory in a Class 5A Division I regional game at Baylor University's Floyd Casey Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

"They are an outstanding offensive football team, and their quarterback is outstanding," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "They're going to be tough to beat."

The Highlanders concluded their season with a 10-3 record. And even though the loss was tough to swallow, it marked the end of an impressive run that included an outright District 14-5A championship and a 6-0 record in league play.

"We had great senior leadership this year, and those guys really helped form bonds and a really great chemistry with our football team," Schmid said. "That goes a long way in the success of a football team."

"All of our seniors are special. ... For them to hang in there and do the things that they did this year — outright district champions, third round of the playoffs — it says a lot about them and what they bring to the table."

Turnovers plagued The Woodlands early and often, as two fumbles by quarterback Chris Andritsos gave Allen a short field and ended a promising drive in the opening quarter.

"We knew from just watching them that they were a very explosive offense," Schmid said. "We were going to have to match them score for score. The turnover down in (the red zone), which hopefully would have led to a touchdown for us, was big."

The 35-point loss was the Highlanders' worst postseason setback in their 36-year history. They lost to A&M Consolidated 31-0 in the second round in 2002.

The Eagles' Jaelen Barlow scored the game's opening touchdown with a one-yard trot off left tackle. But it was all Murray from that point on.

The junior connected with Cole Carter for a seven-yard scoring strike toward the end of the first period to give Allen a commanding 14-0 advantage.

That's when Murray turned things up a notch, accounting for four touchdowns in the second quarter, including passes of 71, 13 and seven yards and a 49-yard score on the ground.

The Eagles outgained The Woodlands 368-158 in the first half and walked into the locker room with a 42-0 lead.

In the third quarter, Murray picked up where he left off, hitting Jalen Guyton for a 38-yard score. It was his sixth total touchdown of the game.

"You have to decide if you're going to try to get pressure on him and make him rush, and you saw how deadly he is with his legs," Schmid said. "We battled that decision all game long, where we put pressure on him and flush him or we don't put pressure on him and try to cover.

"You saw what happened when we gave him time. He just sat back there and put the ball exactly where he wanted to. ... He's a special player, he makes them click and he was the guy we had to stop."

The Woodlands was able to get a couple of scores of its own in the third quarter on a three-yard pass from Andritsos to Jeremy Davis-Harper and 59-yard run by junior Patrick Carr, but it was too little, too late.

Allen's second-team offense found paydirt on a five-yard run by Keon Williams and Dylan Larsen went in from one yard out for the Highlanders to cap the scoring in the fourth.

Carr was the bright spot for the Highlanders, carrying 19 times for 196 yards.

"This may be one of the best playoff games he's had — there's no doubt about it," Schmid said. "He's had some 200-plus-yard games before, but not against the caliber of opponent that he was facing today, so he stepped up and played big. We're fortunate that we've got him back next year."



Allen eliminates The Woodlands from 5A playoffs

By David Just | November 30, 2013

WACO - Allen needed four plays to score three touchdowns during a three-minute stretch of the second quarter Saturday.

That's the way it went throughout the Eagles' 56-21 dismantling of The Woodlands in a Class 5A Division I Region II semifinal at Floyd Casey Stadium.

Quarterback Kyler Murray amassed 272 yards and five TDs by halftime, and No. 1 Allen (13-0) went into the break leading 42-0.

"We knew we could throw the ball on them," Murray said. "Our offense is really explosive, so we just came out here and stuck to the game plan."

Allen, the defending 5A state champion, will face fellow unbeaten Spring Westfield (13-0) in the Region II finals at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Kelly Reeves Athletic Complex in Round Rock.

The Eagles' offensive line gave Murray plenty of time to work, and the junior was sharp, finishing 16-of-21 for 335 yards and five TDs.

Murray played only one series in the second half before giving way to the second team.

"It all starts up front," Allen coach Tom Westerberg said. "You've got to have the protection to sit back there like (Murray) did and find the receivers. We threw and caught the ball real well."

Allen failed to score on its opening series for the first time in more than two months, but it scored on six of the next seven.

Murray connected with Jalen Guyton for a 71-yard touchdown that gave Allen a 21-0 lead early in the second quarter.

A defensive stand and blocked punt later, Murray hit Josh Pettijohn for a 13-yard score to cap a second straight one-play drive.

Murray threw another perfect deep ball on the first play of Allen's next offensive series, but it was dropped near the end zone. Murray took the next snap and ran 49 yards for a touchdown, giving Allen a 35-0 lead.

The Highlanders (10-3) scored three times in the second half against Allen's second-team defense.

Allen averaged a 40-point margin of victory in three playoff wins.