

Highlanders roll into win column with 21-0 win over La Porte



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By **Demetrio Teniente**

LA PORTE — For The Woodlands, this was about bouncing back. The Highlanders' final non-district game against La Porte would set the tone for the rest of their season.

Suffice it to say The Woodlands is back on track.

The Highlanders fought through some sloppy moments but dominated on the scoreboard, rolling to a 21-0 victory over La Porte on Friday night at Bulldogs Stadium.

The victory gives The Woodlands a 3-1 record heading into next week's District 16-6A opener against Conroe at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

The Tigers also improved to 3-1 by stopping Aldine MacArthur 27-12 at Buddy Moorhead Memorial Stadium.

The Woodlands had to bounce back from a devastating defeat, a 14-7 loss at the hands of second-ranked Katy last week at the Tigers' home stadium. It was an evenly matched game without any scoring in the second half.

Which is why The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid was beaming about his team's performance against the Bulldogs when it was over.

"It was huge," Schmid said. "Last week was an emotional game for us. It was a four-quarter, down-by-down, every-single-play was important game. "As a coach you worry and you work hard on getting your kids to bounce back and we did.

The Woodlands managed to amass 335 yards total offense against the previously unbeaten Bulldogs, who are expected to contend for the District 21-6A championship.

TWHS quarterback Eric Schmid had two runs of more than 50 yards, and teammate Carlos Ramos also had a long run against the Bulldogs, who failed to mount much of an attack against Antoine Winfield and the Highlanders' rugged defense.

"Offensively it took us a little while to get going but defensively we picked up right where we left off (from the Katy game)," Mark Schmid said. "I think by the end of the night, we were a better football team."

The Bulldogs might be inclined to agree.

The Woodlands had problems with penalties in the first half, but just before halftime, a defensive holding call against La Porte proved to be critical.

That penalty allowed Eric Schmid to hit Christopher Stewart for a 3-yard touchdown pass.

"It was huge because we had created some problems for ourselves and that makes it harder for drives to continue," Mark Schmid said. "That was a good deal for our momentum to get a penalty against them to keep the drive alive and getting that touchdown before the half did a lot for us."

The Woodlands added a touchdown in each of the final two quarters and counted on their defense to do the rest.

In the second half, Eric Schmid used his speed to reel off a 55-yard touchdown run on a quarterback draw play.

The Highlanders' quarterback may have been untouched on the scoring play.

"I don't think I was," Eric said. "Maybe someone tapped me, but I couldn't feel it."

Eric Schmid finished the night by passing for 105 yards on nine completions, while adding 87 yards on the ground.

Ramos, the Highlanders trailback, added 87 yards on the ground, including his long run that led to another touchdown.

After Ramos broke off a 57-yard run, he scored from 15 yards out on the next play.

While The Woodlands was clearly thrilled with the victory, the Highlanders were concerned about Stewart, who sustained a leg injury on Ramos' 57-yard run. He had to be carried off the field.

Schmid said Stewart was on his way to receive medical attention.

"We aren't sure what it is," Mark Schmid said. "We'll find out when the doctors look at it. He is a great football player and we hope but nothing but the best for him."

La Porte managed just 156 yards total offense, all but four of them on the ground. Running backs Aidan Blair and Nathan Redd led the Bulldogs with 70 and 66 yards, respectively.