

THE COURIER

OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY



Klein Cain hands The Woodlands second-straight loss

By Justin Maskulinski
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SHENANDOAH — The parity in District 15-6A in 2019 was on display at Woodforest Bank Stadium on Friday night.

Second-year varsity program Klein Cain capitalized on scoring chances and forced key turnovers in its 28-14 win over defending co-champion The Woodlands. The Hurricanes (3-2, 2-1) surpassed last year's district win total with the win.

“It starts with the resiliency of our kids,” coach James Clancy said. “Last week, we lost to a good Conroe football team. We had our chances but didn't finish. This week in practice — hats off to our coaches and our seniors for great leadership and understanding we've got to focus on the task at hand. Nothing but respect for coach (Jim) Rapp and The Woodlands and their program and all their history. This was a big step for us.”

The Highlanders (3-3, 2-2), who entered the week ranked 14th in the Houston area high school media poll, lost for the second-straight week. It's the first time since 2007 that the Highlanders have lost two district games in one season.

The Woodlands was playing without multiple starters. Wide receiver Malik Johnson and defensive linemen Caleb Fox and Simon Cruz were a few of the players on the sideline in gym shorts.

“Those guys right there that just got through playing are great kids, great players,” Rapp said of the players who stepped up. “They battled for 48 minutes and I can’t ask for more from them. They did a great job.”

Tailback Bryeton Gilford was not on the Highlanders’ sideline. Rapp declined to comment on whether the senior was still a part of the program.

The Hurricanes broke the scoreless tie on a third-and-25 play late in the first quarter. Luke Pardee connected with Cole Montago for 83 yards up the Klein Cain sideline for the score.

Pardee completed 17-of-21 passes for 199 yards and two touchdowns. The Hurricanes, which entered the week with the district’s best offense, unofficially totaled 436 yards.

With 7:52 to go in the half, Jaydon Blue capped a 9-play drive with a 1-yard touchdown run. Three plays earlier, Pardee found Matthew Golden for 28 yards on fourth down to keep the drive alive. Blue had 159 yards on 30 carries. Pardee rushed for 52 yards on seven carries. Aaron Jordan, who backs up Blue, totaled 33 yards on nine carries.

“Aaron Jordan and Jaydon Blue gives us a really nice combo,” Clancy said. “Both of them do things well. They’re good teammates and that’s what makes them special as backs. They enjoy watching each other play.”

The Woodlands crossed midfield twice before it was able to punch in a score. With 18 seconds to play in the half, Ben Mills finished a 12-play, four-minute drive with a sneak.

“Any time you score, it’s a boost,” Rapp said of the late touchdown. “That’s what we were looking for. We’ve just got to do a better job of scoring.”

Blue pushed the lead back to two scores on the first drive of the second half. The sophomore’s 43-yard touchdown run made it 21-7 with 8:42 to go in the third quarter.

A few plays after a bad snap was recovered by Klein Cain’s Clayton Saxton, Pardee connected with Zach Siefkas for a 10-yard touchdown that made it a three-score game. The Woodlands turned the ball over four times in the second half.

Zachary Jones tackled the Klein Cain punter at the 5-yard line to set up a quick Highlander score in the later stages of the third quarter. Jobarre Reed's run brought the deficit back to two scores with 4:04 to play.

The Woodlands converted a fourth-and-1 near midfield on its next drive but fumbled on the same play.

"We're moving the ball and we're doing some good things," Rapp said. "To have the turnover after we go for it on fourth down and convert, that's just something that can't happen. The kid's trying to make a play, trying to give extra effort."

Klein Cain's Isaac Hudson recovered the ball and set up a new Hurricanes drive, which ended in a field goal attempt that was blocked by Kennedy Stewart.

The ensuing drive for The Woodlands marched downfield, thanks in part to four connections between Mills and Ben Ferguson. Klein Cain's Bryson Culton picked off a pass at the 15-yard line to end the scoring chance.

Mills was 20-for-32 for 189 yards and was The Woodlands' leading rusher with 53 yards on 13 carries. Ferguson caught seven passes for 82 yards. Matthew Bulovas had five catches for 58 yards.

The Hurricanes punted after three plays but got the ball back in The Woodlands' territory after a muffed punt return. From there, Klein Cain ran the ball and forced the Highlanders to use their timeouts. A Pardee keeper converted a third down and four that put the game on ice.

"Can't say enough about the offensive line in crunch time," Clancy said. "In crunch time, the offensive line stepped up and we got some crucial first downs. (Pardee) made some great reads. It was just a great group effort."

"In 15-6A, you've got to bring it every week," Clancy said. "I think this is a year where, top to bottom, there's pretty serious parity and we're well aware of that."

Box Score

KLEIN CAIN 28, THE WOODLANDS 14

Klein Cain	7	7	14	0	—	28
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The Woodlands	0	7	7	0	—	14
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SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

KC—Cole Monago 83 pass from Luke Pardee (Aidan Martin kick), 0:40.

Second quarter

KC—Jaydon Blue 1 run (Martin kick), 7:52.

TW—Ben Mills 1 run (Fabrizio Pinton kick), 0:18.

Third quarter

KC—Blue 43 runs (Martin kick), 8:42.

KC—Zach Siefkas 10 pass from Pardee (Martin kick), 7:39.

TW—Jobarre Reed 5 run (Pinton kick), 4:04.