

Highlanders' season comes to close with loss to Spring

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SHENANDOAH — The Woodlands grabbed an early lead Friday night. Spring's Cadyn Bradley caught everything else.

The senior wide receiver supplied six receptions for 224 yards and three touchdowns, helping the Lions rally from a two-score deficit to oust The Woodlands from the playoffs, 52-35, at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

"He's an exceptional young man," Spring coach Trent Miller said. "This time last year we played The Woodlands in the first round, and his older brother took the spotlight in that game, so it was really cool to see him have the game he had (Friday). He's always had it in him, it's just taken some time for him to get going, and get hot, and there was no better opportunity than this."

Spring's second straight bi-district win over The Woodlands sends it into the Class 6A Division I area round, where it will face Klein Cain (9-2) - a 52-20 winner over Cypress Woods - at 7 p.m. next Friday at Klein Memorial Stadium. The Highlanders ended their season at 8-3.

The Lions (10-1), in addition to big performances on offense, received six takeaways from their defense. Four were fumble recoveries, including a 48-yard fumble-return touchdown by Dorian Friend, who recovered two fumbles. Running back Myron Carter, filling in on defense,

and Jeffery Foster supplied interceptions. “The defense is relentless,” Miller said. “We hang our hat on our physicality and team speed. There aren’t a lot of teams in the state that can run with us.”

Quarterback Bishop Davenport finished with 353 yards and three TDs on 15-of-25 passing. He added 95 yards on 17 carries. More surprisingly, RB Joey Fussell Jr. also recorded three touchdowns.

He scored on a 12-yard run in the second quarter, to give Spring its first lead after trailing 14-3, and he reached the end zone twice in the fourth quarter, helping the pass-first Lions put the game away with power football.

“We’ve got two really good running backs,” Miller said. “And this week, Myron Carter, who’s actually our starting running back, moved over to defense, because we were banged up over there. We have the power to run the football. For what we do and what fits us best, we like to spread it around, but we showed (Friday) that if we have to run the ball to get out of a game, we can do that.”

Spring elected to receive the opening kickoff, and with good reason. Carter fielded the kick at Spring’s 5, and went 95 yards for a touchdown - only officials ruled he stepped out at the Woodlands 46. The first quarter went downhill from there for the Lions.

After reaching the 9 on their opening series, linebacker Evan Dubin picked Davenport at the goalline, ending Spring’s initial scoring threat - and instigating what turned into a 99-yard scoring drive that chewed up more than seven minutes. QB Mabrey Mettauer provided the payoff with a three-yard keeper.

The 15-play drive also benefitted from two personal fouls against the Lions. And their next offensive possession was a quick three-and-out that gave the ball right back to The Woodlands, which led 7-0 after the first quarter.

Spring pulled within 7-3 on a 29-yard field goal by kicker Ruben Ruiz, after defensive back Dorian Friend recovered a Woodlands fumble. But the Highlanders responded with another long drive capped by a one-yard keeper by Mettauer for a 14-3 advantage. That drive took more than 4 minutes off the clock.

Spring’s next series showed why The Woodlands wanted to extend its possessions.

The Lions flashed their big-play ability, with Bradley taking a short Davenport pass, and sprinting down the left sideline for a 63-yard TD.