

Football: Highlanders claim title; Cavs miss playoffs

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SHENANDOAH, Texas - The Woodlands High School football team completed a District 14-5A championship season on Friday with a 53-25 Homecoming Game victory over the Oak Ridge War Eagles at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

The Highlanders (7-3, 5-1) tied A&M Consolidated and Lufkin for top honors but claimed the title via tiebreaker. Therefore, The Woodlands will enter the Class 5A Division I playoffs next week as the top seed from District 14-5A.

The College Park Cavaliers missed a chance to make the playoffs with a 32-7 loss at Bryan on Friday. A victory would have claimed the district's fourth and final playoff berth for the Cavaliers (4-6, 1-5). Instead, that spot goes to the Conroe Tigers (3-7, 2-4), which dropped a 55-14 decision in Lufkin on Friday.

Sophomore running back Patrick Carr rushed for 265 yards and five touchdowns on 12 carries to lead the Highlanders. The Woodlands quarterback Blaine Gillespie rushed for 162 yards and a touchdown as well as throwing for 72 yards and another score.

Oak Ridge (1-9, 1-5) got an outstanding effort from running back Kwame Etwi, who rushed for 239 yards and three touchdowns on 27 carries.

The game went back and forth in the first half with The Woodlands holding a 24-18 lead at the break. Carr accounted for all three Highlanders touchdowns in the first half on runs of 21, 64 and 46 yards. Alex Garcia added a 24-yard field goal.

Etwi answered for Oak Ridge with scoring runs of 12 and 1 yard. He added a two-point conversion run and Francisco Ashford booted a 38-yard field goal.

Carr picked up where he left off in the second half with third-quarter touchdown runs 60 and 38 yards as the Highlanders pulled away. Gillespie ran for a second-half score and threw 16 yards to Houston Brown to complete the scoring.

Oak Ridge also got good production in the backfield from Xavier Richardson, Demarcus Durst and Braden Letney, who combined for 151 yards rushing.

The teams combined for 945 yards of total offense with The Woodlands holding a 523-422 advantage. But the Highlanders defense made some big plays as well, picking off three War Eagles passes.