

The Highlanders use pivotal fourth quarter drive to pull away from Dekaney 24-14



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SPRING, Texas -- One week after accumulating 104 yards of offense in a 9-0 loss at Cy-Fair, the Highlanders came back with a 253-yard effort in defeating the Spring Dekaney Wildcats 24-14, Thursday night at Leonard George Stadium.

Leading the way for The Woodlands was running back, Patrick Carr, who had 21 carries for 118 yards, to go along with two touchdowns, including a 50-yard scamper late in the contest; 109 of his yards came in the second half. Dekaney had 140 total yards as a team for the contest. Carr was very reflective when asked about the performance of the team.

“Perseverance, overcoming obstacles, and adversity we had in the game,” said Carr. “We had to work together as a team, just relax. The defense really stepped up tonight. Without them this wouldn’t have been a game.”

The second play of the game echoed Carr’s sentiments as senior linebacker, Corey Sanders, intercepted a pass from the Dekaney 28-yard line and returned it to the 1-yard line. Carr ran in the next play to make the score 7-0 Highlanders, with 10:39 left in the first quarter. After a few series saw both teams drive into the opponent’s side of the field but come away without points, the quick-paced first quarter ended with The Woodlands carrying a 7-0 lead into the second quarter.

To start the second quarter the Wildcats tried to mix things up by faking a punt on 4th-and-6 from their own 33-yard line and it worked, as they edged the ball to the 39-yard line for a first down. However, the gamble was for naught as the drive stalled a few plays later, and Dekaney punted from their 47-yard line to the Highlanders 15-yard line. The Highlanders couldn’t do a lot with their possession following the punt, and the defenses were setting the pace at this point of the game.

As we got deep into the second quarter Dekaney got some rhythm on offense, highlighted by a 4th down pass that went for 19 yards to wide receiver, Ederson Delice, deep in Highlander territory. A few plays later, running back, Quincy Williams, bounced off a tackle and took the ball to the corner of the endzone from nine yards out, to even the score at 7-7, with 3:10 left in the first half. The score ended an 18-minute scoring drought for both teams.

On the ensuing kickoff, Highlander kick returner, AJ Mason, collected the punt and went 57-yards to the Dekaney 43-yard line to put them in business. After a few negative plays The Woodlands were looking at 4th and 14 from the Dekaney 47-yard line. After thinking about it for a moment, The Highlanders decided to go for it and Hunter Moore caught a well-thrown 42-yard pass to get the ball to the Dekaney 5-yard line. Three plays later on a speed-sweep to the right, wide receiver, Christopher Stewart, ran the ball in from the 3-yard line to make the score 14-7, with 52 seconds left in the second quarter.

The second half started with a heavy dose of running back, Patrick Carr. Starting from The Woodlands 45-yard line, he burst a run of 17 yards; more than tripling his total in the first half. He ran the next plays for eight and 12 yards respectively, and The Woodlands had the ball down to the Dekaney 13-yard line. However the Dekaney defense stiffened up, and the Highlanders ended the drive with a 27-yard field goal by Nacho Garcia, to make the score 17-7 Highlanders, with 8:14 left in the third quarter.

The Wildcats couldn't move the ball on their drive, and after a 57-yard punt by Dekaney put The Highlanders deep in their own part of the field, the teams played for field position for the rest of the third quarter.

Dekaney, trying to garner some momentum late in the game, took a shot at a deep ball, but AJ Mason was ready for it. The interception by the cornerback put the ball at the Highlander's 45-yard line with 9:19 left in the contest.

This jump-started Highlander quarterback, Matt Bonaguidi, as he completed three passes in a row of nine, eight, and 19 yards, to get the ball down to the Dekaney 15-yard line. The game seemed almost in hand, but a 72-yard interception by Dekaney's Dreddrick Crim returned the ball all the way to the Highlander 13-yard line and flipped the momentum. A 1-yard touchdown dive by running back, Benjamin Hawkins, made the score 17-14, with 3:13 left in the game.

"I just encouraged my teammates," said Carr. "We got this, just relax. We've done this a lot of times over the past years, so let's come together and do this."

The Highlanders looking to secure the win, turned the game over to Carr to lead them to the victory. Carr fought his way for a first down on third and one from the Highlander 32-yard line, to bring the clock down under two minutes. Then Bonaguidi completed a pass of 16-yards to James Toups to get another first down with 1:30 left in the game. The next play saw Carr break two tackles to complete a 50-yard run to the endzone with 52 seconds left in the game, to make the final score 24-14 Highlanders.

"We were put the test," said head coach Mark Schmid. "They responded well."

Next week the Highlanders welcome a perennial power, the Katy Tigers, to Woodforest Bank Stadium at 7:30 pm, Friday, September 12th. The game will be OnDemand at woodlandsonline.com following the conclusion of the game.

"Katy is going to be a big game," said Schmid. "They are a great football team, and we're really happy to be at home for the first time this season. We got a lot of work to do, but this game serves as a little momentum boost for us. We got better from where we were against Cy-Fair last week, and we have to make sure we get better next week."



The Woodlands stops Dekaney 24-14

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By Jon Poorman

SPRING — It wasn't pretty at times, but The Woodlands got the job done against Dekaney on Thursday night, capturing its first victory of the season with a 24-14 triumph over the Wildcats at Leonard George Stadium.

The defense carried the load for the second consecutive game, and when the Highlanders needed it the most, the offense came through in crunch time to put the game on ice. The Woodlands (1-1) held the Wildcats to 140 yards of total offense and limited them to just 2.6 yards per carry.

"I'm extremely pleased with the way the defense continues to play," Highlanders coach Mark Schmid said. "They give us opportunities and keep the opponent off the field. We're not having to score 35 points to win, and that's huge right now."

Dekaney cut The Woodlands' lead to just three points with a little more than three minutes to play. Matt Bonaguidi's interception deep in Wildcat territory was returned by Dekaney's Dreddrick Crim to the Highlanders' 13. Running back Ben Hawkins plunged into the end zone from one yard out a few plays later to make the score 17-14.

But that's when the The Woodlands' offense stepped to the plate. The Highlanders picked up two huge first downs on a run by Patrick Carr and a 16-yard completion from Bonaguidi to James Toups. Carr did the rest, ripping off a 50-yard scoring jaunt down the left sideline to clinch the win.

"That was huge," Schmid said. "Before they took the field, we basically told them, 'You can win the game right here. You can win the game.' They responded well, and Patrick responded well with the big touchdown run in the end."

Big plays were the story early on for The Woodlands as Corey Sanders' interception set his team up at the Wildcats' one-yard line just 1:21 into the game. Carr took care of the rest, diving into the end zone to give the Highlanders a 7-0 lead.

"I was reading the quarterback, and he was reading the flats," Sanders said. "I saw his eyes change to the seam route and I just thought I'd drift back, and he threw it right to me. Once I got the ball, I did my best to get it in the end zone, but I just came up about a yard short. It was really exciting because it gave us a lot of momentum at the beginning of the game and allowed the offense to punch it in."

Nearly 18 minutes of game time drained off the clock before Dekaney answered. Quincy Williams tied the contest with a nine-yard run with just more than three minutes to play in the first half.

The Woodlands' A.J. Mason returned the ensuing kickoff 57 yards into Dekaney territory, however, and on fourth and 14, Bonaguidi connected with Hunter Moore for a 42-yard gain down the left sideline. Christopher Stewart capped the drive with a three-yard touchdown run on a sweep play to the right side.

Nacho Garcia's 27-yard field goal gave the Highlanders a 17-7 lead early in the third, and Carr, who finished with 118 yards on 21 carries, led the offense on the final scoring drive of the night.

The senior is now just 59 yards away from the school's all-time rushing record heading into a matchup against No. 2 state-ranked Katy next week.

"The victory is really good because we've got Katy coming up next week and La Porte the week after that — two really fine football teams," Schmid said. "It's good to get the win under your belt right now."