



Defense carries The Woodlands to major upset of Katy

By Angel Verdejo | September 12, 2014

SHENANDOAH - It was a statement kind of night. At least that was the case for the team on the home side.

Katy came into Friday having won 50 consecutive regular-season games, a span that covered parts of six seasons and four 10-0 campaigns. The last team to beat Katy was The Woodlands. And now the Highlanders are the first non-playoff team to beat the Tigers since.

"They're both sweet," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said of the victories. "This one may be the sweetest, though."

Behind a stout defense that forced four turnovers - three in the fourth quarter - The Woodlands pulled away for a 24-7 victory at Woodforest Stadium to knock off the state's second-ranked Class 6A team. That is a statement.

"Most certainly," said Highlanders linebacker Corey Sanders. "We knew this was going to be an extremely tough team - they were in the state championship game last year. But we just focused on bringing our very best. Defense came up with some serious momentum changers, and we just did a great job overall tonight."

The Woodlands only outgained Katy by 7 yards (244-237), but the Highlanders clamped down while protecting a seven-point lead until midway through the fourth quarter.

Down 14-7, Katy had a chance to cut the deficit on a third-quarter drive that started at the Tigers' 10 and reached The Woodlands' 11. When it stalled, Katy missed a 28-yard field goal.

The Highlanders (2-1) didn't answer immediately, but the defense stopped Katy short on fourth down and ended a drive early in the fourth quarter on an Antoine Winfield Jr. interception. Six plays later, Nacho Garcia's 23-yard field goal made it a 10-point lead with under seven minutes to go.

"I knew at halftime we had a real chance," Highlanders quarterback Matt Bonaguidi said. "But that drive where ... we got a field goal out of it, I'm thinking, 'All right, we have a two-possession lead. Our defense is playing great and this is real chance.' "

The defense, which limited Katy (2-1) to one first down in the second quarter, maintained its quality of play the rest of the way. Zac Richardson picked off a Garrett Doiron pass following the field goal, and the Highlanders added a third interception after an insurance touchdown.

A week after running for 348 yards, Katy had just 137.

"They were more physical than we were and that's on me," Katy coach Gary Joseph said. "We'll be better, but they got after us physically up front. We had some opportunities early on that we didn't take advantage of, and it gave them some confidence and they made some plays."

Noted Sanders: "All night long, we were stopping them, getting them into three-and-outs. To stop an offense like that requires a certain level of intensity and discipline, and that's exactly what we were able to put out there on defense."

Bonaguidi and the offense did their part. The senior completed 11 of 21 passes for 96 yards and a touchdown, and added 65 yards on the ground, most coming on chunks as the Tigers' defense keyed on running back Patrick Carr, who ran for 81 yards and a score.

Also of note was the fact 2013 starting quarterback Chris Andritsos rejoined The Woodlands for the first time this week after deciding over the summer to focus on baseball. He dressed but didn't play.

"Chris is a great player for us and I'm sure he'll find some way to contribute," Schmid said, adding he didn't see a change at quarterback happening soon.

Added Bonaguidi: "That's the plan. I'm confident in the offense and I feel like I can lead them in many ways, so that's the plan."



The Woodlands Highlander football team overpowers Katy Tigers for monumental win

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SHENANDOAH, Texas- Riding back-to-back shutouts and an 86-0 scoring margin coming into the game, the Katy Tigers must have felt confident taking on the Woodlands Highlanders at Woodforest Bank Stadium tonight. The Highlanders didn't seem phased by the challenge, as running back, Patrick Carr, set the all-time rushing record in Highlander history, and the Woodlands walked away with the 24-7 win over the number two state- ranked Tigers, ending their 50-game winning streak. The last loss for Katy was September 4th, 2009, also to the Highlanders.

The game also saw the return of last year's starting quarterback, Chris Andritsos. He had given up football to focus on a baseball career, but returned to the sideline this evening. He didn't play tonight, and there is no word on whether he starts or plays next week against LaPorte.

Leading the way for the Highlanders was quarterback Matt Bonaguidi with 96 yards passing a touchdown, along with 65 yards rushing and a touchdown. Carr had 81 yards and a touchdown as well. For Katy,

Oklahoma running back commit Rodney Anderson had 77 yards on 17 carries, and wide receiver Tony Mullins had six receptions for 72 yards.

“Our defense has done a great job all season,” said Highlander Head Coach Mark Schmid. “Tonight was no exception. Offensively we got better. We took advantage of some opportunities we got from the defense. It was a great team win.”

On the second drive of the game for the Tigers, they found themselves the beneficiary of a call, as a fumble on a catch was ruled down by the official, but the next play saw running back Kyle Porter fumble, and the ball was recovered by Woodlands linebacker, Tristan Horton, at their own 25-yard line with 2:52 left to play in the first quarter.

However, two plays after the turnover, Katy intercepted a Bonaguidi pass and had the ball back at the Highlander 31-yard line with 2:07, giving them a second chance. Facing a 3rd-and-13, quarterback, Garrett Doiron, hit wide receiver, Tony Mullins, over the middle of the field for 14-yards to get the ball to the highlander 20-yard line as the first quarter ended 0-0.

A few plays into the second quarter, Doiron hit Mullins again on a slant that got the ball down to the 4-yard line, and on a 3rd-and-goal from the three yard line, Katy ran a successful bootleg that hit running back, Kyle Porter, in the corner of the endzone to make the score 7-0 Katy, with 9:00 left in the second quarter.

On the Highlander’s next drive, Bonaguidi, looking in rhythm with the offense tonight, hit wide receiver, Hunter Moore, on 3rd down for 15-yards, to get the Highlanders into Katy territory at the 48-yard line. Then on 3rd-and-5 he completed a pass to wide receiver, Reed Barber, for another first down to keep the chains moving. With the defense keying on running back, Patrick Carr, Bonaguidi kept the ball on several zone-reads tonight, and on his second keep he took an 11-yard scamper down to the Katy 19-yard line for another first down, causing Katy to use a timeout. Two plays later, Bonaguidi kept the momentum and hit Hunter Moore on a 15-yard slant pass and tied the game at 7-7 with 4:26 left in the half.

The touchdown counted for the first points the Tigers have allowed after nine quarters of shutout ball this year.

On the next series, the defensive line for the Woodlands continued to push the Tiger line off the ball and get pressure on the quarterback. That pressure caused a three-and-out and brought the ball and continued momentum, back to the Highlanders at their own 45-yard line with 3:16 left in the half.

With the ball back to the offense, Bonaguidi kept a read on second down for 10 yards and moved the chains to the 45-yard line of Katy. He had 54 rushing yards in the first half to go along with 75 yards passing. A few plays later on 3rd-and-5, Bonaguidi fired a ball in a tight window to wide receiver, Kalif Johnson, for 11 yards to the Tiger 28-yard line. The next play saw Carr get loose, breaking several Tiger tackles on his way to the end zone, making the score 14-7 Highlanders with 1:20 left in the second quarter. Carr ended the half with 52 yards rushing.

“Matt (Bonaguidi) has continued to get better,” relayed Schmid. “He made great decisions tonight, both throwing and running the football. He’s doing the things we knew he could do, and tonight was no exception.”

Before a snap in the second half, Katy drew a false start setting them back five yards, perhaps feeling some pressure for trailing at the half for the first time since a September 4th, 2009, defeat at the hands of

the Woodlands. The Highlander defense would force a three-and-out, and a short punt would give the ball back to the Highlanders at Katy's 44-yard line.

The drive for the Highlanders would stall, but Bonaguidi would drop back from his quarterback position to drop-kick the ball all the way to the Tiger 10-yard line with 9:23 left in the third quarter.

The next Tiger drive saw a much improved offense out of Katy. A long run by Rodney Anderson down the far sideline got the ball into Highlander territory; and a catch by Cole Haring saw the ball sitting at the Highlander 29-yard line with 5:42 left in the third quarter. A run by Porter that saw him break two tackles, took the ball to the Highlander 15-yard line, but the Highlander defense stiffened after that.

The Tigers would settle for a 28-yard field goal attempt by Alec DaPra, but the ball sailed wide left and the Highlanders maintained their 14-7 lead with 3:42 left in the third quarter.

A three-and-out by the Highlander offense didn't allow for any rest for their defense, and the Tigers took advantage, moving from their 39-yard line to Highlander territory. However, the first play of the fourth quarter presented the Tigers with a 4th-and-2 opportunity from the Highlander 35-yard line, still trailing 14-7. The quarterback exchange on the pitch was out of sync, and the Highlander defense stopped the play short, giving them possession at their 34-yard line with 11:54 left in the game.

On the Tigers next possession, a third down pass bounced off wide receiver Mullins chest and was intercepted by defensive back, Antoine Winfield Jr, who returned the ball 28 yards to the Katy 18-yard line, leading 14-7 with 8:37 left in the game.

The Highlanders would get a 23-yard field goal from Nacho Garcia on the drive, to make the score 17-7 with 6:26 left in contest.

The next possession for Katy saw another interception, this time by Zac Richardson, returning it 28 yards to the Highlander 8-yard line with 5:19 left to play. The next play saw Carr rush for four yards, breaking the all-time Highlander rushing record held by Daniel Lasco in 2010, with 3,901 yards.

Following the record-setting run, Bonaguidi successfully maneuvered the defense on another read option and put the ball in the end zone, making the score 24-7 Highlanders with 4:43 left in the game, effectively ending the contest.

"Our kids have worked hard. We've done a lot of growing up over the last two weeks," said Schmid. "This is a huge confidence builder for our team. The kids were excited. They read the internet, newspapers just like everybody else. They prepared well."

The Highlanders will look to continue their winning way next Friday, September 19th, 7:30pm, at home against LaPorte.



The Woodlands zaps No. 2 Katy

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By Jon Poorman

SHENANDOAH —Simply put, The Woodlands made history on Friday night at Woodforest Bank Stadium.

The Highlanders used yet another excellent defensive performance to stun No. 2 state-ranked Katy 24-7. It was the Tigers' first loss in 50 regular season games; The Woodlands defeated homestanding Katy 31-27 in 2009.

If that weren't enough, running back Patrick Carr also became the Highlanders' all-time leading rusher.

"It's Week 3, and we're happy to be 2-1 and to beat Katy," The Woodlands coach Mark Schmid said. "We know there's a lot of football left to be played. It's a huge confidence builder for my team. I don't know what kind of statement it made, but I know tonight we got after it, and we can build on that.

"Offensively, we got better. We were able to put some drives together, put 14 points on the board in the first half and take advantage of some opportunities the defense gave us in the second. It was a great team win. Great team win."

The Woodlands limited Katy to 237 yards of total offense and held highly-touted running backs Rodney Anderson and Kyle Porter to 77 and 51 yards, respectively. The Highlanders also came away with four turnovers, including three interceptions.

"We were absolutely lights out tonight," The Woodlands linebacker Corey Sanders said. "We did our assignments every single play for four quarters. We knew they were going to do their job, so we knew we had to play to the best of our abilities to match them. Defense did a great job tonight, held the Katy Tigers to seven points."

On the offensive side of the ball, The Woodlands — thanks in large part to senior quarterback Matt Bonaguidi — was able to capitalize on turnovers, sustain drives and help put Katy away in the final quarter.

Despite only gaining 81 yards on the ground, Carr made the most of them, and with a four-yard run up the middle in the fourth, he scribbled his name at the top of a very prestigious list. Carr now has 3,915 rushing yards for his career, breaking the record of 3,901 yards set by Daniel Lasco in 2010.

“It’s awesome,” Schmid said. “Patrick’s a great kid — one of the best kids you’d ever want to have on your football team. For him to do that says a lot about him, and it also says a lot about the players who have surrounded him, and he understands that. I’m happy for him.”

After a scoreless first quarter, Katy finally broke the stalemate with a three-yard touchdown pass from Garrett Doiron to Porter on a play-action rollout to the right side of the field.

The score was set up by a Sy Slater interception at the Highlanders’ 25. The pick came just two plays after The Woodlands’ Tristan Horton had recovered Porter’s fumble.

The Highlanders, however, answered when Bonaguidi connected with a sliding Hunter Moore for a 15-yard score to knot the contest at 7. It was the first points surrendered by the Tigers all season.

“Matt has continued to get better, and he made some great decisions tonight, both throwing the football and running the football,” Schmid said. “He’s doing the things we always knew he could do. Tonight was no exception.”

After forcing Katy into a three and out, The Woodlands continued its offensive show with a 55-yard drive, capped by a 28-yard scoring jaunt from Carr. The touchdown gave the Highlanders a 14-7 lead heading into the locker room.

Several big stops on defense helped The Woodlands maintain its lead through the third quarter, but it was the Highlanders’ play in the fourth that really put the victory on ice.

The Woodlands’ Antoine Winfield Jr. picked off Doiron with about seven minutes remaining and returned the ball to the Tigers’ 18. Nacho Garcia then put the Highlanders up 17-7 with a 23-yard field goal.

Later in the quarter, Zac Richardson came away with another interception, which he returned to the Katy eight-yard line. Bonaguidi then scored on a four-yard keeper to hand his team the commanding 24-7 advantage.

“Momentum changers, absolutely,” Sanders said of the interceptions. “They were starting to get desperate, and we just kept turning them around and putting it on them good.”