



KLEIN OAK PANTHERS 2006



The 2006 edition of the Klein Oak Panthers was unveiled Saturday. There were flashes of promise, and first game jitters. The defense was challenged with playing a no-huddle offense and the offense was feeling their way toward anticipated successes by the second half.

On the first reasonably comfortable evening in current memory the Panthers won the coin toss and opted to receive. DeSean Hales, on his first touch of the night, picked up the kickoff three yards deep in the endzone and returned the ball to our 15 yard line. On our first play Hales took a direct snap and cruised around our left side for a quick 22 yard gain, great blocks by Louie Black, Max Wilkerson and John Elijah. After a short completion to Elliott Lim, Chris Coburn got three yards on a trap play. On third down Hales was stopped for no gain bringing on Wes Theiss for our first punt. He sailed one downfield for 46 yards setting up Cy Creek at their 9 yard line. CC came out with a short passing attack which they would use often during the game. Scott Arthur's name was called frequently for tackles on this first drive. Jay Newman put a couple of good hits on their QB, getting him just as he passed or pitched the ball. However the drive continued on a series of short runs and passes until we let their running back get loose for a 34 yard TD run. Looks like we thought he was down, but the zebras thought otherwise. Score 0 to 7. Hales had a short 13 yard return setting us up at our 23. First down was incomplete as Black seemed to be the hit way late by the CC defender. Black got his first reception of the year on our next play, but we had to punt again after a couple more incompletions. CC started on their 35 and coughed it up after a few hard hits. We took over at their 11, ran three plays and were forced to kick a 26 yard field goal by Joel Eichler. Score now 3 to 7.

CC had a long return to the 50 and then ran 8 plays before surrendering the ball back to us on a failed 4th down effort. Andy Wilson, freshman, broke up the pass attempt turning the ball over to us. Our next drive lasted only 3 plays bringing in Theiss for another punt, this time for 24 yards. After a 24 yard reception, Arthur and Miranda teamed to stop the CC runner for no gain and then Miranda by himself for a 11 yard loss. DeSean Hales showed why he is always watched by the defense by returning the CC punt 55 yds to their 25. Coburn gets 1 yard before Hales caught one for 15. Looked like we had our first TD of the season when Lim visibly had two feet in the endzone on the next play, but again the refs did not observe the same play we did. We ran several more short plays and then brought on Eichler for his second FG taking the score to 6 to 7. On Creek's next drive they mixed the run with the pass, mostly the short version of both and ultimately ending up with their second TD after 11 plays. Score now 6 to 13. Although CC scored I noticed how our defensive front, Jay Newman, Andrew Lester and Mark Hunter began working

Roster

Statistics

Player of the Week

VARSITY		OAK - OPP
Sept 2	Cy Creek	28 - 35
Sept 15	Willis	48 - 6
Sept 22	Magnolia	37 - 7
Sept 30	Woodlands	14 - 34
Oct 7	Spring*	50 - 28
Oct 13	Tomball*	51 - 14
Oct 20	Klein Collins*	44 - 20
Oct 27	Klein Forest*	14 - 30
Nov 3	Westfield	21 - 49
Nov 10	Klein	24 - 31
Nov 17	Oak Ridge	41 - 21
Nov 25	Cedar Park	31 - 28
Dec 2	Berkner	35 - 28
Dec 9	Garland	14 - 31

* Denotes District Game

**Denotes Play-off

better with middle linebacker Bart Dear in doling out punishment.

Our next possession featured a 70 yard completion to Elliott Lim. Josh Cooley followed Justin Walters's blocking for our first TD of 2006 on the next play - short but successful drive. Score 13 to 14 now. CC got the ball at their 31 after gang tackling stopped the runner. One great defensive play by Arthur and a couple of incompletions preceded another standout pass defense play by safety, Chase Thomas, who almost had an interception. On our next drive was short and we punted the ball back to the CC 40. Lester now begins to assert himself and manhandled their QB for a loss on 1st down. The CC running back, although making decent yards tonight, took every opportunity to run out of bounds rather than take on our folks. Typical of their drives all night, CC used the short passing game to set up another TD before halftime, leaving the score 13 to 21 at the half.

Our first halftime performance again shows how exceptional the KO Band and Strutters are. Our award winning Strutters, under the leadership of Alyssa Stratton, showed off some colorful outfits and jazzy routines and were followed by the band with some wonderful Gershwin renditions.

The second half began with our kicking to CC who returned the ball to their 25. The Cougars began their standard routine of short passing but on second down Jeremy Mayweather put a lick on their QB and Bart Dear captured the fumble. One incomplection, a short run by Cooley preceded a holding call that took us back to the 38. Hales then got into the scoring by hauling in a pass from Cooley and falling into the endzone. Score now 20 to 21. CC returned the kickoff to their 40 and again began the same routine of controlled passing for a couple of plays before Andrew Lester controlled the line and one handed the QB down to cause a CC punt. We took over at our 17. After a bad deep snap to Cooley, Coburn fell on the errant football at our 1 yard line. This drive stalled and we attempted a quick kick, for only 20 yards. Their drive was defended well and they ended up turning it over on downs after a clutch stop by Mirenda. Cooley gets 5 and then two before having a third down interception returned 37 yards for a score. Now it's 20 to 28. Our next drive had Chris Coburn featured for several consecutive runs. First play went for 10 yards, the next play covered 12 yards then a slip for a short loss. Two more incompletions brought on Theiss for another punt, a touchback to their 20.

Fourth Quarter Time

Their last scoring drive was short and quick, featuring the speed of their running back. Score now 20 to 35 with 11 minutes left. Hales got our next possession started on the right foot with a nifty runback of 55 yards to their 29. Wes Theiss is now in at QB and has his first pass tipped and intercepted. Now it's time for our defense to assert themselves. Dear stopped their QB for no gain on first, Ryan Korenek defended a pass on second and Newman rushed their QB into a no gain play on third down. We got their punt back at our 38. Coburn took a short pass for 13 yards past midfield. He then carried it up the middle for a 9 yard gain on the next play, followed by another gain for 13 yards. After the CC defenders focused on Coburn hurling, instead of Hales receiving, DeSean took a pass down to the 9 yard line. Cooley took the next play in for a TD and a refreshed Coburn came

back into the game for a tough 3 yard run for the two point conversion. Score now 28 to 35. Newman and Korenek made some big hits early on their next drive and then Kenneth Hunter and Chase Thomas kept it up. Lester and Dear teamed up next. From this point the CC drive went backward after getting to our 16. A botched field goal gave us the ball back at our 13 and Coburn got 5 on first down. One penalty, one short run by Cooley and a QB sack set us up for 4th down incompletion giving the ball back and sealing our fate for the evening.

Although starting the season with a loss was not plan #1, we played a talented team, showed promise on both sides of the ball and played tough all 4 quarters. Next up: The Willis Wildcats.

Fresh off their bye week, and with the Cy Creek game well in the rear view mirror, the 2006 version of the Klein Oak Panther football team took a dominating defense and big play offense on the road to Willis. The Panthers scored early and often, and the defense led by a tremendous defensive line performance held the Wildkats to minimal offensive production. Final Score – Klein Oak 48 – Willis - 6

First Quarter

DeSean Hales (3) returned the opening kickoff 20 yards to the Oak 25 yard line. The rest of the drive was all Chris Coburn (33) with some strong support by the O-Line. Coburn blasted for 58 yards on his first carry, sprung by blocks from John Elijah (66) and Max Wilkerson (60). Proving the first carry was no fluke, Coburn went virtually untouched into the end zone from the 17 yard line. The key block on this carry was provided by center Adam Wright (62). The extra point sailed wide right, but the Panthers were up 6 – 0 with only 41 ticks off the clock. Lee Bell (37) and Eric Cables (35) put a lick on the Wildkat return man and dropped him at the Willis 26 yard line. The defensive unit proved to Willis early on that it would have a difficult time moving the ball against Klein Oak. Elijah and big Andrew Lester (54) stuffed two Willis runs, before Cameron Kilpatrick (25) anticipated the Willis quarterbacks move and picked off their first pass to give the Panthers the ball back on the Willis 33 yard line. A Hales 25 yard reverse helped out by a downfield block by Mike Rayburn (46) and a Coburn 8 yd TD run where he broke two tackles put Oak on the board for the second time. QB Josh Cooley (7) added the 2 pt conversion on a keeper. Derek Dahmann (59) and Sedale Dunlap (76) provided excellent seal blocks. The score with 9:33 remaining in the first quarter was Panthers 14 – Wildkats 0. A Kamikaze tackle on the ensuing kickoff by Cables left the stunned Willis team wondering what hit them as they set up shop on their own 38 yd line. Defensive plays by Bart Dear (32) and Jay Newman (82) along with a fumbled snap forced Willis into their first punt of the game. Hales gained no yardage on the return and the Panthers finally slowed down a little on offense. After Cooley was stopped a yard short of the first down on an 8 yd keeper, Wes Theiss (4) unloaded a dandy 47 yard punt downed on the Wildkat 15 yard line. Another strong defensive stand with the key play being a

Lester sack led to another Willis punt that was returned 11 yds by Hales. 6 plays later the score was Klein Oak 21 – Willis 0. Key plays on this drive were 3 runs by Cooley for 21 yards, a 12 yard catch and run by Louie Black (11), and Coburn's 3rd touchdown run of the game behind the blocking of Justin Walters (63) & Wilkerson. Joel Eichler (86) added the PAT with 38 seconds left in the quarter.

Second Quarter

Willis opened the second quarter with a drive that finally netted a couple of first downs. Dear, Alex Mirenda (24), Mark Hunter (81), Logan Studdert (42) made some hard hits, and the drive shut down after some pressure on the QB by Elijah and a Lester tackle for a 3 yard loss. The Special teams, well prepared by Coach Thibodeaux, snuffed out the Willis fake punt to give Oak excellent field position on their own 39 yard line. Luis Montano (30) came in to relieve TD machine Coburn and started the drive off with a 3 yard run. Cooley excited the Klein Oak fans with a 25 yard scamper around the left side. After an incomplection, for some reason Willis thought they would single cover Hales. QB Cooley quickly showed the error of this strategy when he hit DeSean 7 yards behind his nearest defender for a 31 yard scoring strike. Eichler was able to convert the extra point, even though he was assaulted by Wildkat defenders (second hit resulting in a 15 yard flag). Score now Oak 28 – Willis 0 with 7:18 remaining in the half. Aided by the personal foul yardage, Eichler kicked the ensuing kickoff out of the end zone to ensure no Willis return. Tackles by Elijah and Newman followed by a good pass defense by Ryan Korenek (8) forced Willis into another punt. The best thing about the next Oak drive was the Thiess 36 yard punt that ended it. Lloyd Richardson (23) dropped the return man in his tracks. Klein Oak's stingy defense along with the punting of Thiess helped the Panthers win the field possession game all contest long. This time was no exception with Willis taking over on their 8 yard line. Colton Morgan (20) got in on the defensive party with a strong tackle and back to back sacks by the stampeding Panther D-Line (Elijah, Hunter, & Lester) led to the demise of another Willis offensive possession. Even though Willis was able to cover their punt well, the Panthers still took over in Wildkat

territory on the 48 yard line. Cooley promptly found Elliot Lim (22) over the middle for a 38 yard catch and run. After a couple of incomplete passes, Josh decided to take matters into his own hands and took the ball in the last ten yards on a quarterback draw. Eichler converted another PAT for an Oak 35 – 0 lead with ten seconds left in the half.

Third Quarter

The third quarter began with the Willis return man running back a deep Eichler kick to the Willis 37 yard line where he was run out of bounds by Freshman Andy Wilson (6). Proving that the first half was no fluke, Klein Oak's defensive front provided two more tackles in the backfield by Hunter and Lester to force Willis into another punt. Oak's offense took the field again with excellent field position on their 41 yard line. Hales, with the help of Walters and Dunlap took the handoff for 31 yards around the right side. Cooley then completed an 11 yard strike to Black. Another Klein Oak scoring drive ended on a 16 yard pitch and catch from Cooley to Lim. Elliott provided a nifty move to elude the last Willis defender to reach the end zone. The score was now Klein Oak 41 – Willis 0 with 8:04 remaining in the third. Montano got into the special teams action with a tackle on the next kickoff. The next 3 and out drive by the Willis offense was keyed by a pass defense by Richardson and a tackle of the quarterback in the backfield on by Korenek and Justin Besier (12). Hales brought the Klein Oak excitement up a notch by returning Willis' punt 60 yards for a highlight real touchdown. The return, which featured a hurdle of a potential Willis tackler that would have made Jay Newman proud, was called back due to a block in the back. Not to worry Panther faithful. The penalty just allowed Mr. Cooley to score on a 68 yard sprint to the promised land. The run featured a pancake block by Wilkerson. Another Eichler kick made the score 48 – 0 in favor of the good guys with 4:38 remaining in the quarter. Willis decided to get conservative on offense and did move the ball on the next drive using the sweep play as their main weapon. The tackling was hard and solid with Bell making a couple of plays, and Chase Thomas (34), Marlin Halstead (72), and Casey Baltzell (56) getting in on the defensive bandwagon. The drive ended when Jeremy Mayweather (5) pounced on a Wildkat fumble at the Oak 19. The quarter ended with Oak on top 48 – Zip but not until Theiss (giving Cooley a much deserved rest at QB) completed two passes to Black for 15 yards and Montano added a 28 yard run around the left side.

Fourth Quarter

The drive that started in the third bogged down as the fourth quarter began and Theiss again backed Willis up inside their 20 with a 34 yard boot. Willis broke up the shut out on their fourth quarter drive. Many Panthers got in on the tackling action with Bell, Halstead, Besier, Richardson, Greg Neal (55), Justin Sisson (2), Mark Hunter and Kenneth Hunter (75) all adding to their defensive statistics. Willis did complete a long desperation pass to the Oak 3 yard line. Kilpatrick almost came up with his second interception on the play. 2 plays later, Willis finally found the end zone, but Kilpatrick took his frustrations out on the 300 pound Willis kicker after a botched snap to

make keep the score at Klein Oak 48 – Willis 6 with not much time left in the game. Oak and Willis traded a couple of defensive stands as time ran out. The best play for the Panthers during their possession was a 15 yard scramble provided by Theiss. As time ran out, Klein Oak had earned their first victory of the 2006 season with a decisive victory over a former 18-4A foe.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (128 yds on 6 carries, 2 TD's & 2pt conversion, 5-11 passing, 114 yds, 2 TD's), Coburn (94 yds, 6 carries, 3 TD's), Hales (49 yds, 4 carries, 1 reception, 31 yds, TD), Black (4 receptions, 42 yds), Lim (2 receptions, 46 yds, TD), Montano (48 yds, 8 carries) and Theiss (13 yds, 3 carries, 2-3 passing, 15 yds, and 47.3 yd punt average).

The entire defensive performance was excellent, but the play of the defensive line was dominant. Lester led the way with 5 tackles in the backfield and several other stops, Mark Hunter added 3 tackles for losses along with other strong plays. The safeties and linebackers chimed in when the line hadn't already finished the deal. The following senior leaders were all over the place: Dear – 9 tackles, Korenek – 12 tackles, Sisson – 12 tackles, and Besier 6 tackles. On the turnover front, Kilpatrick provided a key interception, and Mayweather pounced on a fumble.

This strong performance showed how well the 2006 Klein Oak Panthers Football Team can be on both sides of the ball. We look forward to another 100% effort this week against Magnolia as the team uses the non district schedule to prepare for District 16-5A play and beyond.

Our third game of the season started off on the wrong note, with a blocked punt, but quickly reverted back to our style of play of last year. That style was to score early and often and demoralize the opponent. DeSean Hales ran all over the field all night as again, our offensive line of Justin Walters, John Elijah, Sedale Dunlap, Max Wilkerson, Derrick Dahman, Adam Wright, Robert Cooke, Tyler Condiff and Clint Naron picked up every blitz and controlled their territory all night. The Defense came up large again with Bart Dear getting defensive player of the week honors.

The Panthers won the toss and Jeremy Mayweather had a strong return to our 25. DeSean Hales began his eventful evening lining up in the backfield and taking the first handoff for a 12 yard gain. Magnolia would have their fill of Mr. Hales by night's end. After two unsuccessful plays Chris Coburn got his first carry of the evening for 4 yards bringing on our first punt. Magnolia made a bull rush and successfully blocked Wes Theiss's punt effort and got the ball at our 21. One short run, then a completed pass to our 4 led to their first and only score of the night. It took 3 plays from the 4 but they did get in. Score 0 to 7.

On the next kickoff Hales had his big toe grabbed by a Bulldog or he would have had a 101 yard return, but ended up with a 32 yard effort. We kept giving them a dose of Hales again and he responded with another gain of 14. However, a Mike Rayburn short catch was mixed in with two plays that did not click and Theiss came in for another punt, this time successful to their 35. Magnolia neglected to catch the ball though and Dear pounced on the loose ball. On new set of downs Josh Cooley had a couple of nice runs to get a first down. Hales had a short catch before an interference call gave us the ball at the 12. 12 yards later Hales had our first score of the night, but our conversion was wide right. The bulldogs fell on a short kick at their 38. Bart Dear stopped them on first down and Jay Newman did the same on second down leading to an incomplection and their first punt covered by Hales for a touchback. Coburn got a couple on first, but two plays later Theiss was in again for his third punt, against a very stiff south wind. Magnolia set up shop at our 43. Newman did his ball stripping trick again and we promptly got it back at the 50.

2ND Qtr begins. Mike Rayburn hauled in his second reception for a 12 yard gain. A deep pass to Hales was incomplete before Chris Coburn made gains of 5 and then 17 bring the ball to the 14. One incomplection, a short run by Cooley and then a real big hit on Louis Black brought on Sven Beymann for his first kick of the year, a successful 21 FG. Score now 9 to 7. Joel Eichler booted the next kickoff to deep into the end zone with no return. A host of Panthers stopped the 1st down with Chase Thomas getting the final hit. Lloyd Richardson stopped the runner on the next play and their back disappeared into a pile of white jerseys on the following try. A pass interference penalty gave them a new life, although a short lived one. The whole D-Line, led by John Elijah, Mark Hunter and Andrew Lester, made their presence known on this set of downs and Justin Besier got into the action with a great tackle of a short pass attempt. Another short pass was well defended by Colton Morgan leading to a Magnolia punt. Time for the DeSean Hales' show when he

made a great catch of the low punt and then performed his magic for an 83 yard TD return. Cooley's pass attempt was no good on the conversion. Score now 15 to 7. Eichler again booted an identical kickoff 5 yards deep into their end zone. Magnolia made 17 yards on their next drive courtesy of some really big hits by Alex Mirenda, Cameron Kilpatrick and Lloyd Richardson. The Bulldogs this punt decided not to give Hales a chance and kicked short. One incomplection, a short run by Coburn and another incomplection brought on Theiss again for a punt to their 15. Lester and Newman knocked the QB down in the backfield on 2nd down before they lost another 5 on third. Another negative yardage drive setting the stage for more of the same in the second half. After not allowing Hales a runback on their last punt they made the mistake of not kicking away from him this time.....29 yard return to their 12. Hales runs to the 4 on first, Cooley misfires on second, Coburn for 3 on third and then he breaks a couple of tackles on the next play for his first score this night with Cooley taking the conversion in for a 23 to 7 lead at the half.

Halftime was long owing to Magnolia deciding to schedule us for their Homecoming. As usual our Strutters and Band were the most impressive performers during this time.

Our second half began as the 1st ended. Magnolia would never generate any appreciable offense due to our relentless defense. There were consistently 3 to 5 Panthers in on every tackle. On their second play Bart Dear got his first INT of the year and brought the ball back 21 yards to their 28, but a bad block in the back put the ball at our 48. Coburn got 6 on 1st down and Hales got 6 on 2nd as the zebras blew the play dead with Hales still spinning and on his feet. A short run by Cooley followed by another run by Hales for 17 and then Coburn for 7 put the ball on the 14. 4 plays later Cooley keeps around the left side for another score. Beymann is good on the PAT and the score is 30 to 7. Magnolia starts next at their 39. Since they could not run, they tried a long pass, unsuccessful except for a holding call on us.

Another long incomplection, another stuff of the QB by Dear preceded a late hit on their QB. A Bulldog completion of about 17 yards gave then some hope but a 4th down pass hit the ground giving the ball back to us on our 9. Hales got 17 on 1st and 9 more on the next one before making a twisting and turning run, breaking several tackles for another 35 yards. Cooley then hit Elliott Lim for a tough 13 yard reception with a Bulldog all over him as he made the catch. Cooley gets 5 on 1st and 5 on 2nd bringing the 3rd Qtr to an end. On the first play of the 4th Qtr Coburn makes a quick cut and goes in from 12 out for his second TD. With Beymann's kick, score's now 37 to 7. The rest of the quarter was mostly ball control by our offense and opponent control by our defense. Coburn had a nice 22 yard run and Wes Theiss, in for Cooley, had another for 30 yards but fumbled it at their 8. However, in spite of a 40 yard run by them, there was no more offense left in the Bulldogs. Justin Sisson had a big hit on their next series and Scott Arthur came in for some plays after some time in the training room the last couple of weeks.

This game showed some evolution in our offense and more consistency from our defense. Magnolia only got about 100 yards on offense and our offense used 6 different players on big plays. The Woodlands is up next. Time to step up in class and make a statement for the rest of the year.

The 2006 Klein Oak Panther Football Team took on perennial 5A powerhouse Woodlands on a hot and balmy Saturday evening at Klein Memorial Stadium. Even though the team ended up on the wrong side of a 34 - 14 score, this reporter believes that Klein Oak showed the fans that they can compete with the best that the area has to offer. Although a few breaks did not go the Panthers way in the first half that led to a 24 - 7 Panther halftime deficit, the two teams played very evenly in the second half with Klein Oak holding the Woodlands squad to around 60 yards total offense during this half.

First Quarter

Jeremy Mayweather (5) took the opening kickoff 12 yards to give the Klein Oak offense the ball on their

15 yard line. Two plays later, a pass from Josh Cooley (7) just over the outstretched hands of Louie Black (11) fell into the opportunistic Woodlands defensive back's arms and allowed them to take over on the Panther 38 yard line. Cameron Kilpatrick (25) snuffed out the first run attempt and brought down the runner in the backfield. The Woodlands however were able to mix the run and pass to put together an 8 play scoring drive culminating with an 11 yard scoring run off of a draw play. Mark Hunter (81) provided a hard tackle in the Woodlands backfield on the drive, and Bart Dear (32), Ryan Korenek (8) and Jeremy Mayweather (5) also let the Highlanders know that the Panthers were there to hit during the drive. After the extra point, the score was TWH 7 – KO 0 with 8:06 remaining in the 1st quarter. After a DeSean Hales (3) 14 yard return from the end zone, Oak set up shop for its second offensive possession. This drive was more sustained. A highlight of the drive was a Chris Coburn (33) 18 yard scamper set up by excellent blocking by pulling guard Derek Dahmann (59) and downfield assistance by Justin Walters (63). Another outstanding play was turned in on an excellent 12 yard catch and run on a pass from Cooley to Elliott Lim (22) for a first down. The drive would stall, and Wes Theiss (4) came on to pin the Woodlands inside their 20 with a 35 yard punt that was not returned. The next offensive possession for the Woodlands was again successful. Tackles by Logan Studdert (42) and Colton Morgan (20) followed by big hit by Dear on a draw attempt made the Highlanders go to the air. A pass interference call followed by a 32 yard scoring strike behind the Panther secondary made the score TWH 14 – KO 0 with 2:10 remaining in the first. Hales almost broke the next kickoff all the way, but had to settle for a 43 yard return. Two plays later, The Woodlands secondary made their second interception of the night and the Panther defense returned to the field as time was winding down in the first.

Second Quarter

Even though Oak's defensive unit had been on the

field quite a bit, they showed that conditioning was not a problem as they provided their best defensive stand of the game to start the 2nd quarter. Tackles by Chase Thomas (34) and Dear along with Justin Besier (12) putting intense pressure on the quarterback led to the first Highlander punt of the game. Oak set up shop and quickly showed their big play ability. On the second play of the drive Cooley took a QB keeper for 68 yards deep into Woodlands territory. The run was set up by an excellent seal block by Mike Rayburn (46) and relentless downfield blocking by Coburn. Cooley ran for 5 yards on the next play, but the promising drive was halted as Josh was hit right as he was throwing to a Panther receiver open in the end zone. The ball flew high into the air, and a Highlander was waiting for it. Backed deep in their own territory, The Woodlands were knocked even further back by a sack from Jay Newman (82) on the first play of the drive. From their end zone, the Highlander QB was able to complete a 66 yard pass that ended with a touchdown saving tackle by Korenek. After a couple of passes to their Purdue bound tight end, the Woodlands possession stalled after a deflected pass by Besier and Newman's second sack of the drive. Always known to have a good kicking game, the Highlander kicker split the uprights with a 33 yard field goal to make the score 17 – 0 Woodlands with 6:20 left in the half. Oak's next drive started on their 30 after an Anti-Hales pooch kickoff. The drive went nowhere, but Theiss got off a 47 yard punt that again backed the Woodlands deep in their territory, especially after an illegal block. The Panther D-Line was now getting going. John Elijah (66) and Andrew Lester (54) caused havoc in the backfield that caused an incomplection and a fumble out of bounds. The drive ended on a sack by Newman, Mark Hunter, and Elijah. With time running low in the second quarter, Klein Oak's offense needed something big to happen. DeSean Hales was the man to provide that excitement. Taking a screen pass from Cooley, DeSean scampered 61 yards down the left sideline and all the way back across the field into the right side of the end zone. Hales running style was rewarded by the whistle to whistle

hustle of his downfield blockers. Max Wilkerson (60), Lim, Black, Rayburn, and Coburn all provided important interference during the touchdown run. Sven Beymann (16) added the extra point to make the score TWH 17 – KO 7 with 2:07 left in the half. Studdert and Justin Sisson (2) brought down the Woodlands return man on the kickoff, and after Dear/Lester run stuff, things were looking up for the Panthers. A timeout was called in anticipation of getting the ball back with good field position. The Highlanders showed why they are a power to be reckoned with as their back broke loose down the right sideline for a 63 yd TD run on the first play after the time out. This made the score TWH 24 – KO 7 with 1:43 remaining in the half. Oak's final possession of the half ended in a 30 yard Theiss punt, but not until after a potential pass interference call that was not called on a Panther receiver negated a possible big gain.

Third Quarter

Coach Smith and his staff did a good job of getting the team ready to play for the second half. The Panthers came out with what seemed a renewed confidence that they could eat away at the first half deficit. The Highlanders felt the brunt of this intensity as Dear & Korenek dropped the first run attempt in the backfield, and the drive would end after two consecutive trick plays were snuffed out by alert Panther defenders. The first was a flanker reverse that did not fool Newman or Alex Mirenda (24) and resulted in a big loss. On the next play Korenek covered a lot of ground to break up the flanker reverse pass play. After the punt, the Panthers set up shop on their 36 yard line. Coach Poth went exclusively to the run on this drive. Hales gained 13 yards on two carries behind pulling guard Sedale Dunlap (76). Sophomore running back Ossam Cook added 7 yards rushing on the drive and Cooley broke off another long 34 yard gain down to the Highlander 8 yard line. Josh had to leave the game as he landed on the ball at the end of this run. No Worries Oak Fans. Coburn promptly took the handoff from the capable backup QB Theiss and ran

through a gaping hole provided by Walters, Dunlap, and Adam Wright (62) for an 8 yard TD. Beymann's PAT made the score TWH 24 – KO 14 with 8:01 remaining in the third. The Woodlands kept the pressure on during the next 14 play drive by mixing things up and responding well to many good individual Panther plays. Besier deflected his second pass of the game, Newman added another tackle in the backfield, Scott Arthur (10) and Lloyd Richardson (23) got in on the action. Thomas provided a couple of key stops and things were looking good when Richardson tackled the Highlander for a 5 yard loss after an initial stuff by Lester. A pass interference call in the end zone gave The Woodlands new life on the one yard line. A one yard touchdown run keyed by a non call as Studdert was ready to make the touchdown saving tackle before being hog tied by a Woodlands lineman right in front of an official. The score now was TWH 31 – KO 14 with 2:23 remaining in the 3rd. Oak's defense had fought valiantly on this drive, but the breaks did not go their way. Klein Oak took over on offense on their 17 yard line after another Woodlands pooch kick. It appeared that this unit was wearing on the Woodlands as the Panthers started a 14 play drive at this point. Cooley took off for 24 yards sprung with a nice block by Hales. The Cooley/Hales combo combined on an 11 yard first down completion and Coburn and O. Cook provided nice runs to continue the drive up to the end of the third quarter. The score was still 31-14 in favor of TWH at this point.

Fourth Quarter

The drive finally ended after a nice Cooley completion to Black on 4th down came up just short. Elijah, Dear, and Mirenda keyed a successful Oak defensive series that actually forced two punts as there was a phantom roughing the kicker call on the first punt. Starting on their 16 yard line, Oak put together another consistent drive. Cooley had a clutch 17 yard run to convert a third and ten. Coburn ran for 8 and Josh added another 7 yards with help from a pulling Wilkerson. Rayburn decided to join the offensive party with a 14 yard catch and run on

an accurate pass from Cooley. After a couple more no calls on potential pass interference plays (one of which looked pretty obvious), the drive ended with a couple of unsuccessful bomb attempts to Hales.

Two personal fouls on the Panthers helped the Woodland offense move the ball, but plays by Dear, Thomas, and Elijah forced the Woodlands into a field goal attempt. The kick was good, making the score TWH 34 – KO 14. A couple of traded possessions later and the time would expire on the game with this same score.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (139 yds on 13 carries, 7-22 passing, 124 yds, 1 TD), Coburn (50 yds, 12 carries, 1 TD and the games tough man award for playing through an injured leg), Hales (8 yds, 4 carries, 3 receptions, 79 yds, TD), Black (2 receptions, 21 yds), Rayburn (1 reception, 14 yds) Lim (1 reception, 11 yds), and Ossam Cook (22 yds, 4 carries).

The D-Line led the defensive statistics with Newman (12 tackles), Elijah and Lester (8 tackles each), and Mark Hunter (6 tackles). Korenek and Thomas led the safeties with 6 tackles each, while Dear and Besier led the linebackers with 8 and 5 tackles respectively. Richardson was the leading tackler for the cornerbacks with 4. Many of the tackles were in the Highlander backfield.

This game was a test. Even though the Klein Oak Panthers 2006 Football Team didn't make an "A" on the scoreboard, they accomplished what was necessary going into an important District 16-5A game against the Spring Lions this week. They found out that they could compete with the best in the State. This game reporter may sound line a "homer", but the game was much closer than the final score indicated. Good Luck Panthers as you enter district play.

The fifth game of the young season saw the KO Panthers control the game on both sides of the ball. The 4th quarter may have been the highest scoring quarter, with 45 total points, that I have witnessed in my 4 years at Oak games. Like the rest of the game we came out on the positive end of the quarter and the game as well. Spring got a couple of successful long pass plays, one courtesy of Jeremy Mayweather getting tackled by an offensive player. DeSean Hales, offensive game MVP, ran virtually untouched on numerous plays to total 246 rushing yards, Josh Cooley added another 138 to go with Chris Coburn's 76 yards. Mark Hunter, defensive game MVP played tough all game and Rodell Davis gained special team's game MVP honors. It also appears Sven Beymann is back in 2005 form kicking all 6 PATs and being 2 for 2 in FGs.

The Panthers won the toss and deferred to the second half. Beymann did the pooch kick to the Lions' 30. One short pass was followed by our first sack of the evening by Justin Besier and John Elijah. Spring ended up punting to our 25. Hales took our first handoff right for 6 yards and then another one for 5 yards. Hales went left next with a serious pancake block courtesy of Louie Black. Josh Cooley kept for 33 yards on the next play. Hales took the pitch down to the 4 and then we ran several plays before finally turning the ball over on downs after a failed 4th and 2. Scott Arthur stopped the Lion receiver on a first down completion, then Ryan Korenek and Bart Dear slammed the Lion runner for a short gain and Dear and Andrew Lester stopped the 3rd down try. Spring punts to their 47. Hales followed numerous great blocks by Derek Dahman, Max Wilkerson and the rest of the O-line for 43 yards and our first score. 7 to 0 for the good guys now. The kickoff was covered at the Spring 30. A good 25 yard run gave them some hope, but an incomplete pass was followed by a short completion stopped by Besier and Jay Newman. Next another incomplete pass brought on a 4th and 13 and we got the ball back at our 20. Hales gets a couple on first, Cooley a couple on second and Hales another 13 next play. On our next 3rd down play Elliott Lim made an incredible catch managing to hold on to the ball as he was being creamed by a Lion defender to bring the 1st Qtr to an end.

2nd Quarter - Hales takes the next handoff and takes advantage of a stout block from Chris Coburn before winding his way 43 yards to pay dirt again. Beymann as usual perfect and now it's 14 to 0. Joel Eichler

made the next kickoff and also threw a shoulder into their runner knocking him out of bounds at their 43. Hunter and Korenek team up on a 1st down stop, one more incomplection then Jeremy Mayweather took care of business on 3rd down. The next punt was downed at our 18. We had a short run by Ossam Cook, a short completion to Hales and a good run by Cooley to keep the drive moving. However, we ended up punting a few plays later to their 10. Elijah put a good lick on the Lion runner on their first play, and then Lloyd Richardson stopped their receiver for a short gain. Justin Sisson flattened their next player completely. Korenek and Newman did their double team act again for a short gain then Alex Mirenda manned up for the next stop moving their runner backwards and then Justin Besier demolished their QB and his grip on the ball but fielded by an O Lineman who Jay Newman plastered and then Richardson got the eventual fumble. Cooley went for 12 and then 6 before a 4th down brought in Beymann who connected on a 40-yd Field Goal. Spring decided short was not working so they tried long a couple of times eventually being successful with a 49 yard TD reception after a couple of Panthers lost their grip on him. Score at halftime is 17 to 7.

Everyone enjoyed watching the Strutters' alumni perform at the half. Although they only practiced one time their kicks were incredibly high and their unison and timing was equally amazing.

Jay Newman as usual led the Panthers out to begin the 2nd half with us receiving the kickoff at our 48 after a 40 yard return by Ossam Cook. Cooley was incomplete on a pass to Hales and then handed to Chris Coburn up the middle for 12 yards. Three failed plays preceded Wes Theiss's punt to the Spring 2 yard line. Mark Hunter got his first safety of the year on their 3rd down effort. Score now 19 to 7. Cook got another good return for 20 yards to the 50. Hales took off for 13 on 1st, 7 on the next play, then 2 and followed by another 4. Cooley had a couple of short runs, then Hales for a couple more short ones to set up his next play for 12 yards and another TD. Score now 26 to 7. Besier stopped their return guy for a

short gain on the kickoff. Now our pass rush is getting a little more push up front and begins to cause more havoc for the Lion QB. His first was erratic and caused him to try short which was stopped by Mirenda and Andy Wilson. He was incomplete on the next two plays as well and ended up turning the ball over on downs. Cook took the handoff on our first two plays and made 13 yards, then another 15 yards. After 3 more short plays Beymann came in for another FG, good again leading to a score of 29 to 7 at the start of the infamous 4th quarter,

4th Qtr Oak 24 points Spring 21 points Total
of 45 for the quarter

Spring started the scoring this time with a 6 play 67 yard drive. Big hits by Chase Thomas and Mirenda along the way but they scored anyway. Score now 29 to 14.

Oak came back with a 9 play 79 yard drive to help put a stake in Spring's hopes. Big plays on this drive were by Coburn for 50 yards and Cooley for 8 yards and a TD. Score now 36 to 14. Not to be outdone Spring came back with their own 2 play 70 yard drive courtesy on a great fingertip catch by their receiver. Score now 36 to 21. Our next drive takes only one play by Josh Cooley for 42 yards. Now we're ahead 43 to 21. Here comes Spring again with another two play drive for 68 yards to make the score 43 to 28. It should be noted that Jeremy Mayweather was tackled, not blocked which enabled their receiver to get by. Here Oak comes back again for a 5 play 51 yard drive culminating with an 8 yard run by DeSean Hales to end the scoring at 50 to 28. This quarter was not great for defensive stats but was sure fun to watch.

The outcome of the game was never in doubt, in my opinion. Both the offense and defense played consistently and very physically. Next up is Tomball, another school with us scheduled as their Homecoming opponent. I suspect they should have

picked another school.

The 2006 Klein Oak Varsity Football Team continued to show unsuspecting teams the error of their ways when deciding to take on the Panthers during Homecoming week. Utilizing a dominating ground attack supplemented with an efficient passing game, Oak racked up half a century's worth of points for a second consecutive week in pounding the Tomball Cougars 51 – 14 to improve their 16-5A district record to 2 – 0. A fast and furious 27 point outburst during the 3rd quarter sealed the deal. Klein Oak's defensive unit continued its solid play in limiting the Cougars to 187 total yards and 14 points

First Quarter

Joel Eichler (86) started the game off with a deep kick returned to the Tomball 27 yard line where Lloyd Richardson (23) and Casey Baltzell (56) stopped the return cold. Tomball moved the ball enough for a couple of first downs utilizing a shuttle pass and another completion, but the drive came to a halt soon thereafter. A tackle in the backfield by Mark Hunter (81) followed by a sack from Andrew Lester (54) that caused his own helmet to fly off forced the Cougars to punt and the Oak set up shop on offense at their 10 yard line. DeSean Hales (3) started things out with a 15 yard run set up by lead blocking from QB Josh Cooley (7). Cooley added 7 yards on the next play. A couple of plays later, backup QB, Wes Theiss (4) got into the action as receiver catching a 16 yard strike from Cooley. After a 30 yard TD scamper by Hales was called back due to holding, Cooley hit DeSean on a 24 yard pass and run for a key 4th down conversion to keep the drive alive. Soon thereafter, the Panther QB hit fellow senior, Elliott Lim (22), in the corner of the end zone for a 3 yard touchdown pass. After Sven Beymann (16) hit the first of his 6 successful point after kicks, the score was Klein Oak 7 - Tomball 0 with 3:55 remaining in the first. The ensuing kickoff was muffed by the Tomball return man who was duly pummeled by Eric Cables (35), Logan Studdert (42), and Cameron Kilpatrick (25) at the Tomball 12 yard line. The defense turned up the heat on this possession with M. Hunter, Jay Newman (82), and Justin Besier (12) all making hard tackles. Alex

Mirenda (24) provided one tackle for a loss, and caused a fumble with a hard hit, but somehow the official ruled the play an incomplete pass. On third down, Richardson and Ryan Korenek (8) successfully defended a pass to force another Cougar punt. Hales fielded the squib punt on one bounce and returned it 10 yards to the Tomball 37 yard line. The last play of the quarter saw Cooley hit Mike Rayburn (46) in the right flat. Rayburn shed the first would be Tomball tackler and rumbled down the sideline for a 24 yard gain. The quarter ended with Oak still leading 7 – 0.

Second Quarter

The Panthers continued another successful drive with a 12 yard run by Cooley behind big offensive linemen Justin Walters (63) and Sedale Dunlap (76) along with help from pulling guard Derek Dahmann (59). A couple of completions to Theiss and Hales brought Oak to the 2 yard line. Hales converted a 4th and goal 2 yard TD run over the right side keyed by a block provided by fellow receiver Louie Black (11). Beymann's successful PAT made the score Klein Oak 14 – Tomball 0 with 8:21 remaining in the half. Rodell Davis (31) made the first of his several good special teams plays as he brought down the Tomball kickoff return man on their 31 yard line. The Tomball squad showed that they weren't going to lie down against the Panthers and proceeded to put together an 8 play, 69 yard scoring drive that featured excellent execution of their option offense. Senior captain Bart Dear (32) made some tough hits on the drive and Mirenda added a sack. Tough running by the Cougars led them to the Promised Land. Their deficit was cut to 14 – 7 with 5:13 remaining in the half. Oak's next offensive possession was nothing to write home about and ended up with a Tomball interception returned to Klein Oak's 25 yard line. The defense, fired up by Coach Gorka after the previous scoring drive by Tomball, promptly got the ball back when John Elijah (66) pounced on a fumble caused by Mark Hunter. The offense, seeking redemption from the turnover on their last drive, came out clicking. A 19 yard

reverse to Hales that totally confused the Tomball defense was followed by a completion from Cooley to Rayburn and two more passes to DeSean. Mr. Cooley punctuated the drive with a 26 yard TD run following strong blocks by Dunlap and Dahmann. Beymann added the point after to make the score Panthers 21 – Cougars 7 with 2:06 remaining in the half. After the kickoff gave Tomball the ball on their 30, Newman, Dear, M. Hunter, and Korenek all made plays to give the ball back to the Panthers before halftime. Time ran out on the half with Klein Oak leading 21 – 7 but not before Theiss made his 3rd catch of the game.

Third Quarter

In an effort to keep the ball away from dangerous Klein Oak return men, Tomball employed the pooch kick that was fair caught by Louie on the Oak 26 yard line. Proving lightning can come in small packages, sophomore running back Ossam Cook (14) took the handoff around right end and outran all Tomball defenders to the end zone for a 74 yard touchdown on Oak's first play from scrimmage in the second half. Another Beymann PAT made the score 28 – 7 in favor of Oak with 14 seconds gone in the half. After Richardson made the tackle on the kickoff, fellow defensive back Jeremy Mayweather (5) decided to get in on the party with an acrobatic interception 3 plays into Tomball's offensive possession. The turnover gave the ball back to the Panthers on their 15 yard line. The first play went backwards then Cooley provided a 21 yard run to put Ossam in familiar territory – his 26 yard line. Coach Poth, employing the "run it til' they stop it" style of play calling, went with Cook around right end once again. Helped by excellent downfield blocking by Lim, Ossam had his second 74 yard touchdown run of the quarter and there was still 8:48 remaining in the stanza. Another successful point after made the score Panthers 35 – Cougars 7. A stunned Tomball team took the ball over at their 28 yard line. A sack by Besier followed by another tackle in the backfield by Lester led to a quick punt by Tomball. Someone on their sideline wasn't thinking right and allowed

the punt to find the hands of DeSean. 66 yards later Mr. Hales was in the end zone with his second punt return for a touchdown on the season, leaving the game reporter wondering if anyone will ever kick the ball to him again. The score was now 41 – 7 with 6:06 remaining in the quarter. Rodell Davis added to Tomball’s misery by causing a fumble on the Eichler kickoff that was recovered by Richardson. Chris Coburn (33) got in on the scoring frenzy by taking the ball 14 difficult yards for a TD to make the score 48 – 7 with 4:42 remaining in the 3rd. Believing that the offense needed a rest, the defense finally allowed a little Tomball movement and the Cougars kept the ball for the remainder of the quarter.

Fourth Quarter

Tomball did finish off a 14 play scoring drive in the 4th. Oak’s defense played hard on this drive, but Tomball executed well during this series. Andy Wilson (6) made several solo tackles on the drive, with Baltzell and Dear also getting in on many plays. Tomball’s scoring play was nicely executed with the receiver making a diving catch on his 12 yard TD reception. No worries – Oak is still up 48 – 14 with 10:33 remaining in the game. Richardson pulled out the “Delayed Fair Catch” trick play on the ensuing kickoff, but the refs weren’t buying it and Oak’s offense took the field at their own 23 yard line. Theiss was sent out as field general for the 4th quarter. Coburn took the handoff for 39 yards on the first play of the drive helped out by nice downfield blocking by Scott Arthur (10). Coburn thought he had found paydirt again, but his subsequent 38 yard run was called back by holding. Theiss hit Rayburn on a 5 yd hot route, and Coburn added 10 more yards behind the blocking of Walters and Joel Segovia (41). Another sophomore running back named Cook (this time it was John Michael Cook (43)) showed our depth at running back with a 15 yard gain behind the capable blocking of Max Wilkerson (60), Adam Wright (62), and big sophomore Clint Naron (74). Theiss added a nice 7 yard run behind big pulling guard Dunlap but was stopped short of the goal line. Beymann converted

the 20 yard field goal attempt to make the score Klein Oak 51 – Tomball 14 with 5:55 remaining in the game. Oak's next defensive stand was impressive as some players that don't play all the time stood up well against Tomball's option defense. Greg Neal (55) got a couple of tackles on this drive. Colton Morgan (20) and Chase Thomas (34) took out Tomball's pitch man but not before Kenneth Hunter (75) and Cables denied Tomball the other two options on the play. Kilpatrick defended a pass play forcing a 1 yard punt by Tomball caused by pressure from Cables. Theiss showed excellent agility on a 15 yard run. This time he was running behind a seal block from sophomore Jordan Nayver (18) and behind lead blocking by sophomores Naron and Kevin Forsch (73). Coach Smith would then order the clock to be run out and the game ended with the Panthers on top 51 – 14.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (104 yds on 10 carries, 1 TD, 10-15 passing, 126 yds, 1 TD . 1 int), O. Cook (152 yds, 4 carries, 2 TD's) Coburn (51 yds, 7 carries, 1 TD), Hales (40 yds, 7 carries, 4 receptions, 59 yds, 66 yd punt return 2 TD's), Theiss (3 receptions, 31 yds, 1-1 passing, 5 yds, 12 yds, 2 carries), Rayburn (3 receptions, 37 yds) Lim (1 reception, 4 yds, TD), and John Michael Cook (12 yds, 4 carries).

Three defensive Panthers had a double digit tackling night with Dear and Richardson providing 11 tackles and Newman adding 10. Other tackling leaders were as follows: Mark Hunter – 8, Lester – 5, Miranda, Korenek, and Wilson – 4 each. Lester led the team in tackles for losses with 3 plus a sack. Other Panthers with tackles in the backfield were – Besier, Dear, Mirenda, Mark Hunter, and Newman.

This game was very enjoyable to watch. The Panther faithful got to see a diverse offense and an attacking defense. The team has great senior leadership, but the future is also bright with many contributions being provided by underclassmen. One excellent by

product of the lopsided score was the second unit getting a good number of snaps in the 4th quarter proving that they will be ready when called on. Homecoming week is here for the 2006 Klein Oak Panthers. Let's get ready to make it three in a row in district against Klein Collins next Friday.

This evening started out eventfully for the Klein Collins folks when Sven Beymann's kickoff went a little short and a big Tiger grabbed it and went 62 yards for a 7 to 0 lead. However, this was another game where we outplayed the competition on both sides of the ball.

1st Quarter

After spotting Collins to a small lead our first possession turned out to be three plays and a score with DeSean Hales carrying all three plays for 71 yards and our first TD. Terrific blocking was provided by the unsung heroes of Friday Night Lights, the O-Line. Max Wilkerson, Derek Dahmann and Justin Walters opened the holes on the first two plays and then sealed the D-Line's blitz as Louie Black and Elliott Lim provided the downfield blocks for Hales' 54 yard run. The ensuing kickoff, unlike our first short kick, worked with Andy Wilson grabbing the loose ball to give us an immediate second possession. Now comes a seven play successful drive with Josh Cooley carrying three times for nine yards, Chris Coburn once for fifteen and Hales three times for 11 and a second TD. Now it's 14 to 7. Clint Narron, Walters and Adam Wright chipped in with key blocks on this effort. Collins offense is on the field for only three plays. Alex Mirenda and Mark Hunter had big plays on this short lived drive. After a quick three and out for our side, Wes Theiss launched a 36 yard punt to the Collins 34. Collins made quick work of this with their QB taking it 66 yards and their second TD. 14 to 14 now. We set up shop at our 41 kept the ball for 11 plays and our third TD. Ossam Cook had four carries 9 yards, Cooley had one for 18, Hales had 2 for 14 yards and Coburn had three carries and our third TD.

21 to 14.....what a long 1st quarter!

2nd Quarter

The Oak defense came up big again holding them to only 6 yards and forcing another punt. Jay Newman, Ryan Korenek and Lloyd Richardson made the key plays on this short drive. We gave it right back to them on a fumble but our D came up big again and held them for four plays bringing on another punt. John Elijah and Walters teamed up for a minus six on first down and Bart Dear stopped the next play, then Hunter and Mirenda got involved on the next play. Their punt sailed into the end zone for a touchback. Our next possession was for eight plays with big plays by Coburn for 25 yards and Cooley, four carries for 23 yards. However our eventual punt was promptly fumbled by the Collins' receiver and we began this drive at the Collins 5 after a Lim recovery. A Cooley pass to Lim looked like a great catch and a TD but Cooley was ruled to be out of bounds before the throw. Beymann connected for a field goal after the drive stalled. 24 to 14 now. Bart Dear came up very big on first down, Jeremy Mayweather on second and then Mirenda greeted their runner very rudely on third down. Their punt was to our 16. Coburn gets 4 on first down, Cooley to Hales on second, two incompletions, 16 and 9 yard runs by Cooley closed out the half with the good guys up by 10.

This was a very special halftime. We had a 25th anniversary Homecoming which recognized all of the Oak past principals and a variety of Past Homecoming Kings and Queens. Jay Newman was crowned Homecoming King and DJ Richmond was crowned Queen.

3rd Quarter

The quarter started ominously similar to the 1st with our fumbling the kickoff. One ref said Oak's possession, but was overruled and KC got the ball at our 22. Mark Hunter and Justin Besier manned up on the first down for a 3 yard loss, Mirenda and Hunter

for another minus 6 on second down and then KC threw 2 incomplete passes, foregoing the field goal try. So, no harm done we began another 8 play drive with Cooley and Hales combining for all 8 plays. Hales had 6 carries for 41 yards and Cooley with 25 yards and another TD. 31 to 14 now. After another good kickoff to the Collins 29, our defense only had to stay on the field for five plays courtesy of a Mayweather interception and earlier big hits by Mirenda, Elijah and Hunter. Our next drive lasted for 5 plays with an eventual fumble recovered by KC at our 39. Six plays later KC finally got back into the end zone after a long dry spell. With a Hunter block on the PAT the score is now 31 to 20. Time to respond and Hales does so impressively with 3 carries for 58 yards with the last 41 coming on his second TD run of the night. Beymann good for a 38 to 20 score. Beymann's next kickoff went to the KC 36 yard line with Dear and Mayweather crawling all over the KC return guy.

4th Quarter

Collins looked good for the first three plays but went backwards after them and punted to our 41. Key defenders were Jay Newman, Mr. Homecoming King, Hunter and Justin Besier with a big hit and who was also the recipient of a neck stinger putting him out of action indefinitely. We took over at our 34 and ran nine plays with an eventual interception giving it back to KC at their 39 after a 22 yard return. Collins helped the clock move along for 6 plays and only 19 yards. Logan Studdard laid a very nice lick on the Tigers QB on one play! After turning it over on downs at our 43 Cooley took off for a nice 40 yard run, but alas we turned it over on a fumble on the very next play. Collins ran four more plays and promptly giving it back to us so Wes Theiss could score his first varsity TD on the next play for us. Score now and at the end 44 to 20.

This game featured great running by DeSean Hales with 214 yards on 23 carries, Josh Cooley with 16 totes for 162 and Chris Coburn with 10 for 46 yards. Bart Dear, Mark Hunter, Alex Mirenda, John Elijah

and Jeremy Mayweather always were around the ball carrier. Overall a very solid effort for offense and defense. I think the players are ready for Klein Forest.

The 2006 Klein Oak Varsity Football Team took on the Klein Forest Golden Eagle football squad on a beautiful crisp Friday evening at Klein Memorial Stadium. The Panthers came out fired up and took two different first half leads over their highly ranked opponents. Klein Forest used an attacking defense, and some excellent individual efforts by their quarterback and primary wide receiver to give Klein Oak their first District 16-5A defeat, the score being 30-14.

First Quarter

Oak set up shop on their twenty to open the game after a touchback on the opening kickoff. 3 plays later, this drive was over but Wes Theiss (4) boomed a high 39 yd punt and the special teams game MVP Elliott Lim (22) brought the Forest return man down in his tracks. The Panther defense shut down the Eagles on their first two plays with Senior Captain Bart Dear (32) pressuring the QB into an incomplection and Alex Mirenda (24) knocked the running back silly for no gain on second down. Forest was able to complete their 3rd down play for a big gain down to the Oak 15. Their drive ended in a field goal try after another excellent pursuit play by Dear and a team sack by Dear, Jay Newman (82) and Eric Cables (35). The FG try sailed wide left to leave the game in a scoreless tie. Oak's second offensive possession was successful as Josh Cooley (7) hit passes to Lim for 7 yards and Louie Black (11) for 11 yards. A couple of plays later, DeSean Hales (3) ran around and past a stunned Klein Forest defensive unit for a 41 yard scoring jaunt. Justin Walters (63), Derek Dahmann (59), Scott Arthur (10), and Lim provided key interference for Hales. After a Sven Beymann (16) extra point kick, the score was Klein Oak 7 – Klein Forest 0 with 4:25 remaining in the first. Coach Thibodeaux called for the sky kickoff left and Beymann executed it perfectly with the Forest return man barely averting a Klein Oak recovery. Forest began this drive on their 35 yard

line. After a couple of stops by Mark Hunter (81) a Golden Eagle receiver broke a tackle and burst for 26 yards to convert another third down opportunity. The next play was one of the key plays for the game and unfortunately it did not go the Panthers' way. On a play that film review would confirm was a lateral, Jeremy Mayweather (5) alertly picked up the ball and raced 60 yards for an apparent touchdown. The refs did not see the play the same way and called the lateral an incomplete pass negating the turnover. Chase Thomas (34) tried to keep the momentum in Oak's favor with a tackle in the backfield on the next play, but Forest converted another key third down with a 23 yard reverse play. The next third down conversion by Forest resulted in a perfectly thrown fade route to their #8 to make the score 7 – 7 with 52 seconds left in the quarter. The Panthers again started with the ball on their 20 after a kickoff into the end zone. One play later, the first quarter ended with the score knotted up at 7.

Second Quarter

Klein Oak's offensive possession that began at the end of the first quarter would continue in the second. Coach Poth and the Panthers' offensive unit orchestrated a 13 play, 80 yd, 6 minute drive that culminated in a 2 yard TD run by Cooley with 6:47 remaining in the half. The longest play on the drive was a 17 yard run by Hales and only employed one pass play which was a 7 yard strike from Cooley to Black. The remainder of the drive was led by the offensive line play of Max Wilkerson (60), Adam Wright (62), Clint Naron (74), Walters, & Dahmann, with the assistance of tight end Mike Rayburn (46). DeSean had 33 yds rushing on the drive, while Cooley added 27 and the TD. The Panthers enjoyed a 14 – 7 lead over the Golden Eagles at this point. Klein Forest had a nice return of the subsequent kickoff, but the carrier was still punished by Cables on the tackle. Ryan Korenek (8) and John Elijah (66) got in on the defensive action with some hard stops. After the Klein Forest back got loose in the secondary, Lloyd Richardson (23) made a touchdown saving tackle. Newman and Logan

Studdert (42) combined on a tackle in the backfield, but the Forest drive ended successfully as #8 caught his second TD pass of the game to knot the score at 14 with 3:42 remaining in the half. Klein Oak's next possession featured a couple of nice runs by Chris Coburn (33) for 16 yards, but a failed halfback pass attempt was included in the drive to force an Oak punt. Theiss boomed this one 51 yds. The kick was returned to Klein Forest's 47 yd line. Forest put together a quick drive that ended with a 23 yard TD pass to the infamous #8, his third of the game. Hunter, big Andrew Lester (54), Thomas and Dear all provided nice plays on defense, but they were not rewarded as the Forest receiver made an acrobatic catch for paydirt. A missed extra point left the Panthers facing a 20 – 14 halftime deficit.

Third Quarter

The second half started with a Beymann pooch kick fair caught on the Forest 35 yard line. Hard stops by Dear, Newman, and Andy Wilson (6) set up the opportunity for a Studdert sack to force Forest into their first punt of the game. Hales gave the Panthers good field position with a 23 yard return to the 47 yard line. This drive however went nowhere and ended in a 35 yard Theiss kick that pinned Forest deep in their territory. The Golden Eagles were able to move the ball somewhat on this drive, but a combination of plays by Wilson, Studdert, & Dear forced another Forest punt. This punt was again nicely returned by DeSean to near midfield. A lone yellow flag for a block in the back brought this nice play back all the way to the Panther 6 yard line. The Oak offense showed a new wrinkle by employing the Flanker/Tight End shift maneuver on this possession to confuse Forest's defensive unit and open some holes for Ossam Cook(14) and Coburn. Oak moved the ball from deep in their territory all the way to the Forest 40 behind 37 yards rushing by Cook and 15 more by Coburn. Dahmann provided some nice pull blocking and Rayburn added a couple of downfield cut blocks. The ball possession offensive scheme took us to the end of a scoreless third quarter with

the score still Forest 20 – Oak 14.

Fourth Quarter

The promising drive came to an end early in the fourth, but things were still looking up for Klein Oak as punter extraordinaire, Theiss, pinned Forest on their 5 yard line with another 35 yd effort. A stop at the line by Hunter & Lester along with an incomplete pass had things looking up with Forest sitting on third and ten in the shadows of their goal posts. Credit the Golden Eagles for coming up with another big 3rd down play, this one being a pass over the middle to their huge tight end for a 40 yard gain. Hales was brought in to defend against #8, but the Forest receiver proved his success was no fluke with another acrobatic catch just over DeSean's reach for another first down. Lester added another tackle in the Forest backfield, and a Miranda/Dear 3rd down stop forced Forest to bring on their field goal unit. The successful 23 yard kick put the Golden Eagles up 23 – 14 with 5:01 remaining in the game. Lim fooled Forest by not fair catching their sky kick and Oak started with excellent field position after Elliott's 19 yard return. Incomplete passes intended for Hales & Arthur forced another 35 yard Theiss punt. This one was alertly scooped up by the Forest up back and returned to their 49 yard line. 5 plays later, Klein Forest found the end zone again for their first rushing TD against Oak's defensive unit. The score was now Klein Forest 30 – Klein Oak 14. After a 22 yard return of the kickoff by Cook, Klein Oak employed the no huddle offense to make a last gasp effort to tighten up the score. Cooley completed passes of 12 yards to Theiss, and 7 yards to Lim and added 37 yards rushing before having a Golden Eagle defender step in front of a pass intended for Hales. Forest ran the clock out at this point. Final Score – Klein Forest 30 – Klein Oak 14.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (55 yds on 11 carries, 1 TD, 5-10 passing, 44 yds, 1 int), Hales (56 yds, 12 carries, 1

TD, 22 yd punt return), Coburn (31 yds, 7 carries), Cook (36 yds, 5 carries), Black (2 receptions, 18 yds), Lim (2 receptions, 14 yds,) & Theiss (1 reception, 12 yds).

The defensive unit was led by Game MVP – Dear with 8 tackles. Miranda added 8 also. Safeties Wilson and Thomas had 6 stops. Studdert had a sack and 4 tackles. Hunter and Newman provided 4 tackles each to lead the defensive line.

Klein Oak's record dropped to 5 wins against 3 losses (3 – 1 in 16-5A), but again proved that this group of players can compete with the best teams in the area. The entire offensive line did an excellent job of controlling their bigger opponents to open some room for the running game, and the defense gave Forest all they could handle. Without a couple of breaks, and an outstanding individual performance by their star wide receiver, the score could have ended up much different. Time to get ready for state ranked Westfield next week. This game should show the Panthers that they can hang with teams that are loaded with speed and athleticism.

The Westfield Mustangs had given 22 points for the entire season and our Panthers laid 21 on them in four quarters. However, their running back duo was formidable and we had a fight on our hands all night.

Westfield is state ranked and played like it, but Oak played hard and proved they are definitely worthy of being a playoff team.

1st Half

We started the game receiving and the kickoff for a touchback. Josh Cooley got the first carry and lost a couple of yards. DeSean Hales ran on second down and was bottled up for no gain and Chris Coburn caught a short pass for four yards leading to our first punt by Wes Theiss. Wes got the ball to their 37 yard

line. Elliott Lim stepped in front of the Mustang receiver on their first play and intercepted his first pass of the season. Hales was dropped behind the line on our first play and ran again for no gain on second down. Ossam Cook got 13 yards on his first carry but was short of the first down marker. Cooley hit Louie Black for a nice completion of 16 yards and a our first 1st down. Cook carried up the middle for three yards, then Cooley ran for two and had an incomplete pass bringing on Sven Beymann for a 45 yard field goal try was a little short. Westfield took over at their 28. They got only two yards on first down with Bart Dear and Lloyd Richardson making the stop. Mark Hunter and Alex Mirenda made big hits on second for no gain and then an incompletion set up their first punt which went out of bounds at our 24. Hales got a few going left on first down and caught a pass for a loss before getting 10 yards on a third down run. Theiss came in for second punt giving them the ball back at our 48. The Mustang runner got 23 yards on a first down run up the gut. Dear and Black stopped him for a short run on their next play before he made it to the 1. Dewayne Stewart is a very good running back and showed it on this drive. One short burst up the middle again and we are down 0 to 7. Cook took the kickoff deep in the end zone and managed to get it out to the 14 after dragging a few Mustangs the last couple of yards. Hales got 1 yard on 1st down then Coburn hauled in another pass from Cooley for 13 and a first down. Hales got nine yards on the last play of the first quarter.

Lim made a very nice reception for 15 yards and another first down to begin the second quarter and Coburn dragged a few Mustangs for a 4 yard gain up the middle. Hales got another 6 yards with help from Justin Walters and Max Wilkerson's blocks. Cooley got sacked for a minus 6 on the next play, and then handed off to Coburn for another 7 yards up the middle again. Hales went left and was forced out of bounds after three yards. Now it's time for Cooley's 2nd best run of the evening with a keeper up the right side for 22 yards with more help from Walters who took out two Mustangs with one block. Cooley

went left untouched for our first score of the night with nice blocks from Clint Narron, Adam Wright and Wilkerson. Now 7 to 7. Sven Beymann served up a well placed pooch kickoff but they started at midfield after a nice return of 23 yards and a tackle by Lee Bell. Westfield's Stewart had a couple of tough runs before they threw a nice pass for about 40 yards and their second score. Now 7 to 14. Cook was stopped at our 13 this time on the kickoff return and Hales was stopped for two yards on the first down run and then made a nice run for 6 yards. However, Cooley was sacked again on third down and Theiss came in for another punt, this time to their 49, but this was promptly returned to our 5 yard line. Stewart scored on the next play. Now 7 to 21. Jeremy Mayweather returned the next kickoff very well for 28 yards to our 28. Hales got 5 on 1st down with a good block from Wilkerson. Next, Hales was stopped for no gain and DeSean got just enough on 3rd down to get a first down. On the next series Coburn got 4 on 1st, Cooley 2 on 2nd, Cook got 3 on 3rd and Hales again got just enough for another hard fought 1st down. Cooley passed to Hales for 13, and then Black makes a sensational catch for another 17 yards. Three incompletions later Beymann came in for another FG try and was wide left just before the end of the quarter.

2nd Half

Westfield received the kickoff with another nice return to their 45. The Mustangs started with another dose of Stewart who had 5 runs to cover the 55 yards and their next score. Along the way Mirenda, Dear, Casey Baltzell, Hunter and Black made tough tackles to no avail. Our next drive started at the 17 this time. Hales was stopped short of the line again on 1st down and made a nice 7 yard gain on the next try. Walters and Derek Dahmann had key blocks for this effort. Hales was short on our next play bringing Theiss for another punt, this time with very little return to their 42 after a stop by Colton Morgan. After two incompletions the other half of Westfield's running back duo, Bo Walker, came in and went 47 yards for his first TD of the evening on his first carry.

We started at our 30 for the next possession. Scott Arthur got his first reception of the game from Cooley on 1st down and Hales was stopped for no gain on the next try. Two penalties later we have the ball now at our 45, 1st and 15. Chris Coburn got 10 yards on another run up the gut, Cooley then had his best run of the night for 30 yards to their 15 and this was followed by a perfect pass to Lim for the score. Now 14 to 35. The mustangs started next at their 30 and we got another dose of Walker who may not be as fast as Stewart but is certainly a load to bring down. After 9 straight carries and 70 yards the score is 14 to 42. After a touchback we started at our twenty. Cooley's next three pass attempts were to Wes Theiss with the last two successful for about 25 yards. Our next three plays were unsuccessful and Theiss punted to their 17 but we ended up covering a fumble at the 15. Cook got 5 on 1st down, Cooley no gain on 2nd and then a pass interference in the end zone gave us the ball on the 2. Hales loses 5, and then Cooley gets that yardage back and some to the 1 where Coburn took it in. Now 21 to 42.

After a few plays on their next possession they coughed it up again and we took over at our 40. On our possession Coburn got 6 on one carry, Cooley called for grounding the ball on the next play and an incomplete pass gave the ball back to them Bart Dear made his presence known again to Stewart on the next drive a couple of time but nevertheless Stewart and company took it in again for another score. Now 21 to 49 and the final score.

This game was a series of hard knocks from both teams. Though the score was definitely in Westfield's favor I saw our offense and defense giving as good as they got physically. Westfield had a little more speed than the Panthers. I look forward to the game with Klein which should be spirited with the long rivalry associated with these schools.

Anticipation was in the air as fans arrived at Klein Memorial Stadium for the 2006 Klein Oak Panther Football team's final contest against their arch rival Klein Bearkats. Lightning and thunder were also in the air and the kickoff was delayed for over two hours as a strong thunderstorm worked its way through the area. Playoff T-shirts were selling briskly during the storm delay and the temperature was noticeably chillier after the front came through. The game that the faithful fans that remained saw a contest that this reporter believes was dominated by the Panthers, but a few mistakes and some big plays by the Bearkat offense put Oak on the wrong side of a 31 – 24 score.

First Quarter

Klein's strong legged kicker let it loose on the opening kickoff to force the Panthers to set up for their opening possession on the 20 yard line after the touchback. The Klein Oak offense showed no ill effects of the long wait in the locker room as they put together a very efficient 10 play, 80 yard scoring drive that included 5 first downs. All the plays in the drive were runs with quarterback Josh Cooley (7) picking up 53 yards on 7 carries and Chris Coburn (33) added 17 yards on two carries. Derek Dahmann (59), Clint Naron (74) led the offensive lines domination of Klein's defense. Coburn and Elliot Lim (22) provided nice interference also. With 7:38 remaining in the first, a Cooley 6 yard TD run followed by Sven Beymann's (16) PAT left the Bearkats stunned by the quick 7 – 0 deficit. Beymann's nice angle kick to the sideline along with a tenacious effort by Greg Neal (55) on the tackle backed Klein far into their territory. Things continued to look up for Oak as Louie Black (11) took the legs out from under Klein's tailback on first down. An incomplection caused by pressure from Andrew Lester (54) and Alex Mirenda (24) was followed by a Mirenda tackle in the backfield to force Klein into their first punt. A solid 50 yard punt was returned to the 46 yard line by DeSean Hales (3) where the Panthers second offensive possession would begin. Hales went for 11 on first down. After being held for no gain on the next play, the Panthers went to the air. Cooley spotted tight end Mike Rayburn (46) open downfield. Rayburn juggled but hauled in the Cooley spiral for an 18 yard gain. Unfortunately for the good guys, the ball was knocked loose on the tackle and Klein recovered on their 11 yard line. After tackles by Mirenda and Black along with a 5 yard penalty on the Bearkats, Klein was in a third and long situation. After

employing some trickery, a big gain on a misdirection play put them in good shape deep in Panther territory. Lloyd Richardson (23) did make a touchdown saving tackle on the play. Jeremy Mayweather (5), Bart Dear (32), Mark Hunter (81), and John Elijah (66) made some stops to quell the Bearkat momentum. Klein settled for a 31 yard field goal to make the score Klein Oak 7 – Klein 3 with approximately a minute left in the quarter. After another kickoff way out of the end zone, the Panther offense could muster no movement on their next drive. The quarter ended with the Panthers in the lead 7 – 3.

Second Quarter

To start the second stanza punter Wes Theiss (4) was brought on and booted a 37 yard effort. Unfortunately Wes also had to be the touchdown saving tackler on the play after an excellent Bearkat return. Two plays later a TD run by Klein's Senior Allstar tailback gave Oak their first deficit – 10 – 7 early in the quarter. Mr. Theiss got right back in the action as he fair caught the subsequent kickoff on the Panther 25 yard line. Hales led this offensive drive with 30 yards on 6 carries and Cooley provided an exciting 16 yard QB keeper behind big tackle Justin Walters (63). The drive stalled and Klein took over on downs at their 39 yard line. A big run by Klein followed by a Panther personal foul put Oak behind the 8-ball with the Bearkats rolling at the Oak 10 yard line. Another Klein 10 yard touchdown made the score Klein 17 – Oak 7 with 4:22 remaining in the half. Lim fielded the next pooch kickoff by Klein and gave the ball to the Oak offense on the 28 yard line. Again the Panthers showed how they could move the ball with Coburn running behind big Adam Wright (62) and Max Wilkerson (60) started the drive out with an 8 yard gain. Cooley would convert a quarterback sneak for a fourth down conversion and then go to the air for a 12 yard completion to Rayburn and a 13 yard strike to Hales. Josh ended this efficient drive with a 10 yard scoring run on a quarterback draw play. After Beymann's kick, the score was not tightened to 17 – 14 with Klein having

the advantage with 56 seconds remaining in the half. Any hopes of a last minute scoring effort by Klein were dashed by big plays by Elijah and Ryan Korenek (8) followed by a fumble caused by Mirenda that was pounced on by Jeremy Mayweather (5). With 4 seconds remaining, Oak's Hail Mary pass fell incomplete to end the half with the score still Klein – 17 Klein Oak – 14.

Third Quarter

Klein showed their special team skills with a long return of the 2nd half kickoff only to be set back deep in their territory by a holding call. They were able to muster another one of those big plays that hurt the Panthers when their back ran 79 yards on the first offensive play of the half to put the Bearkats up 24 – 14 with only 24 ticks off the clock. Hales, tired of touchbacks on kickoffs, took the ball from 7 yards deep in the end zone for a 28 yard return to the Oak 21. Strong runs by Coburn and Cooley set up a 17 yard completion to Rayburn. The running by Coburn & Cooley (17 and 20 yards on the drive respectively) continued to wear down Klein's defense. Black sprung open for an 14 yard reception followed by a pass interference call in the end zone on Hales. Cooley walked into the end zone from one yard out after blocks by Walters, Rayburn, and Mirenda to culminate a 79 yard, 14 play drive to make the score Klein 24 Oak 21 with 4:15 minutes remaining in the quarter. Another excellent kickoff return by Klein set them up again with good field position in Panther territory. Lee Bell (37) made a tackle in the Bearkat backfield on first down. One more big play again would haunt Oak's defense as the Klein back scampered 40 yards for what would be their final score with 3:01 remaining in the third. The score was now 31 – 21 in favor of the Bearkats. After a Cooley to Hales 11 yard completion with 15 to go on 3rd down, Thiess provided a 33 yard punt, this one with no return. Bell and Chase Thomas (34) stopped Klein's momentum as the third quarter came to an end with the score Klein 31 – Oak 21.

Fourth Quarter

Richardson and Cody Davis (84) combined to thwart a Bearkat pass play just short of the first down marker forcing a Klein punt. The punt was shanked out of bounds giving Oak good field position on the Klein 45. Cooley & Coburn again led the rushing attack and Lim hauled in a 2 yard completion before the drive stalled after a mishandled exchange on a 4th down play. Good plays by M. Hunter and Jay Newman (82) forced another Klein punt giving the Panthers good field position on the Oak 44 yard line. The next drive started promising with a couple of Cooley runs and a 17 yard reception by Rayburn along the left sideline but ended with a leaping interception by a Klein defender. Again the defense, led by Newman and Mirenda took up the challenge and forced Klein to punt from their end zone. Oak set up shop on the Klein 40 with 3:40 remaining in the game and a 10 point deficit. The hurry up offense looked good with Josh going for 9 yards and stopping the clock followed by a Coburn 5 yard run for a first down. Cooley then hit Black for 18 yards. After a couple of short runs and an incomplection in the end zone, Beymann came in and tightened the score with a 27 yard field goal with 1:53 remaining in the game. Coach Thibodeaux called on the double place kicker on side kick. It was well executed by Joel Eichler (86) but did not take the correct bounce and went out of bounds at the 49 yard line where Klein took over possession. One first down later, they were able to run the clock out to preserve the victory – Klein 31 – Klein Oak 24.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (142 yds on 28 carries, 3 TDs, 10-15 passing, 124 yds, 1 int), Hales (38 yds, 11 carries, 3 receptions, 27 yds), Coburn (60 yds, 13 carries), Rayburn (4 receptions, 63 yds), Black (2 receptions, 32 yds) & Lim (1 reception, 2 yds).

The defensive unit was led by Game MVP – Mirenda with 9 tackles. Newman added 5, with Bell, Dear,

Justin Sisson (2), Mayweather, & Richardson had 4 each. M. Hunter, Lester, & Elijah had 3 each as they fought off the huge Klein offensive line. The team had no interceptions, but Mayweather pounced on a fumble

This was another game where the score really didn't reflect the overall quality of the team's production. Oak out-gained Klein 364 yards to 281 and their longest play was 18 yards long. The offense consistently moved the ball with 24 first downs to Klein's 14. The Bearkats ended up on the correct side of the scoreboard by opportunistically taking advantage of Panther mistakes, and by turning in several big plays on offense. If the Panthers can eliminate a few of the mistakes; they will be a force to reckon with in the playoffs. Time to get ready for the Oak Ridge War Eagles as we leave our friends, the Klein Bearkats to play the Lufkin Panthers in the opening round of the State Playoffs.

On a windy evening our KO Panthers came prepared to take care of business. Being favored to win a playoff game for the first time, the Panthers started strong and kept the pressure up all evening. Our defense, apparently miffed at their being described as a "bend don't break" defense, stepped up big time to ensure that this was the first playoff victory in school history. Our offense was formidable with numerous players stepping up.

1st Quarter

Our first possession started at our 30 and Josh Cooley hit Louie Black for a 44 gain on our second play, moving the ball to their 28 yard line. This was a combination that would work many times tonight. However, after a couple of runs by DeSean Hales and Chris Coburn and a few incompletions by Cooley, Sven Beymann missed a field goal effort giving them the ball back at their 25. The War Eagles took a little momentum back by running the ball down to our 40. The next play was stuffed by John Elijah and Alex Mirenda for no gain. However, their running back broke free for a 28 yard run and the first score of the

game. OR 7 KO 0. After a short kickoff we took over at our 30 and a facemask penalty was tacked onto the end of the first running play by Hales. Hales then had two runs of 10 yards and then a nifty 51 yard scamper for our first score. KO 7 OR 7. Big blocks were provided courtesy of Derek Dahman and Elliott Lim. Oakridge ran a total of 8 plays on their next drive. Our defense stepped up big time with solid tackles being made several time by Ryan Korenek and Lloyd Richardson. When they were not making the hits, Chase Thomas, Jay Newman and Alex Mirenda were in the middle of the action. The first OR punt was a thing of beauty, if you are an OR fan, coming to rest at our 3 yard line. The 1st quarter ended tied 7 to 7 with the Panthers facing a third and long.

2nd Quarter

Hales took care of the long situation with a nice run for 12. Black got back into the action with his second reception and then Hales and Cooley alternated runs getting the ball to their 47 before Cooley hit Louie Black again for 47 yards and our second score. During this play two OR defenders took themselves out of the play by colliding with each other. KO 14 OR 7. Beymann's kickoff was short and out of bounds giving them the ball at their 30. The defense stepped up big again to start the next OR possession and in a matter of three plays forced another OR punt, this time to our 15. Chris Coburn took the first handoff, up the middle as usual, this time for 10 yards. Great blocking was provided by Justin Walters, Mike Rayburn and Derek Dahman. On our next play Cooley made what was undoubtedly his best pass of the year hitting Hales perfectly in stride for a 75 yard TD. Now KO 20 OR 7 after Beymann missed the PAT. OR started their next drive at their 27 and 1st down was stuffed by Andrew Lester, 2nd down by Mark Hunter and a host of others, and, I am positive the OR QB is glad he handed off on 3rd down because Mirenda gave him a terrific shot that I suspect loosened a few fillings. However, another three and out for OR and we were handed a short field again getting the ball back at

our 45. We had a couple of short runs before Hales broke free for another 15 yards, but was stripped of the ball which they returned to our 43. One long pass later OR set up shop at our 1 yard line setting up their second score of the evening for an eventual halftime score of 20 to 14.

The halftime show began with the presentation of our National Merit Scholarship recipients, of which our middle linebacker, Bart Dear, was proudly and deservedly one.

3rd Quarter

OR received the first kick of the half and, after a nice return, started at their 40. Unlike our last several defensive stands, this time we missed a tackle on 1st down and their runner made the 60 yards look easy bringing the score to 21 to 20 in their favor. Now, however, our defense decided that this would be the last score they would allow and patiently waited for the offense to begin to roll up the score. We began the drive at our 38. Hales carried the ball 4 times on the drive and Cooley once. The big plays were both pass completions to Louie Black, one for 20 yards and the other a 31 yard TD strike, where as before, two OR defenders ran together as they watched Black scamper into the end zone. Score now 27 to 21 in our favor. The WarEagles next possession began at their 30. Bart Dear dragged the OR runner down on their first play for no gain. Chase Thomas did the same on 2nd down. Although they eventually made a couple of first downs on this drive, additional big stops were made by Andrew Lester, Mark Hunter and Jay Newman bringing out their punter again. Hales made their short kick appear even shorter as he returned the ball to the OR 38, a 36 yard return. Coburn handed off to Hales on 1st down on a reverse good for another 20 yards, Hales for another 8, then Josh Cooley on a keeper up the middle for a TD making the score 33 to 21 after our 2 point conversion try came up short. A fair catch helped OR set up shop at their 23 to begin their next possession, which like all the rest will end in no points. At this point our defense is in control and not

about to relinquish it.

4th Quarter

This one began and ended the same, with our defense well in control. Although we allowed them a few first downs, eventually forcing them to turn the ball over on downs, our defensive leaders were Lester, Hunter, Newman, Mirenda and in larger part the rest of the D. OR had no answer to our pass rush and able tackling. Lester and Hunter had sacks on the drive and there was never any threat of a score for this possession. Cooley manned up on the next drive carrying himself on the first three plays and then completing a pass to Chris Coburn to the OR 26. Hales did the rest taking it in the last 26 yards. Score now 41 to 21 after a successful 2 point conversion to Elliott Lim. Next up, one play one fumble.....whoops.....no fumble after all and they keep the ball. Logan Studdert, Mark Hunter and Andrew Lester all met at the QB position shortly after that for a very rude sack of him. A few completions, a few incompletions and a few very short runs comprised the rest of the game.

This was a proud moment for the football program of Klein Oak. This first playoff victory was an entire team effort. After reading somewhat derogatory comments about themselves, our Defense made a statement by controlling the game from start to finish and Offensive performers, who had not read anything at all about themselves in sports articles and on websites, also decided to make a statement by showing everyone that this is a complete team on both sides of the ball. I expect bigger and better things from these fine young men as we continue to make additional statements about our abilities and character through this playoff season.

Klein Oak's first every playoff victory of Oakridge the week before set up a Thanksgiving weekend match-up between the Panthers and the Cedar Park Timberwolves from Leander, Texas. The stage was set at the "Palace in Round Rock", Round Rock ISD's state of the art high school football stadium on a beautiful but windy Saturday afternoon. The Klein Oak fan base traveled well, and appeared to have more folks in the stands than did Cedar Park who was playing only 20 minutes from home. The band, Strutters, Cheerleaders, and Standleaders all did a great job of energizing the crowd. The game turned out to be a "Tale of Two Halves" where the Panthers fought back from a 21 - 10 halftime deficit employing a stifling and opportunistic defense and a diverse offense to send Cedar Park home on the wrong end of a 31 - 28 final score.

First Quarter

Klein Oak won the toss and elected to receive. Scott Arthur (10) fielded the kickoff and returned the ball up the right sideline 19 yards to give the ball to the offense on the 22 yard line. The first drive of the game was highlighted by a Josh Cooley (7) 9 yard scramble that was just short of a first down. Punter Wes Theiss (4) was brought on with the task of punting into the stiff breeze. His effort netted 21 yards but most importantly did not allow a Cedar Park return. Cedar Park's first offensive possession was also short lived as Lee Bell (37) and Ryan Korenek (8) combined to make the first stop. Chase Thomas (34) brought down the Timberwolve runner behind the line of scrimmage on down 2, and Alex Mirenda (24) forced the Cedar Park passer into an incompletion on down 3. A punt later and the Panthers set up shop on their 8 yard line. A 13 yard carry by Cooley and another 13 yard run by Jeremy Mayweather (5) provided the Panthers with a couple of first downs and got them out of the shadows of their goal posts. The drive was stalled by a penalty and Theiss was brought on for his second kick of the game. The punt took an unfortunate bounce and gave Cedar Park the ball in Panther territory on the 48 yard line. After Korenek, Bell, and Thomas combined for a couple of tackles, Cedar Park executed its triple option offense to perfection with the pitch man running 36 yards for the initial score of the game. After the point after was good, the Score was Cedar Park 7 – Klein Oak 0 with 3:58 remaining in the first. DeSean Hales (3) took the ensuing kickoff from the goal line out to the Oak 23 yard line. Still not figuring out what might work against the athletic Cedar Park defense, the Panther offense was again forced to punt. This time Theiss' boot covered 32 yards and backed Cedar Park into their territory at the 36 yard line. Two tackles by Mirenda and one by game defensive MVP Mark Hunter (81) at the end of the first quarter would force Cedar Park to now kick into the wind. Score at the end of one quarter was Cedar Park 7 – Klein Oak 0.

Second Quarter

After Cedar Park's punter had to battle the strong breeze, the Panther offense tried to see what they could accomplish with the wind at their back. Although Cooley and Chris Coburn (33) found good running room behind Max Wilkerson (60) and Clint Naron (74) a mishandled snap shut down the offense and brought on punter Theiss for his first effort with the wind helping. This kick covered 52 yards and sailed into the Cedar Park end zone. Two plays later Cedar Park's offense would strike again with a 71 yard touchdown run that could not be thwarted even with Lloyd Richardson's (23) diving effort. Cedar Park 14 – Klein Oak 0 – 8:44 until halftime. After a pooch kick by Cedar Park was fair caught on the Oak 33 yard line, Hales lifted the Oak faithful spirit by taking the handoff around the right side following a pancake down block by Derek Dahmann (59) and pulling blocks by Wilkerson and Justin Walters (63) 67 yards for Klein Oak's first score of the game. After Sven Beymann's (16) successful point after kick, the score was looking better at Cedar Park 14 – Oak 7 with 8:31 remaining in the quarter. Richardson brought down the Cedar Park return man cold on the 15 yard line, but the Timberwolves offense answered Hales TD with a 3 play scoring drive of their own punctuated by a 35 yard scamper over the right side. The score was now Cedar Park 21 – Klein Oak 7 with only 45 seconds off the clock for the last three touchdowns. Oak's offense still struggled to find its way on the next possession and Theiss booted a 43 yard punt that was also mishandled by the return man. The ball settled all the way back at the Cedar Park 27 where their offense took over. The Panther defense made some adjustments and began limiting the big plays by Cedar Park. Justin Sisson (2), Cameron Kilpatrick (25), Bart Dear (32) & Andrew Lester (54), all Klein Oak Seniors, made critical stops to limit Cedar Park yardage. The drive ended as Cedar Park attempted a 4th and one play that was snuffed out by Hunter and another senior, John Elijah (66) to give the Panthers the ball and a chance to score before halftime. A 2 yard pass from Cooley to Hales was followed by a 6

yard completion from Josh to Mike Rayburn (46). After a QB keeper for a first down, Cooley hit Elliott Lim (22) for 7 yards and DeSean made an acrobatic 16 yard reception along the right sideline. The drive bogged down at this point, but with time running out in the half, Beymann calmly booted a 36 yard field goal through the uprights with only 2 seconds remaining in the first half. Score at halftime – Cedar Park 21 - Klein Oak 10.

Third Quarter

Coach Smith and his staff must have made one heck of a halftime speech as well as making the proper adjustments because the Panthers looked like a different team in the second half. Beymann's second half kickoff went out of bounds and Cedar Park's offense went to work starting at their 30. Jay Newman (82) got into the fray with a stop of the running back and then Lester made one of the key plays of the game by forcing a fumble from the Timberwolve dive back. Thomas jumped on the pigskin to give Oak's offense a chance on the Cedar Park 35 yard line. The momentum had turned. After an 8 yard run by Hales and a QB sneak for a first down by Cooley, Lim would be interfered with deep in Cedar Park territory to give Oak the ball first and goal at the 7. A strong 4 yard run up the middle by Coburn was followed up by a three yard TD scamper by Cooley sprung by a great block by a pulling Dahmann. The 2-pt conversion failed to leave the score – Cedar Park 21 – Klein Oak 16 with 9:01 remaining in the 3rd quarter. Bell continued Oak's excellent kick coverage with a jarring tackle of the Cedar Park returner on their 26 yard line. Cedar Park would not give up however. After a couple of big runs, the Timberwolves pulled out a seldom used pass play for a 27 yard scoring strike to put Oak in the hole by a score of Cedar Park 28 – Oak 16 with 7:47 remaining in the 3rd. Klein Oak's offense, showing its composure answered back with a 7 play scoring drive that would take less than 3 minutes off the clock. The drive was highlighted by a 30 yard catch and run by Louie Black (11) and 2 passes from Cooley to Lim totaling 40 yards. Josh wound up the

drive with a 7 yard td run by diving for the pylon. Coburn showed his diversity with an excellent lead block. Beymann on for the successful PAT – Score Cedar Park 28 – Oak 23 – 5:09 remaining in the quarter. A good kickoff return by Cedar Park gave them excellent field position on their 46 yard line. Hunter added another tackle in the backfield on first down. Cedar Park would convert a first down through the air, but back to back tackles for loss by Mirenda and Hunter along with two illegal procedure penalties caused partially by the rowdy Klein Oak fans forced Cedar Park into a third and long situation. Sisson snuffed out the screen pass play to force Cedar Park to punt. Hales returned the punt 13 yards to the 17 yard line. Coburn started out with three hard fought yards up the middle. Cooley then hit Lim for another ten yard completion. Hales added a 12 yard run as time expired in the 3rd quarter. The score was still Cedar Park 28 – Klein Oak 23 with one quarter remaining in one of these fine teams' season.

Fourth Quarter

The drive that started at the end of the third continued in the fourth. If successful, this possession could go down in Klein Oak history as one of the most clutch drives ever. A completion to Hales for 21 yard line was followed by an 8 yard run also by DeSean. Cooley converted a key 3rd down using the ever reliable and safe QB sneak play behind big Adam Wright (62). Cooley would hit Black for 11 yards down to the Timberwolve 11 yard line. Hales completed this efficient and diverse scoring drive with an 11 yard scoring run behind blocks by Walters and Wilkerson. Cooley scored the 2 pt conversion using lead blocks by tight end Rayburn and linebacker turned fullback Mirenda. With 7:56 remaining in the contest Klein Oak took its first lead over Cedar Park – 31 – 28. The Klein Oak faithful hoped the defense could continue its excellent second half play to preserve the lead. After a deep Beymann kickoff, sophomore Brian Corcoran (30) and freshman Kilraine Jones (85) took down the return man in his tracks on the Cedar Park 15.

Strong play by Oak's defensive line of Newman, Lester, Elijah, and Hunter limited Cedar Park to one first down on this drive and forced them to punt. Oak took over on its 32 yard line with 5:16 remaining in the game. After a 3rd down pass to Hales left the Panthers one yard short of the first down line, Coach Smith was left with a tough decision. Go for it and basically end the game at this point, or take the more safe route and punt the ball away with confidence the defense can hold the lead. After a time out, the decision was made to punt and Theiss' 49 yard spiral that went out of bounds on the 15 made the coach's decision look divinely inspired. Cedar Park showed their character as they would not give up. Thomas brought down the receiver after a screen pass. Kilpatrick broke up another screen pass attempt. After a first down completion, Hunter made a huge play by stripping the Cedar Park runner of the ball allowing Mayweather to recover and give Oak the ball with 1:29 remaining. Because of the time out situation, the Panthers were not in position to just take a knee. The first play was a nice 9 yard run by Cooley, but it was called back. The second play would prove that victory was not going to come without some more tests for this football team. The snap was mishandled and Cedar Park recovered on their 46 yard line. A touchdown would send the Panthers on a long bus drive home, a field goal would send the game to overtime. 25 rushing yards and a personal foul later, Cedar Park was looking good on the Panther 17. This is when the defense showed what they were made of. A big play in the backfield by Mirenda, Newman, Hunter, and receiver turned defensive back Hales backed Cedar Park to the 24. After a short run snuffed out by Dear, the crowd forced another illegal procedure call on Cedar Park. With time running out, Cedar Park was forced to attempt a 42 yard field goal to send the game into overtime. The kick had the distance, but as it sailed wide right of the goal posts, the Panther celebration began both on the sideline, and in the stands. One kneel down on offense would cause the time to run off the clock and the Klein Oak Panthers would move on to the third round of the 2006 5A State Playoffs with a 31 - 28 victory over the Cedar Park

Timberwolves.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (64 yds on 20 carries, 2 TDs, 13-17 passing, 151 yds), Hales (120 yds, 15 carries, 2 TD's, 5 receptions, 47 yds), Coburn (18 yds, 7 carries), Lim (5 receptions, 57 yds), Mayweather (2 carries, 15 yards) Black (2 receptions, 41 yds) & Rayburn (1 reception, 6 yds).

The defensive unit was led by Game MVP – Mark Hunter with 10 tackles, several for losses, and 2 caused fumbles. Lester & Dear added 9, Bell had 8, Newman & Thomas provided 7 stops (Thomas added a fumble recovery) , while Sisson, Elijah, & Richardson added 6 each. Mirenda had 5 tackles along with Mayweather who also recovered a key fumble. (2), Mayweather, & Richardson had 4 each. Another weapon that helped the defense was Theiss' 6 punts for a 37.2 yard average. The average was held down by the 3 punts that had to go into a stiff wind.

This year's version of the Klein Oak Panther Football Team finally proved that they belong in these 5A State Playoffs. Whether it was lethargy from the long bus drive, or just the wonderment of the whole playoff experience, the team did not perform up to snuff in the first half. Adjustments on defense to limit the big play in the second half, and the opening up of the offensive playbook in the second half left Cedar Park wondering what hit them, especially as they looked at that final scoreboard.

Congratulations to the Panther squad as well as to the fans and supporters who definitely played a huge role in this historic victory for the program. Next Up – Richardson Berkner – WACO HERE WE COME.

First it was Oakridge and the first ever Klein Oak Panther Football playoff victory.
Second it was Cedar Park and a win over a highly favored foe in its own back yard.

What was in store for the Panther faithful as they traveled to Waco, Texas on this sunny but cold December day for the Varsity Panthers' match-up against another highly touted opponent – the Richardson Berkner Rams? Another victory against a favored opponent was the result of a high powered diverse offensive display led by the team's star receiver and its capable backup quarterback and an opportunistic defense that knew when to step up and make the big play. This combination sent the Berkner Rams home with their heads down on the long drive back to the Dallas area after the Klein Oak Panthers Football Squad defeated them in an exciting contest – 35 – 28.

First Quarter

Many in the stands were wondering why after Klein Oak's captains won the opening toss, they elected to kickoff to Richardson. A perfectly executed pooch onside kick with coverage led by special teams mad-man Erich Cables (35) knocking the pigskin loose and DeSean Hales (3) recovering the ball proved that the coaches strategy was sound. In what might be considered the special team's play of the season, Coach Smith and his staff, along with deft execution by the players had set the tone and momentum for the rest of the game. Klein Oak belonged in this contest, and intended on seeing through with the job at hand. With the Rams still stunned by the onside kick, QB Josh Cooley (7) hit Hales on the first play for 33 yard reception down to the Berkner 1 yard line. After three unsuccessful QB sneaks, Hales was not denied the 2 yard touchdown behind a down block by tight end Mike Rayburn (46) and a kick out block by Louie Black (11). Sven Beymann (16) provided the extra point kick and Oak was up 7 – 0 only 2 minutes 20 seconds into the contest. Cables again was the first to the ball on the ensuing kickoff and forced the Berkner return man into a 5 yard loss. Berkner answered quickly after Jay Newman (82) and Cameron Kilpatrick (25) made the stop on first down. Second down would yield a perfectly executed 72 yard run on the triple option for the score. The score was knotted 7 – 7 with 8:38 remaining in the first quarter. After a touchback on the kickoff, the Panthers set up shop on the 20. Oak's offense showed its prowess as it rumbled down the field for a 12 play, 80 yard drive that was keyed by a nice 9 yard scamper by Chris Coburn (33) through a hole opened by a pancake by Adam Wright (62) and the passing of Cooley who connected on 3 passes on the drive. Two were to Hales for 46 yards, and one was a clutch 3rd down conversion to Elliott

Lim (22) for 13 yards. Coburn finished off the drive with a one yard dive play behind a block from Derek Dahmann (59). Beymann again completed the extra point which made the score Klein Oak 14 – Richardson Berkner 7 with 4:48 remaining in the quarter. Sophomore Kevin Williams (48) brought down the Ram runner on the next kickoff, but not until he had returned the ball to the 48 yard line. On the first play of this drive, defensive game MVP and Senior Captain Bart Dear (32) stopped the Berkner dive back in his tracks. Dear, Justin Sisson (2), and Lloyd Richardson (23) made several plays on this drive, but the Rams were not to be denied. Another excellent execution of the option play led them to their second score and the game was now tied 14 – 14 with 2:24 still remaining on the clock. Louie gave Oak good field position with a 12 yard kickoff return to the 36 yard line. Cooley wasted no time in moving the team downfield with a 19 yard pass to Lim. A 5 yard QB draw resulted in another first down. Josh did take a hard hit on the last play of the quarter and appeared a bit banged up. At the end of one stanza, the score was Klein Oak 14 – Richardson Berkner 14.

Second Quarter

The second quarter started with the Panthers facing 3rd and ten with backup QB Wes Theiss (4) on for the injured Cooley. Wes showed that all the preparation and work in practice paid off with a strike to Black on the first play for 28 yards and a first down. Two plays later, Theiss hit DeSean for a 25 yard scoring strike. Beymann again fired his kick accurately to make the score Klein Oak 21 – Richardson Berkner 14 with 10:31 remaining in the half. Sven decided he would take matters into his own feet and booted the kickoff out of the end zone for a touchback. A strong defensive effort led by Dear, Chase Thomas (34) and Jeremy Mayweather (5) would force the Rams into the first punt of the game. Oak was again on offense at the 20 yard line. Coach Poth and Coach Large decided to mix it up with the running attack on this drive. Ossam Cook (14) darted through a hole opened by Rayburn and Justin Walters (63) for 11 yards. Cooley back in the

game hit Black for three yards and then Cook added another 15 yard gain off right tackle. All in all, Ossam accounted for 61 yards rushing on this drive, part of which behind a lead block by Max Wilkerson (60) that sent the defender flying. Hales again took the scoring honors on a 4 yard run behind Walters and Dahmann. Once again Beymann provided the accurate PAT and things were looking good with the Panthers up 28 – 14 with 2:18 remaining in the half. Berkner started on their 20 after another touchback kickoff. A few good runs that were ended by hard tackles by Lee Bell (37) and Alex Mirenda (24) moved the ball near midfield. Mark Hunter (81) decided to put an end to the drive by knocking the ball loose. Brian Corcoran (30) alertly recovered the fumble to give Oak the ball on its 46. The time is right for the trick play that's always worked on in practice, but seldom utilized in a game. QB Cooley pitches to Hales who pitches to Theiss (in at receiver), Wes throws a bomb to a wide open Louie for a 44 yard gain. Two plays later, the Rams intercept the ball in the end zone to damper some of the Oak enthusiasm. Most of the enthusiasm remained as the halftime score saw a Klein Oak 28 – 14 lead over the Berkner Rams.

Third Quarter

A two touchdown lead and the ball to start the 3rd quarter gave the Panthers confidence leaving the locker room after halftime. Black returned the second half kickoff 15 yards to the 28. The offense started out like it left off in the first half with Cook running for 15 yards on his first three carries. After a holding call pushed them back, a snap over Cooley's head would result in a 26 yard loss and another injury to the senior signal caller. Theiss came on for Oak's first punt of the game. His 31 yard kick ended with another special teams tackle by Cables. Berkner showed their character by marching down the field for the score despite many hard knocks by the Panther defense including a shot by Thomas that knocked the Rams player's helmet off near the goal line. A QB sneak ended the drive and made the score Klein Oak 21 – Richardson

Berkner – 14 with 6:04 remaining in the 3rd. Three carries by Cook on the Panthers next possession only netted 9 yards and brought on Theiss to punt. Hunter and Kilpatrick brought the Ram down on his 30 yard line. Dear and Thomas got back into the action. Mayweather snuffed out an end around play, and the defensive line led by Big Andrew Lester (54) and John Elijah (66) stuffed the run on third down. Unfortunately an offsides call gave Berkner a 4th down conversion. Mirenda and Bell met the Ram QB in the backfield forcing an incomplection and causing him to come up lame. The next play was a mishandled pitch by the Berkner runner that led to a huge scrum around midfield. Richardson came off the bottom of the pile with another Oak forced turnover. Theiss hit Hales for a quick 10 yard gain to bring the 3rd quarter to an end with Oak still on top of Berkner 28 – 21.

Fourth Quarter

Fireworks again went off on the first play of the final frame as Wes lofted a volley down the left sideline and DeSean made an acrobatic catch on the way to a 45 yard TD, his 4th of the game. Beymann's kick was good giving Oak the advantage – 35 – 21 with only one play gone in the 4th. Mayweather brought down the return man in his tracks on the 31 yard line. Stops by Dear, Newman, Mirenda, Thomas and Bell seemed to keep Berkner in check until their backup QB (the starting running back) made an excellent fake on the dive play and scampered 33 yards down the right sideline to keep the game close with the score now Klein Oak 35 – Richardson Berkner 28 with 9:28 remaining in the game. Hales made Berkner pay for the squib kickoff as he returned it 28 yards to the Oak 40. DeSean ran for 5 yards and Theiss added 9 behind Wilkerson. The junior signal caller then hit Lim for a first down. After an 8 yard run by Ossam, the Ram defense finally got to Theiss for a sack. Wes put his coffin corner kick out at the 10 yard line giving Berkner one last shot with 90 yards to paydirt and 4:20 remaining to get there. After a dive stuffed by Lester and Hunter, Berkner went to the air and hit the tight end

wide open over the right side of the Panther defense. The big receiver rumbled down the sideline carrying the ball like a loaf of bread. Thomas made him pay for not securing the ball and scared the loaf out of his hands and into the awaiting arms of the ever opportunistic Mayweather. Oak had the ball at midfield with time running out and the Region Finals in their sites. Hales carried for 28 yards on two carries, the second with help from Dahmann and Rayburn. Senior Coburn added 18 yards on three carries, and Cook got one last first down on a 6 yard run over the right side. The Rams could do nothing but watch as the time ran off the clock on the game and their season. Final Score – Klein Oak 35 – Richardson Berkner 28.

Game Summary

Offensive statistical leaders for the game were as follows: Cooley (6-10 passing, 116 yds), Hales (34 yds, 9 carries, 6 receptions, 159 yds, 4 TD's), Offensive MVP Theiss (9 yds, 4 carries, 6-6 passing, 157 yards, 2 TD's), Cook (105 yards, 17 carries), Coburn (28 yds, 6 carries), Lim (3 receptions, 39 yds), & Black (3 receptions, 75 yds).

The defensive unit was led by Game MVP – Dear with 15 tackles that constantly frustrated the Ram option offense. Hunter & Newman led the linemen with 8 tackles while Thomas led the D-Backs with 10. Fumbles were caused by Cables, Thomas, and Hunter and recovered by Hales, Mayweather, Richardson and Corcoran. Other leading tacklers were Elijah and Sisson with 6 each

The confidence is growing. The Klein Oak Panthers are proving that they can hang and outlast the best in the 5A State Playoffs. Today's performance was a victory on the scoreboard as well as in all three phases of the game – offense, defense, and special teams. Next Up – Garland Owls – ELITE 8 – REGION FINALS.

The first successful playoff run in Klein Oak history ended four weeks into the extended season with only sixteen 5A teams left out of the entire state. All of the Klein schools were home watching while the Panthers continued their roll through the likes of Oakridge, Cedar Park and Richardson Berkner. The Panthers were picked as the underdog in all of their games by writers and webmasters who thought this was a team with only one star. They neglected to discover the heart and soul of a senior laden team with more pride than statistics and more toughness than our opponents could believe.

Garland came to Houston with a team equally laden with talent and desire, and with both a running back that had already committed to the University of Texas and a defensive line that could shut down most teams. The Owls only managed 10 points on the Panthers in the first half and found themselves trailing our Panthers 14 to 10 courtesy of a seven yard TD run by Ossam Cook and an absolutely phenomenal effort by DeSean Hales for a 93 yard punt return. Garland controlled the ball for most of the half and gave us very little room to muster a running game. However, the improbable existed at the half with the good guys leading. Our defense, a group that never received the recognition they deserved, especially during the playoff run, fought a larger and deeper offensive team who had shown that no team they had played recently could stop them from imposing their will. Andrew Lester, double teamed on most plays, made his presence felt on every series. Bart Dear was a consistent force in the middle, Alex Miranda ran down numerous wide attempts, Mark Hunter fought the hard fight every play and Jay Newman dropped one Owl runner for a 28 yard loss. By the end of the first half I believe that there was some doubt in Garland's mind about the outcome. We won the first half by never quitting on any play and taking advantage of our opportunities. Garland won the second half and the game by eventually wearing us down and allowing their feature players to produce as they have all season. #9 for Garland played as he appeared, a full grown man with speed and power. As hard as our defense played, so did our offense. Josh Cooley, returning from an injury the week before, gutted up and played a very solid game taking some huge hits when he kept the ball. DeSean Hales, Chris Coburn and Ossam Cook could never really get any momentum going in the running game. Cook had the 7 yard TD run and Coburn had the longest run of the day on a

17 yard effort.

As Don Porter did so well last year with his final game wrap up, I feel the important thing to take away from this season is the recognition of the character and spirit of these young men. All of these guys will remember being part of a group that won, and won convincingly. Senior Josh Cooley evolved into a very good quarterback whose passing abilities became formidable beginning with the playoff run, and this was a big part of our success. Junior DeSean Hales has shown that he can operate in space better than just about anybody as he made defender after defender miss him just to see him take it the length of the field, often. Senior Chris Coburn, called on to block players, often 80 to 100 pounds heavier, did so with total commitment and garnered 500+ yards when handed the ball. Seniors Louie Black and Elliott Lim became an incredible receiver duo. When the ball was thrown to either, it was a completion and typically happened at a critical time of the game. Backup quarterback and frequent receiver, Wes Theiss, proved a valuable commodity, often as a receiver, but more importantly for one playoff game while standing in for Cooley against Berkner and completing six out of six passes for a whole lot of yards. Junior Mike Rayburn was a solid slot receiver when called on helped the potent ground attack when blocking from the tight end position. Seniors Chase Beck and Joel Segovia rounded out a receiving corps that was as talented as any in the area. Sophomore running back Ossam Cook showed he should be a force in the next two years and another sophomore, John Michael Cook proved that depth will not be a problem at this position in the future. This brings us to the unsung heroes of the offense, the O-Line. No matter what your talent level, you have to have a group of guys that know they will not get the glory or the accolades but are willing to commit their entire well being to knocking the stuffing out of their opponent in order for the team to win. The job is dirty, tiresome, frustrating and hard. Seniors Justin Walters and Adam Wright got some All-State honors for all of their hard work and deservedly so. Each one brought an intensity on

each play that was not always visible to the fans, but showed through on game films. Senior John Elijah, when not busting his tail on the defensive line, manned up as a two way player and played his heart out every game providing additional O-Line support. Senior Max Wilkerson played way above his size with determination and grit; I'd go to war with this guy anytime. Senior Derek Dahmann was always involved in the battles and was responsible for numerous clearing blocks as were seniors Sedale Dunlap and sophomore Clint Naron when called upon. Backing up these guys were seniors Robert Cook & Jose Garza along with junior Tyler Condiff. These players were ready when called on during games, but also put in just as much hard work in practice as the starters. Ultimately when the offense is to be successful you must have a reliable kicker and Oak had one of the most reliable in senior Sven Beymann. Beymann's field goal range increased from his junior to senior year and his consistency was a key component to our record. Senior Joel Eichler backed up Sven and showed his strong leg when the opportunity arose. Wes Theiss was an all-district selection as punter in one of his many roles. Lastly on offense are the special teams, typically manned by most of the offensive players and in our case led by the most dangerous return fellow in North Houston, DeSean Hales. Hales' abilities to deny tacklers a direct hit and his determination to shed tacklers allowed us wonderful field position all season. I am certain his future will continue after next year. Seniors Greg Neal and Rodell Davis along with Juniors Erich Cables, Andrew Holley and Sam Cotto were known for making the big hits on defensive special teams.

Our defense was led by the intensity and perseverance of the D-Line. Like the O-Line, there is a lack of recognition, but the game hinges on just how hard this group is committed to play. Senior Andrew Lester defined how a d-lineman is supposed to play. Go 110% on one play, catch your breath, wipe off the blood and then do it again. Senior Jay Newman lined up on the outside and normally turned on the jets each play putting incredible heat on his

opponent. Junior Mark Hunter was a truly consistent force and frequently came up with the key stop at a critical time of the game. Senior John Elijah, when not catching his breath from playing offense, would provide an additional big presence and played hard all the time. Seniors Casey Baltzell, Steven McCampbell, and Drew Blomstrom, junior Kenneth Hunter, and sophomore Cody Davis all made big plays when giving the starters a breather. Backing up the D-Line comes the second line of defense, the linebackers, which were led by Senior Captain and Houston Touchdown Club Academic Player of the Year - Bart Dear. A linebacker can never believe he is beaten on a play and must follow it to the absolute end. Just like Dear comes junior Alex Mirenda whose speed and never quit attitude allowed him to make tackles that both killed drives and saved games. This group was critical to our success and was manned by a "host of Panthers", just like how tackling was done by them, as a group. Senior Justin Besier played like a man until an injury ended his career.

Senior Lee Bell and junior Logan Studdert also played key roles for this unit. Defensive backs are the last line of defense and we used a whole lot of folks here. Junior Chase Thomas played inspired football all year as a safety and was one of the most reliable and consistent forces. Seniors Elliott Lim and Louie Black, typically receivers, came in for spot duty when needed. Senior Cameron Kilpatrick was noted as laying on some truly big licks as was senior Lloyd Richardson, who would sometimes get banged up but always come back to play later. Senior Justin Sisson played an integral role and was responsible for some key tackles behind the line. Senior Ryan Korenek had his name called frequently and was an important presence often. Junior Scott Arthur provided outstanding pass defense, especially during the playoff run. Arthur may have been one of the toughest tacklers in our secondary. Junior Colton Morgan acquitted himself well when called on and will be called on more next year. Oak is blessed to have some underclassmen in this area as well. Sophomore Jeremy Mayweather, besides being a solid kick returner, played solidly as well in the secondary and freshman Andy Wilson showed often

why he was on the varsity as a freshman. I will remember several other players, who though they did not get a great deal of playing time, were there everyday for practice and made us a better team for their effort. To all the Steven McCampbell's and Marlin Halstead's of the world, remember the good times and take that perseverance with you for the rest of your life.

To all of the 31 seniors of this team: Casey Baltzell, Chase Beck, Lee Bell, Justin Besier, Sven Beymann, Louie Black, Drew Blomstrom, Chris Coburn, Robert Cook, Josh Cooley, Derek Dahmann, Rodell Davis, Bart Dear, Sedale Dunlap, Joel Eichler, John Elijah, Jose Garza, Marlin Halstead, Cameron Kilpatrick, Ryan Korenek, Andrew Lester, Elliott Lim, Steve McCampbell, Greg Neal, Jay Newman, Lloyd Richardson, Joel Segovia, Justin Jisson, Justin Walters, Max Wilkerson, and Adam Wright:
Congratulations on a wonderful and magical season. You have gone where no Klein Oak team has ever been. To all of the Coaches, juniors, sophomores and freshmen, congratulations as well and good luck next year.