

Katy finishes regular season as fifth ranked team in state

BY TYLER TYRE
SPORTS EDITOR

Katy finished the regular season as the fifth ranked team in Texas in Dave Campbell Texas Football's final rankings of the year.

The Tigers finished off their district schedule with a dominant 49-7 win over Taylor to go to 10-0 on the season and 8-0 in District 19-6A play.

The Tigers have been ranked fifth throughout the season and stayed that way, as each of the top four teams also ended their regular seasons with wins.

Soutlake Carroll finished fourth, while Duncanville finished third, North Shore finished second and Westlake finished first.

Houston ranked teams included North Shore, Westfield, Atascocita, Shadow Creek and New Caney. Katy was the only Katy ISD team ranked.



Katy's Seth Davis breaks upfield during Friday's game between Katy and Cinco Ranch at Rhodes Stadium.

Table with 5 columns: Rank, School, (Record), Week 3, Prv rank. It lists the top 25 teams in Class 6A, with Katy ranked 5th.

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they lost in the Regional Semifinals to Cinco Ranch.

All of that was on the Falcons' minds on Tuesday, as they wanted to avenge last year's loss Ridge Point and the loss to Cinco Ranch at Wheeler all with a chance at a regional tournament berth on the line.

All of the Falcons' (39-3) motivation showed up, as they took out Ridge Point (39-8) in three sets; 26-24, 25-22, 25-23, showcasing clutch play and offensive firepower en rout to the sweep.

"There was something about coming back here that was just even more motivating or them," said Tompkins head coach Allison Merrell. "We wanted to be in this building and avenge 2017. We talked about it, we talked about making history here, avenging those losses and I told them, 'go out and win it in three.' I didn't know if that was possible because Ridge Point is amazing, but man, they just played good tonight"

The first set didn't start like Tompkins wanted, as it was tight but Ridge Point started to build a lead, as the set got further in, it looked like the Panthers were going to pull away, as they held leads of 22-16 and 23-17, but Tompkins was not about to give up on any set, and came back to win nine of the next 10 points, taking the win and gaining a big advantage heading into the second set.

"I told them in that first set when they went down that 'you have to play for this set, you can't give this set up,'" Merrell said. "They immediately just kicked into a whole different gear after that and showed what

their fight was about. It was amazing to see them do that."

Tompkins fell behind in the second set early, but again showed their grit by coming back from a six-point deficit to take a late lead and eventually seal the set.

"I think we were just really calm and confident about our ability, even when we were down that didn't go away," said senior outside hitter Cindy Tchouangwa. "We all have each-others back, when we're down we don't go after one another, we're good teammates and that's how we're able to just keep our cool in those situations."

Tompkins was done with the comebacks in the third set, the Falcons came out and built a big lead, going up by more than five with just a few points remaining, but Ridge Point trimmed things to 24-23 before Tompkins closed things out and secure the sweep.

For the Falcons, it's the first time in school history they have advanced to the regional tournament, and they are excited about having the chance to continue their run.

"It's just amazing," said sophomore libero Brooklynn Merrell. "Making history is what we wanted to do this year, so to be here and have accomplished that is a really good feeling."

But just because Tompkins has made history doesn't mean the team is satisfied — the Falcons still feel like there is more they can do. They have unfinished business with their next opponent, Clear Springs, which they will play 5 p.m. Friday at Delmar Fieldhouse, as



TYLER TYRE

Callie Funk makes a kill attempt during Tuesday's match between Tompkins and Ridge Point at Wheeler Field House.

the Chargers beat Tompkins in five sets when they met earlier this season.

"We're going to celebrate tonight, but after that it's going to be a lot of film prep. We played Clear Springs early on in the year and

they're a really tough team," Merrell said. "But we have a learning group here and I know they will be ready for the challenge and will be breaking down film and learning what they need to do."

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