

BREAK OUT

Senior running back becomes leading rusher this season, has career-high 338 yards in Westwood win

BY DESTINY DE LA PAZ
Rumbler Staffer

Seventeen yards. Senior Marquis Simmons is a measly 17 yards from a rushing milestone: 1,000 yards in a season. Halfway through the season, the running back already had 858 rushing yards in five games. At Round Rock Friday, he tacked on another 125 yards for a current total of 983 rushing yards.

"I want to at least try to rush for 1,500 yards," Simmons said. "If that's even possible, you know. It is possible because I have one of the best lines in the state of Texas and I'm going to follow behind them all the way to the end zone."

Simmons has reached the end zone 10 times this season, more than any other player on the roster. In five of his six games, he's broken away for explosive runs, including 25-, 45- and 56-yard touchdowns.

As a sophomore, he played on junior varsity and moved up to varsity his junior year. He rushed for 322 yards the 2014 season and also played backup quarterback to starter Billy McCrary. But Simmons hit his stride senior year, rushing for more than 100 yards in four games and averaging 6.3 yards per carry.

VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Overall: 2-4 District: 1-2

Aug. 28	Brennan	31-13 L
Sept. 4	Cedar Park	42-17 L
Sept. 11	Leander	38-24 W
Sept. 18	Pflugerville	33-13 L
Sept. 25	Westwood	52-28 W
Oct. 3	Bye Week	
Oct. 9	Round Rock	60-15 L
Oct. 15	McNeil	7 p.m.
Oct. 23	Cedar Ridge	7 p.m.
Oct. 29	Stony Point	7 p.m.
Nov. 6	Hendrickson	7 p.m.

*Bold indicates home game

"It's improved because he's gotten to be on the field a lot more," head coach Josh Mann said. "We celebrate things out of him when he was on the JV level, some great things out of him last year, and some roles that he played first of district. He's embraced the role of being a running back and in each game you can tell he's just getting better by seeing the holes in his vision."

After amassing 270 yards on

32 carries and scoring three touchdowns in the Leander win, Simmons won three player of the week awards. Fox 7, Bush's Chicken iHSFAN and Friday Night Fanstand Xceleration Sports Performance Labs all named him Player of the Week in week three.

Simmons rushed for a career-high 338 yards and five touchdowns in the Westwood win. He averaged 12.1 yards a carry in the 52-28 win, almost double his season average. The senior credits the offensive line for getting the blocks that paved his way to open field.

"They help me tremendously, I can't shout them out enough, they are the best people in the world," Simmons said. "They were one of the main reasons why I came to score five touchdowns in the game."

The senior has relished taking a leadership role on the team.

"The main thing that is different to me is being a senior and being one of those guys who kind of has to lead the team and tell the underclassmen, what we're supposed to be doing and how it's supposed to be done," Simmons said.

With four games left, the senior running back has his eyes set on more yards, more touchdown and more wins. And he won't for a second forget to credit his teammates.

"Marquis brings, besides his hard work and toughness, he brings a lot of humbleness," Mann said. "He gives a lot of the credit to the other people. He takes the beat on his chest a lot and he's just a really good leader."

RUNNING MAN

In the Westwood game, senior Marquis Simmons had 28 carries for 338 yards. The senior is the leading rusher for the Raiders this season and has won three Player of the Week awards.



photo by Janice McLaughlin



photo by Dylan McElvain

DOUBLE THE FUN Senior Styliani Espinosa and sophomore Sam Wilhite celebrate a point during the Pflugerville semifinal.

Tennis advances to semifinals in district tourney

BY NALANI NUYLAN
Rumbler Staffer

Varsity tennis advanced to the semifinals of district, Oct. 6.

"I was worried we wouldn't be able to make it this year," junior Sara Basinger said. "But in the end, I felt confident in my teammates."

The team traveled to Hendrickson for the first round, Oct. 5. Mixed doubles team of sophomore Sam Wilhite and senior Styliani Espinosa won a crucial game against the Hawks in a super tie breaker 10-3.

"It felt good to take our revenge," Wilhite said. "Coach [Basset] knew what he was doing when he assigned me with Espinosa for doubles."

The team won the match 10-4, with Basinger clinching the final match. The junior won in straight sets, 6-0, 6-4.

The first round win was rewarding for the team because they lost a close match to Hendrickson 10-9 at home less than two weeks earlier, Friday Sept. 25.

"It felt so good," Espinosa said. "They were even on our own court a few weeks ago. It felt pretty good to win."

With the win, the team moved on to the semifinals at Pflugerville. They lost to the Panthers 10-4, ending their district tournament run.

"It didn't feel too bad," Espinosa said. "We were never disappointed. We were sad we had to leave early, but the team will meet with them next year."

The team wraps their fall season with a tournament at Fredericksburg, Nov. 3.

Golf teams successful at first tournaments

BY LEAH LOPEZ
Rumbler Staffer

When sophomore Katie Jones headed to the first tee at Plum Creek last Tuesday, she wasn't worried about the other players on the course. She was only concerned about herself. That strategy paid off when she finished fifth at the Plum Creek tournament, Oct. 6.

"I had a lot of struggles, but for the most part I did pretty well," Jones said. "In golf the only person you are trying to beat is yourself, so it worked out pretty well."

Jones led the girls, shooting a round of 84. The team, which shot a 429, has two more tournaments this fall. They'll travel to the Stonetree Golf Club in Killeen, Nov. 9 and

Star Ranch in Hutto, Nov. 16.

"I'm proud of the team because we work hard and get along well," Jones said. "We have all become really good friends as well."

The varsity boys opened the season with a third place finish at the Stony Point Invitational, Sept. 29. At Teravista in Round Rock, they set a new school record with a team score of 319. Junior Jack Barnes and senior Colin Massey led the team with rounds of 77.

"An increase in competition in the team has encouraged us to perfect our game," Barnes said. "I put in plenty of hours with an instructor over the summer."

A day earlier, the junior varsity team finished sixth out of 19 teams at the Westlake JV tournament. They also set a record with

a score of 332, 18 strokes below the previous one. Junior Ryder Davis led the team with a 79.

"The summer work paid off, helping to break the JV record," Davis said. "It feels good to contribute and I personally hope to score lower than an 80 for the next tournament."

The varsity boys finished fifth at Delaware Springs in Burnet Oct. 9-10, breaking the school record set two weeks early. JV's next tournament is at Forest Creek in Round Rock, Oct. 21.

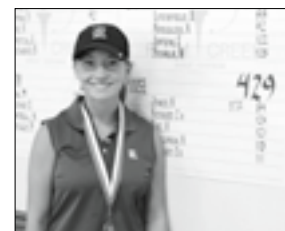


photo by Mike Hilsabeck

Katie Jones was fifth at Plum Creek.