

BREAK OUT

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

role

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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