

Junior running back Byron Holmes having season to remember for Hawks

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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CARROLLTON - Through the first three games of the football season for the Carrollton Hawks, Byron Holmes wasn't a huge impact at running back. He had 127 yards on 38 carries and four rushing touchdowns.

"Coach likes to run the ball in order to open up passing lanes," Holmes said. You just gotta be patient.

However, Week Four against Carrollton's rivals, Greenfield-Northwestern, Holmes had his coming out party. He rushed for 139 yards, which was more than his combined total coming into the game and scored two touchdowns, including a 55-yard run that was the first of six for the Hawks in a 39-0 shutout. Holmes and Carrollton haven't looked back since.

"Byron is the most explosive back in the conference," Head coach Nick Flowers said. "For not a real big kid he plays physical, and we don't give him probably enough carries. He's smart and follows blocks well. The sky's the limit for him."

Holmes stands at five-feet, six-inches and has rushed for 642 yards on 103 carries and gains an average of 6.2 yards per carry. He leads the entire WIVC with 14 rushing touchdowns and 118 points going into Week Nine. Those are impressive numbers for a running back in a spread offense.

"It's nice knowing that we can use the run game too and not just pass the ball," Holmes said with a laugh.

On defense, Holmes has been a stud. He's collected 113 total tackles at outside linebacker. Additionally, he has returned an interception for a touchdown and also scored on a 70-yard kick return on special teams. When he's not returning kicks on special teams he's the punter, and for a little while Holmes was the kicker, but Garrett Settles has overtaken him there.

Last week against Routt, Holmes rushed for 115 yards, four touchdowns and found the end zone a total of five times with that pick six.

"I didn't realize until after the game that he had five. It would've been nice if he picked one more up, but that's the way it goes," Flowers jokingly said.

Overall he's arguably been the most productive player not only in the WIVC but the entire Riverbender area.

"He's definitely a workhorse for us," Flowers said. "He's getting better and better and plays physical. It doesn't bother me to give him the ball three or four times in a row because he's going to run hard."

For all of his accomplishments, Holmes is only a junior, but also a team captain and has been a big reason why Carrollton has one of the best offenses in Class 1A and 8-0.

"He was voted captain for a reason, he's a leader," Flowers said. "Most of his leading is done by example."

