THOMASVILLE 'RUNS OUT OF GAS'

Late TD's Pace Valdosta, 35-21

By WEDNELL TIDWELL

VALDOSTA — "I tried to tell everyone back when we entered this league that we were going to be tough, but nobody listened.

This year, I told everyone that Thomasville is going to be no pushover — they saw it for themselves tonight."

A tired, but delighted Wright Bazemore sat in his tiny office last night looking back over the season opener in which his Valdosta Wildcats exploded for three touchdowns in the last seven minutes to take a 35-21 victory over Illegiot foe Thomasville.

It was one of the few times in history that his 'Cats had had to make a come-from-behind effort.

"WE'RE JUST fortunate that we've got the kind of boys that have what it takes inside not to give up when we're down," the five-time Georgia High School Coach of the Year said. "Thomasville came well prepared. Jim Hughes is doing a great job. The Bulldogs didn't enter this league as anybody's pushovers."

For three and a half quarters, it looked as if Thomasville wasn't going to be anybody's loser either, as the Bulldogs sat on a 21-14 lead.

But late in the fourth period, Valdosta boomed three touchdowns within six and a half minutes of each other against a team of Bulldogs that "had just run out of gas."

"We had four or five players who played most of the game on offense and defense," offense coach Juby Shiver said. "Valdosta didn't have a single player going both ways. By the middle of the fourth quarter, our boys just ran out of gas."

Thomasville may have lost more than the game last night. Injuries put question marks at several key positions.

YARDSTICK

	Thomasville	Valdosta
First Downs	8	13
Yards Rushing	62	193
Yards Passing	31	164
Total Offense	93	357
Passes	2-7	12-21
Passes Int. By	0	0
Fumbles Lost	4	2
Punts	8-38.5	4-33.5
Penalties	4-25	1-5
Thomasville	7 7 7 0—21	
Valdosta	7 7 0 21—35	

Three-year starter William Ponder's knee injury is probably the most serious. Thomasville head coach Jim Hughes is waiting further tests to determine the exact nature of the injury.

LINEBACKERS Richard Hackney and Joe Peeples both received ankle injuries during the game, which may slow them through practice this week for another tough Region foe, Tift County.

Although Valdosta dominated last night's contest statistically, Thomasville did give the Wildcats a few uncertain moments.

After all, it was the first time in three years that Valdosta had been behind and it was the first time since 1961 that Thomasville had led the 'Cats.

However, 1961 was the last time that the Bulldogs had five touchdowns scored against them. (In 1961, Dicky Thompson's freshman year, Thomasville lost to Valdosta, 33-8, and Moultrie, 23-6).

Thomasville took the lead in last night's game twice, once after trailing by seven points.

The Bulldogs jumped into an early lead when Valdosta's Dan Johnson fumbled a punt four yards away from his goal line.

VALDOSTA ROARED back with a 56-yard scoring drive and a 55-yard scoring drive to take the lead 14-7 in the early moments of the second quarter.

With 4:41 remaining in the half, 146-pound Johnny Williams streaked 76 yards with a punt return to tie the game 14-14.

The Bulldogs put together its only drive in the third quarter — 37 yards in five plays.

Bill Stubbs made a diving catch on a 19-yard David Lamb pass, 8½ yards deep in the endzone, to put Thomasville out in front 21-14.

The Bulldogs managed to keep the ball controlled until Valdosta drove 86 yards in 19 plays — a drive that lasts from 2:17 in the third quarter to 6:55 in the fourth.

A four-yard quick pass from Stan Bounds to Roger Rome, tied the game 21-21.

SECONDS LATER Valdosta threatened again, but failed to score when a 65-yard pass from Bounds to Rome was nullified when Rome fumbled the football through the endzone.

But less than two minutes later, Bounds pitched to Darrell Branam who tossed a 66-yard bomb to Johnson.

Johnson, never breaking stride, scored Valdosta's fourth TD, to push the 'Cats in front, 28-21, with 2:17 left.

Two plays later, a Thomasville fumble set Valdosta up at the 31. Four running plays later, Willie Anderson blasted across from five yards out to end the scoring, 35-21.

Thomasville takes on 0-1 mark into next Friday night's home opener with Tift County.

* * *

Thomasville — Lamb one-yard run (Hatcher kick).
Valdosta—Anderson three-yard run (Bazemore kick).
Valdosta—Johnson seven-yard pass from Bounds (Bazemore kick).
Thomasville—J. Williams 75-yard punt return (Hatcher kick).
Thomasville — Stubbs 19-yard pass from Lamb (Hatcher kick).
Valdosta—L. Rome four-yard pass from Bounds (Bazemore kick).
Valdosta — Johnson 56-yard halfback pass from Branam (Bazemore kick).
Valdosta — Anderson five-yard run (Bazemore kick).

Staff Photo—Jack Kelly

Thomasville Quarterback David Lamb Dashes For Open Spaces As Valdosta Defenders Pursue

Staff Photo—Jack Kelly

Wildcats' Darrell Branom (12) Looks For Opening As Linemen Attempt To Clear Way

Politics Take Back Seat As 'Cats Use Nine Lives

By FRANK VEALE JR.

If the Thomasville Bulldogs were running for office Wednesday in the primary, they would win by a landslide and scathack Johnny Williams would be our next governor-in-charge of delivering the goods.

Lt. Gov. George T. Smith showed up at the annual head-knocking at Cleveland Field but politics took a seat to the rear of the bus last night.

A Thomasville team with a heart bigger than Cleveland Field lost a game but won the ardent admiration of Valdostans and homefolks alike.

U.S. 84 was clogged with bumper to bumper traffic of fans heading to Death Valley from Thomasville and into the field they poured in a steady stream which continued even after the playing of the Star Spangled Banner.

It was a star-spangled game with fireworks from football spectators perhaps never before logged on a high school gridiron opening game.

Candidates for state, county and local offices forgot politics for the night as they joined the throng in cheering.

Beneath the dazzling lights a shirt-sleeved crowd of avid boosters and a glittering array of Georgia peaches threw total lung power into support of the mauling Bulldogs.

Red and Black were the official colors of the day and thousands of fans never left their seats even for a Coke.

It was that tense, that exciting, that much of a cliff hanger for both Thomasville and Valdosta.

Everybody on the field and in the stands tried to get in on the act.

When the Bulldogs sported ahead and were looking good, thunder came rolling over the stands in a crescendo of muted noise as thousands of pairs of feet stomped out the roar of approval for the team and the coaches.

Thomasville and Valdosta fans alike will etch this one in memory:

The fabulous sprinting Johnnie Williams running so fast his feet seemed to leave the ground, dancing and twisting his way into the end zone.

The line drive booting of Joe Peeples, putting the 'Cats deep in a hole time after time with out of bounds corner punts.

The steady quarterbacking of David Lamb and his touchdown toss.

These are moments to remember. But above it all, the glory of a great game descends on the team and every coach upon the shoulders of every boy at Thomasville High.

The stars shone brightly — but the team and the Bulldogs' team shone ever brighter in that galaxy of stars on this night of nights.

And there was only a tiny bit of remorse in the minds of Thomasville's traveling band as they walked away in final defeat.

Remorseful because at one time, and then again and again and again, "We had it. We had them beat. We had this game all the way."

It was nip and tuck with a lot of luck.

And the 'Cats had to use all of their nine lives.

Grrrrrrrrrr.

Carl Sanders ought to be governor again . . .

because of his concern for the future of our young people and their education. One of the most pleasing things I heard him commit himself to— is the fact that he will rid the state of "campus dissenters." He will listen to their words but will not tolerate violence.

Mrs. J. D. Mathews

Thomas County Sanders for Governor Committee

(Paid Political Advertisement)

LACK OF DEPTH HURTS THS

First AAA Game Gives 'Cats Scare

By WENDELL TIDWELL

VALDOSTA — For folks in South Georgia, about 50 per cent of football is going to the Friday night games during the fall and the other 50 per cent is spinning tales from memories of past seasons, great plays or players or the championships that might have been.

Some day when the 1970 Thomasville Bulldogs are looking back to their good old days and time has worn away the agony of last night's defeat at the hands of always-powerful Valdosta, they will have some pretty fond memories of their first game in AAA.

With a brand-new head coach and playing their first game as members of Region 1-AAA, the Bulldogs gave Valdosta boosters a few scares that they haven't had to deal with in many years.

It's certainly been quite a while since Valdosta fans have found themselves in the fourth quarter of an opening game, standing silent and tense while their rank in the Region was being determined by a mere measurement for a first down.

But, there they were, all 8,000 of them, breathlessly waiting as the "chain crew" moved onto the field to measure a fourth down. Time was ticking away with five minutes until ten last night and then boom, boom, boom!

Valdosta completed their 19-play drive which had eaten up eight minutes on the clock and almost as if driven by some super-human force, blasted into the Thomasville end zone twice more to win, 35-21.

It was a 66-yard halfback pass from Darrell Branam to Dan Johnson carefully placed between two Thomasville defenders that finally put the 'Dogs away at ten minutes after ten.

One of those tired defenders, Nick Kavouklis, had been playing both offense and defense, receiving punts and kick-offs since 8 o'clock.

Lack of depth hurt Thomasville against Valdosta, but lack of depth hurts everybody against Valdosta.

Last night was the first time a Thomasville team had led Valdosta in nine years. It was the first time any team had been ahead of the 'Cats since they started their 26-game winning streak three seasons ago.

ONLY CO-STATE Champion Athens has scored over 20 points against Valdosta in those games.

There are bright spots for the Bulldogs.

Thomasville's kicking game — including Joe Peeples' well-placed out-of-bounds punts and Randall Hatcher's both and true last night.

Thomasville had only one penalty last night — a five-yarder for off sides — the result of much practice and careful coaching.

The Bulling defense, although ripped by injuries last night, showed that it's not going to give up ground in any Region.

With added depth, Thomasville's defense could easily rank with best in the State

OFFENSE?

"You can't throw the ball when you're backed up around your own 25," said coach Juby Shiver last night. "When we got some room, we opened up. But it just doesn't pay to throw when the score's tight and we've got no room."

Thomasville ran 74 plays from scrimmage last night to Valdosta's 64. Quarterback David

Bulldogs B Team Takes On Tift

The Thomasville High B team Bulldogs open their season

Patten Slates 2 Big Races

A special weekend of late model car racing is planned at Patten Speedway.

First is the regular race tonight, featuring a match race, two heats and a 25-lap main event.

Monday will be a 100-lap Labor Day Special. The total purse will be $1,050 with $325 going to the winner.

The field will be limited to

DANCE
EVERY SATURDAY NITE
9:00 P. M. TILL
Music by
THE COUNTRY "D. Jr."
AMERICAN LEGION
POST 222
701 South Hansell St

DOG RACING

at Monticello, Fla.

HIT THE ROAD
-and HIT IT BIG!

RACING NIGHTLY AT 8
MATINEES EVERY SATURDAY AT 2