

Valdosta humbles Bearcats, 42-0

by Joe Crine

Quarterback John Lastinger, halfback Ernest King and fullback William Gaskin scored two touchdowns each Friday night in Valdosta to lead the Valdosta High School Wildcats, the number one ranked AAAA football team in the state of Georgia, to a 42-0 victory over the Bainbridge High School Bearcats.

The Wildcats and Bearcats battled more than 11 minutes into the first quarter before any points went up on the scoreboard. The first scoring drive of the night was ignited late in the first quarter when Walter Butler took a Bearcat punt at the Bainbridge 39-yard line and returned to all the way to the 24.

King picked up two to the 22 before halfback Irvin Roe took a pitchout from Lastinger, swept around left end and ran all the way to the six.

The Wildcats scored on a play off the right side on the next play as King took a pitchout from Lastinger and exploded into the end zone. David Reaves booted the extra point through the uprights and with 46 seconds remaining in the first quarter the Wildcats of Coach Nick Hyder had a 7-0 lead.

Bainbridge Moves

Coach Miller Shealy's Bearcats moved the ball well the first time they got their hands on it. Halfback Marcus Cox returned the opening kickoff from his own 15 to his own 32 to get the Bearcats' opening offensive thrust underway.

Two consecutive offside penalties against the Wildcat defense gave the Bearcats a first down at their own 42. Quarterback Kenneth Biggles ran an option play off the left side and got six to the 48. Close wedged out a one-yard gain to the 49 then caught a pass from quarterback Biggles for a first down at the Valdosta 37.

Fullback Willie Smiley blasted up the middle and got three to the 34. A pass from Biggles that was intended for halfback Lee Walker fell incomplete. Close lost four to the 38 on a reverse play. On fourth down, Walker tried to slant over the middle from his slotback position and pull in a pass from Biggles, but he was unable to contain the football and the Wildcats took over.

Valdosta Takes Control

Defensive back Thomas Howard intercepted a pass at his own nine-yard line in the second quarter to stop a Valdosta drive. Two plays later, however, Valdosta defensive end James Harris batted a Biggles pass into the air and intercepted it himself at the seven.

King got three to the four before Lastinger slanted off the left side on an option play to score. Reaves again added the extra point and with 6:26 remaining until halftime the Wildcats assumed a 14-0 lead.

Valdosta began their final touchdown drive of the first half from their own 46 following a Bainbridge punt. On the first play from scrimmage following the punt, Gaskin blasted up

Bainbridge	Valdosta
7	18
81	272
42	159
2:13	11:16
2	2
0	0
8:39.8	1:48
7:45	5:55

the middle and raced all the way to the Bainbridge 13. Gaskin again got the call on the next play and this time slanted off the right side for a six-yard gain to the seven.

The Bearcats rose up to stop Lastinger at the six for a one-yard gain on an option off the left side. Roe took a pitch from Lastinger and slanted off the right side for two to the five.

On fourth down, Gaskin got two for a first down at the three. Gaskin again got the call on the next play and blasted off the left side for the touchdown. Reaves' point after touchdown was good and with 2:41 remaining until halftime the Wildcats were on top 21-0.

The Bearcats threatened after taking the ensuing kickoff following Valdosta's final first-half touchdown, but an interception by defensive back Mark Cox at the five stopped their effort. Close returned the kickoff from his own four to his own 29. A penalty for taking too much time moved the ball back to the 25.

Biggles got six to the 31 on an option off the left side then completed a pass



Staff photos — Malloy Brambieri

The defensive unit of the Bainbridge High School Bearcats converged to stop a Valdosta High School Wildcat runner on this play Friday night. Making the tackle is defensive end Jimmy Smith (62). Assisting

him is defensive back Thomas Howard (45) and coming in from the rear is defensive end Carlton Stubbs (52).

to Walker for a first down at the Valdosta 41. Biggles took the ball himself again on an option around the right side and got seven to the 34. Close blasted up the middle for a 13-yard gain and a first down at the 21.

On the next play, however, Cox intercepted a Biggles pass at the five and returned it to his own 31 to stop the Bearcat drive.

Second Half Scoring

The fourth Valdosta touchdown of the night was set up by a 24-yard pass completion from Lastinger to split end Frederick Blair. The drive started at the Wildcat 46 following a Bearcat

punt.

Lastinger tried the left side on an option play from the Bearcat nine and went in for the score. Reaves was true on the extra point once again and with 8:27 remaining in the third quarter, the Wildcats had a 28-0 lead.

The Wildcats tallied their fifth touchdown after a somewhat sustained drive which was momentarily stopped by a Bearcat interception. The drive started on the Valdosta 26.

Early in the fourth quarter, Gaskin got one yard and a first down at the three then slanted off the right side for a touchdown. Reaves added the extra point, and with 7:44 remaining in the

game, the Wildcats were ahead 35-0.

Thomas returned a Close punt from his own 40 to midfield to give the Wildcats good field position from which to start their final touchdown drive of the night.

A pass interference penalty against the Bearcats gave the Wildcats a first down at the 26. John Bond ran an option off the right side and picked up a first down at the 16 and on the next play handed the ball to King, who slanted off the left side and went all the way in for the touchdown. Reaves again added the extra point and with 2:41 remaining in the game, the final score of Valdosta 42, Bainbridge 0 was on the scoreboard.



Bainbridge High School Bearcat quarterback Kenneth Biggles (14) rolls around left end for a good gain against the Wildcats of Valdosta High School Friday night. Pursuing him is Valdosta defensive end Kenny Evans (81).

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