

Valdosta Catsapults Into State Title Game With 23-0 One Conquest Of Benedictine

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—Times Staff Photo

Benedictine Quarterback Danny Dotson Starts To Deal Ball Off With Troy Thomas (36) Punting The Tick

defense piled on McCarthy in the end zone with 47 seconds left before the halftime gun. Harris led the way for the night with eight tackles from his end slot, cornerback Thomas added seven. Linebacker Lynn Roberts had seven, and Kenny Evans and Johnson had five apiece.

Roberts leaped on a Dela Guardia fumble in the third quarter to initiate Valdosta's final touchdown march.

Flashy halfback Ernest King, wearing number 4 after his traditional 44 was torn from his shoulders early on, shook loose for a 53-yard run down to the Benedictine 4-yard line. King totaled 73 yards in the nine carries.

Irvin Roe, the other half of the Wildcats' "double dynamic" combination, carried the ball to the 1, and Bond did his thing again from there with 2:52 left in the third period.

Benedictine never smelled

wants no part of that. "It will be on Saturday unless somebody chokes," the VHS coach said. "I want to play on Saturday. We'll start again Tuesday."

And now the stage is set for Valdosta's second straight shot at the state crown. The Wildcats dropped a 16-14 decision to Clarke Central in Athens last season.

The game could be switched to Friday night if both schools agree, but Hyder

By MIKE CHASON
For perhaps the first time in high school football history, a game has been closed.

It happened in a 23-0 Valdosta victory over Benedictine here Friday night in a contest which gave the hometown Wildcats their second straight Class AAAA VADOTCUP.

them into touchdowns. "I don't know if the fumbles were the whole difference or not," Walsh said, "because I don't know if we would have scored on and scored. But we were moving the ball pretty well, and it could have put some pressure on them if we had."

"They were pretty loose after they got ahead, and when they're loose, nobody's going to beat them."

Valdosta Coach Nick Hyder, who completed step one toward his 200th career coaching victory, pinpointed the fumbles and a Rodney Gordon punt which died on the Benedictine 3-yard line as the game-turning factors.

Three plays after that, second quarter punt, Valdosta swarmed all over Cadet running back Chris McCarthy in the end zone for a safety.

The fumbles were the thing that hurt them and that punt," Hyder, who now has a career coaching record of 101-253-54, said.

"We felt like our youngsters played fairly well. Our lads have played on a pretty even keel all year. It's stress defense and the kicking game which were the big factors tonight."

To the surprise of no one among the 9,900, the visiting Region AAAA champions opened the game with a punt. "We were doing when the final curtain fell a year ago."

It worked to the tune of 121 yards for the night, and 23 carries in this pattern. Bond, who was named the National Football League's "Cadet quarterback" Danny McCarthy, led the team on a third down situation.

When Troy Thomas ran for 53 yards on the 31 yards to the Benedictine

Valdosta	Benedictine
First Down	16 12
Yards Gained	350 121
Yards Per Play	4.1 2.0
Yards Per Carry	4.1 2.0
Yards Per Reception	1.0 0.0
Yards Per Kick	0.0 0.0
Yards Per Punt	2.5 1.8
Yards Per Pass	1.0 0.0
Yards Per Interception	0.0 0.0
Yards Per Fumble	0.0 0.0
Yards Per Turnover	0.0 0.0
Yards Per Safety	0.0 0.0
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