



Young Fan Waves One Golden Pom-Pom While He Wears Another



Big 1 With "Cats Are State Champs" Rises

Avondale's Coach Praises Valdosta

By JULIAN MILLER
Times Sports Writer

Before the Valdosta - Avondale state championship game here Saturday the Blue Devils' cheerleaders held up one of the largest banners ever on Cleveland Field and it read: "Sherman's March Through Georgia Ends in Victory At Valdosta."

Well they were right on one hand Sherman, the Imps' speedy defensive backfield star turned fullback did end his march in Valdosta, however, the "Boys in Blue" weren't planning on a 62-12 defeat by the Wildcats.

But Blue Devil head coach Crawford Kennedy says he wasn't really surprised.

"They're just too tough for us," he said after the 50-point loss. "We can just consider ourselves lucky to have gotten this far with teams like Valdosta around.

"They (Valdosta) were loaded with talent. . . more than any high school football team I've ever seen.

"And they're well-coached, there's absolutely no doubt. Wright Bazemore is the king of coaches."

Did he think the 'Cats would run on his team as easy as they had done?

"I was pretty sure they would do about whatever they really wanted to do," he replied. "I wasn't surprised about anything."

Did he think the present heat wave hurt his team from the north?

"The heat hurt us some," he said. "But it wouldn't have made any difference in the ball game. We had two boys who couldn't come back after the half. But that wouldn't have changed anything. Valdosta is just that good."

On the other side of Cleveland Field Wright Bazemore was wearing the most satisfied smile since the 'Cats won their last "AAA" grid a right by beating Forest Park in 1968.

"I have a fine bunch of play-

ers," he was saying and I am proud of each and every one of them.

"I'm proud of this team for winning. They certainly gave a hundred per cent in every way tonight."

"And the school spirit is the greatest. The people in the town backed us 100 per cent too. A thing like this has to be a city-wide effort.

"I've got the finest coaching staff in the world right here.

Every single one of them is capable of being just as good a coach as I am."

With such a big season behind him it's only natural for the Coach of champions to feel a letdown.

"I was letdown all night," he admitted. "In fact I was kind of feeling letdown all week."

What's he gonna do now?

"Well, the birds and the fish just better watch out!"

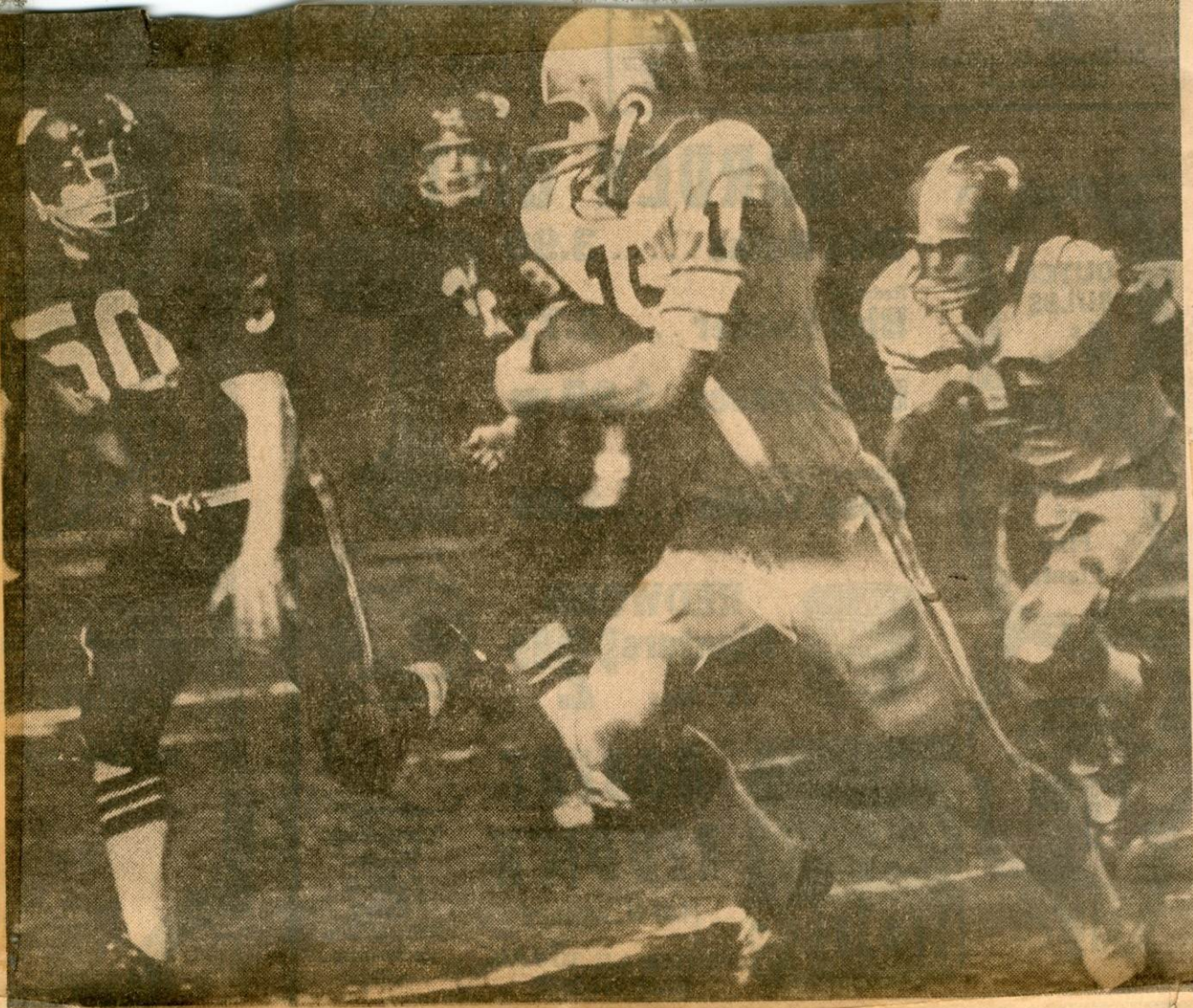




A Portrait of a Champion Coach

VALDOSTA, Ga.—Valdosta High's legendary football coach Wright Bazemore is pictured with an unidentified Wildcat player during Saturday's Class AAA state championship

game here. Bazemore won his 15th state title in his fabled coaching career when the Wildcats stung Avondale, 62-12. (Associated Press Wirephoto)



How It Happened: 'Dosta Quarterback Stanley Bounds Heads Toward Avondale Defenders On Long Gain



Marchin' 'Cats Band, Like Gridders, Gave Another Championship Style Performance

Don vs Andy?

QBs Recall Last Title Game Here

By JULIAN MILLER
Times Staff Writer

This year's state Class AAA football clash between Valdosta's Wildcats and Avondale's Blue Devils at Cleveland Field Saturday certainly brings back memories of days gone by.

And two people who should have a lot of memories are Don Golden and Andy Johnson. Golden was the Wildcat quarterback two years ago in the last title game played here and Johnson led the Athens Trojans to a come-from-behind 26-26 tie.

For the Trojans that year it was a "victory", for they were big underdogs to the undefeated Wildcats who had until then allowed only seven points to be scored on them.

But for the Wildcats, no matter how many times they were told it was a tie, they felt like losers.

That wasn't the last time Golden and Johnson were to get together. The following summer they were on opposite sides in the Georgia High School Association's All-Star game and the press was building up the Golden-Johnson duel again . . . even though neither player had much to do with the North's 7-0 victory.

But now things have changed a little. Instead of competing against each other, they're working together. Johnson is the starting quarterback at the University of Georgia while Golden is a starting safety for the Bulldogs and any conflict still remaining between the two certainly doesn't show in the Bulldog 10-1 record.

"It's hard to explain how I felt that night," said Golden, looking back. "We had heard of Andy Johnson and we knew we had to stop him. He was good but before the game he was just another human being and he could be stopped just like anyone else.

"After the game I was let down. We had practiced full speed all week. And after the game I felt like we'd lost. Everyone had had a good night, but I felt like he (Johnson) had had a super night."

"We had heard a lot of different tales about Valdosta," Johnson recalls. "Valdosta never lost and all of us were pretty worried. In a certain sense we



DON GOLDEN
Led The Cats



ANDY JOHNSON
Like A Win

weren't scared though. None of us were overconfident, but we knew it was a real important game.

"I had heard a lot about Don before the game. Seems like everyone was writing it up like a game between me and him. I guess it was in a way.

"But later on they wrote the all-star game up the same way. I didn't think it should have been that way then. There were too many good athletes there."

The two players found themselves mixed-up in the Johnson-Golden contest again when they both went out for quarterback at Georgia.

"People kept putting us up a-

gainst each other when we got here," Golden said. "They were trying to build up a rivalry between us. But it's gone now. We get along fine."

Both gridders agreed they have played only one other game with as much importance as that 1969 clash at Cleveland Field. That was three weeks ago when Georgia downed Georgia Tech 28-24, for another "state championship."

And now they're heading together into the Gator Bowl, where they'll meet North Carolina. Ordinarily that should be their biggest game . . . but it isn't. Both agree you can't top those state championships.

'Cats, Devils Have Their Weapons Ready

By SAMMY GLASSMAN

Times Sports Editor

Georgia's 1971 state Class AAA high school football crown will be up for grabs when Valdosta's Wildcats and Avondale's Blue Devils collide here Saturday night.

The title between coach Wright Bazemore's 'Cats and coach Crawford Kennedy's Blue Devils from Avondale Estates is slated for 8 p. m. at Cleveland Field.

Valdosta, the South Georgia "AAA" titleholder, will come into the game with a 12-0 record. Avondale, the North Geor-

gia "AAA" grid king, will come to town with an 11-1-1 mark.

VHS will be going for its 15th state championship since Bazemore joined the Wildcats' coaching staff back in 1940. They've been Class AAA champs seven times since 1960.

Avondale will be making its fourth bid for the Georgia "AAA" diadem since 1960. They've ruled the state once, in 1963.

With fan excitement both here and at Avondale running high a capacity crowd of better than 10,000 is expected to be on hand for the meeting between the 'Cats and Imps.

Since claiming the Region 1-AAA title, Valdosta has beaten Warner Robins, 35-6, and Laney of Augusta, 54-20, in the playoffs. Since becoming the Region 7-AAA champ Avondale has turned back Henderson, 10-8, and Forest Park, 19-10, in playoff outings.

The pass is the Wildcats' chief offensive weapon, but VHS can and does run with the football. Operating from the wishbone - T, the Blue Devils like to run with the pigskin, but can and do pass effectively.

Valdosta's aerial leaders are senior quarterback Stanley

Bounds and sophomore split end Stanford Rome. Bounds has hit on 128 of 243 tosses for 2,506 yards and 26 touchdowns. Rome has made 66 receptions for 1,487 yards and 19 TDs.

The Wildcats' rushing leaders are halfback Robert Daniels, who has picked up 487 yards on 74 carries, and fullback Pat O'Neal, with 442 yards on 71 tries. Bounds (81-423) is third on the rushing list, with fullback Robert McCaskill (53-289) next in line.

Other go - team regulars include end Scott Griffin, tackles Paul Demersseman and Wade

Johnson, guards Sidney Earnest, Calvin Lester, David Register and Robert Joseph, center Paul Lore and halfback George Rountree.

The bulk of VHS' defensive load will fall on a group which includes ends David Berrien and Alvin Payton, tackles Steve Stanaland and Gary Irby, Middle guard Freddie Wilbon, linebackers Edwin Pompey, Dick Parker, Jim Clarkston and Ronald Daniels and deep backs Gary Rowe and O. D. Netter.

Avondale's swift - string ground attack is led by fullback Greg Sizemore, who in regular season play romped for 817

yards on 161 carries.

Blue Devil quarterback Doug Elstad has hit on 69 of 137 passes for 1,268 yards. His favorite targets are halfback David Maher, who has made 21 catches for 344 yards, and end Jim Helms, with 15 receptions for 352 yards.

The probable starters, as announced by the coaches, follows:

VALDOSTA

Offense — ends Stanford Rome (190, soph.) and Scott Griffin (185, sr.), tackles Paul Demersseman (210, sr.) and Wade Johnson (200, jr.), guards Sidney Earnest (190, sr.) and David Register (200, jr.), center Paul Lore (175, sr.), quarterback Stanley Bounds (175, sr.), halfbacks Robert Daniels (190, soph.) and George Rountree (175, jr.) and fullback Pat

O'Neal (165, jr.).

Defense — ends David Berrien (170, jr.) and Alvin Payton (170, sr.), tackles Steve Stanaland (220, sr.) and Gary Irby (200, jr.), middle guard Freddie Wilbon (250, jr.), linebackers Edwin Pompey (185, sr.), Dick Parker (175, sr.), Jim Clarkston (180, sr.) and Ronald Daniels (190, jr.) and deep backs Gary Rowe (185, jr.) and O. D. Netter (170, sr.).

AVONDALE

Offense — ends Jim Helms (175, sr.), and Sam Bell (165, sr.), tackles Tom Alderman (215, jr.) and Herb Goodwin (195, jr.), guards Barry Williams (185, sr.) and Rick Melson (219, sr.), center Mike Shaw (165, jr.), quarterback Doug Elstead (180, sr.), halfbacks David Maher (175, jr.) and Bo Landers (165, jr.) and fullback Greg Sizemore (180, sr.).

Defense — ends Stan Burke (175, sr.) and Terry Maye (205, jr.), outside linebackers Landers and Maher, inside linebackers Buck Sherman (180, sr.) and Mike Grabely (175, sr.), halfbacks Jimmy Partridge (160, sr.) and Bell and safes Helms.

UNDISPUTED AAA CHAMP

Valdosta Title Express Rumbles On, 62-12

By DAVID DAVIDSON
Atlanta Journal Prep Editor

VALDOSTA, Ga. — For Coach Wright Bazemore and his Valdosta High Wildcats — the two are synonymous — it was perhaps their finest hour together.

Valdosta unquestionably has its finest offensive football team ever. Maybe the best high school team in the nation.

If the Wildcats hadn't made that perfectly clear previously this season, they did Saturday night by annihilating a strong defensive team — Avondale — in the State Class AAA championship game here, 62-12.

In 1962, Valdosta smacked Murphy here at this same

Cleveland field, 39-0, in what, until Saturday night, was the most one-sided AAA championship game ever.

IN THE VICTORY, senior quarterback Stanley Bounds, the red-haired passing wizard, was magnificent.

Bounds' passing goes further than mere genius. The 18-year-old prep All-American completed 13 of 15 passes, with but one interception, for 313 yards and five touchdowns in his best game ever.

In the second half, Bounds completed seven of seven passes for 136 yards, his first two going for touchdowns set up by Avondale fumbles.

Two touchdown passes went to the brilliant sophomore speedster, Stanford Rome, two to halfback Clifford Bradley, and another to end Paul Demersseman.

ORDINARILY, 12 points would stand up for a victory in most of Avondale's games. But with Valdosta averaging just under 50 points per game, 12 points was less than a drop in the bucket.

The Blue Devils from DeKalb County did manage to give their fans some thrilling moments, but only after the game was out of reach. By Valdosta standards, the "out-of-reach" point usually occurs

★ ★ ★ ★ ★		
YARDSTICK		
AVONDALE (12)	VALDOSTA (62)	
10	First Downs	25
67	Yards Rushing	312
282	Yards Passing	313
8-17-0	Passes	13-15-1
1-15	Yards Penalized	6-50

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
sometimes in the first quarter.

Avondale was thrown for a minus five net yards rushing in the second half by a vicious defense, led by another prep All-American, defensive tackle Steve Stanaland. The Blue Devils went to the air in the fourth period and finished with 10 completions in 25 attempts, with no interceptions, for 282 yards.

AN 82-YARD pass from quarterback Doug Elstad to split end Ed Helms was the most spectacular play of the night.

Valdosta's running game, not to be overlooked, churned out 312 yards, giving the Wildcats a total-yardage figure of 625 yards.

The Wildcats scored the first time they had the ball and almost at will thereafter and were comfortably out front at halftime, 35-6.

On hearing earlier in the week that Wright Bazemore always elected not to receive a kickoff, even when he won the pre-game toss of the coin, a light came on in Avondale

Coach Crawford Kennedy's head.

When Valdosta won the toss and elected to defend the east end of Cleveland Field, Kennedy had instructed his captain to kick. Bazemore's theory is that, especially in a championship situation, a team is likely to be tight at the beginning and make mistakes . . . mistakes Valdosta over the 30-year period Bazemore has coached the Wildcats has taken advantage of countless times.

But the plan blew up in Kennedy's face. Valdosta struck with lightning swiftness. In two minutes, Bounds had lighted the scoreboard for the

Wildcats. It took Bounds only six plays and two minutes (to the second) to get the first touchdown.

The big gainer was a 37-yard pass to Clifford Bradley, and the touchdown came on a nine-yard pass to Rome.

Avondale took three cracks the Wildcat defense, then punted.

Bounds was back in business. This time, however, the Cats remained on the ground six of the seven plays it took to get TD No. 2. Robert McCaskill carried the ball in from 14 yards out on a trap play for the score.

The next TD was the quickest of the half. A 61-yard pass

to Bradley down the left sideline. Avondale then interrupted, perhaps saving the Valdosta side of the scoreboard from overheating, by driving 72 yards in 13 plays. The touchdown came on a fourth-down play, the second of the drive on a fake to Sherman in the middle and a pitch-out to David Maher going wide left.

Avondale	0	6	0	6	-12
Valdosta	21	14	13	14	-62

SCORING — Avondale — Maher, 3 run (kick failed); Helms, 82 pass from Elstad (pass failed). Valdosta — Rome, 9 pass from Bounds (Parker kick); McCaskill, 14 run (Parker kick); Bradley, 20 pass from Bounds (Parker kick); O'Neal, 13 run (Parker kick); Rome, 48 pass from Bounds (Parker kick); Demersseman, 15 pass from Bounds (pass failed); Bradley, 9 pass to Rome and pitch to Bradley (Parker kick); Bounds, 3 run (Parker kick).

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Kennedy Fumes After AAA Rout

By STEVE CLARK

Avondale football coach Crawford Kennedy, still shellshocked Sunday afternoon, dished out both words of praise and criticism for the Valdosta bulldozer which buried Avondale, 62-12, Saturday night in Valdosta for the Class AAA state championship.

"Valdosta's got more talent than any high school team I've seen in 12 years of coaching," said Kennedy.

But Kennedy was in a critical mood, too. What had him upset was the fact that veteran Valdosta Coach Wright Bazemore didn't pull his horses — quarterback Stanley Bounds, et al — until late in the final quarter. For all practical purposes, the game was over long before that.

"I wasn't too happy about that," said Kennedy. "I don't want this to sound like sour grapes, but I simply see no sense in a 60-year-old man (Bazemore) trying to embarrass a bunch of kids.

"Bounds and the other horses were taken out with about three minutes to go. I feel like you shouldn't leave your best people in there when the game is out of reach. There's no purpose in it as far as I can see."

But Kennedy emphasized that his displeasure with the lopsided score should not over-

shadow the greatness of this Valdosta team, which provided Bazemore his 15th state championship in 31 years of coaching.

"They just blew us out of there," said Kennedy. "It was a case of one good football team running into one great team with too much talent," he said.

"It was over at the ahlf (Valdosta led, 35-6), but I was proud of our kids for staying in there and battling them. I was especially proud of that long touchdown drive (72 yards) we made in the second quarter.

"I thought we were a pretty good defensive team, but there's no way we could stop them. They didn't punt one time. They scored everytime they got the ball except the time we intercepted Bounds and the time they fumbled.

"Their line of scrimmage just knocked us back every time. They were bigger, stronger and more talented than us."

Avondale finished the season with a fine 11-2-1 record. The Blue Devils' first loss was in the opener, 24-8, to Butler, Ala., which lost in the finals of the Class 4-A championship in Alabama. The tie was the Columbia game, which turned into a controversy over Avondale's last-gasp field goal.

Bazemore Quits Coaching, Stays Athletic Director

By SAMMY GLASSMAN
Times Sports Editor

After a career of success unmatched in the annals of Georgia's high school football history, Wright Bazemore has relinquished his duties as head coach of Valdosta's famed Wildcats.

At a meeting Monday night Bazemore, 55, asked for and received permission from the Valdosta city school system's board of education to give up his coaching duties, which he has performed with brilliance at VHS over a 31-year span.

The board, after going into an executive session from which the news media were excluded, announced that Charlie Greene, an assistant at VHS for 10 years, will become the 'Cats new head football coach.

Bazemore is to continue as the athletic director at VHS and of the Valdosta city school system, positions he has held along with his coaching assignment in recent years.

While Bazemore has been talking about ending his coaching career for a year, he didn't make his firm decision in the matter known publicly until Monday night. The announcement came just two days after his 1971 'Cats climaxed a perfect 13-0 campaign by win-

ning the state Class AAA championship for the eighth time in the last 12 years.

"I've been coaching here since 1940," the super successful mentor said, "and now it's time to hang it up." Later Bazemore said he's giving up coaching because "the pressure has become unbearable."

"It's difficult to put into words how much you (Bazemore) have meant to our school system and our city," board chairman Ruben Yancey said. "No other member of our faculty has the hearts of so many people with you. There will always be a place for you here."

Other board members added their vocal praise as did M. E. Nichols of Valdosta, president of the Georgia High School Association, and Bobby Greene, president of the Valdosta Touchdown Club.

Nichols and Bobby Greene said both the GHSA and the TD Club will honor Bazemore "in special ways" at future dates.

A native of Fitzgerald, Bazemore began his coaching career in 1938 as an assistant at Waycross High. He joined the VHS staff in 1940 as an aide to the late Bobby Hooks, who at the time was the Wildcats' grid-

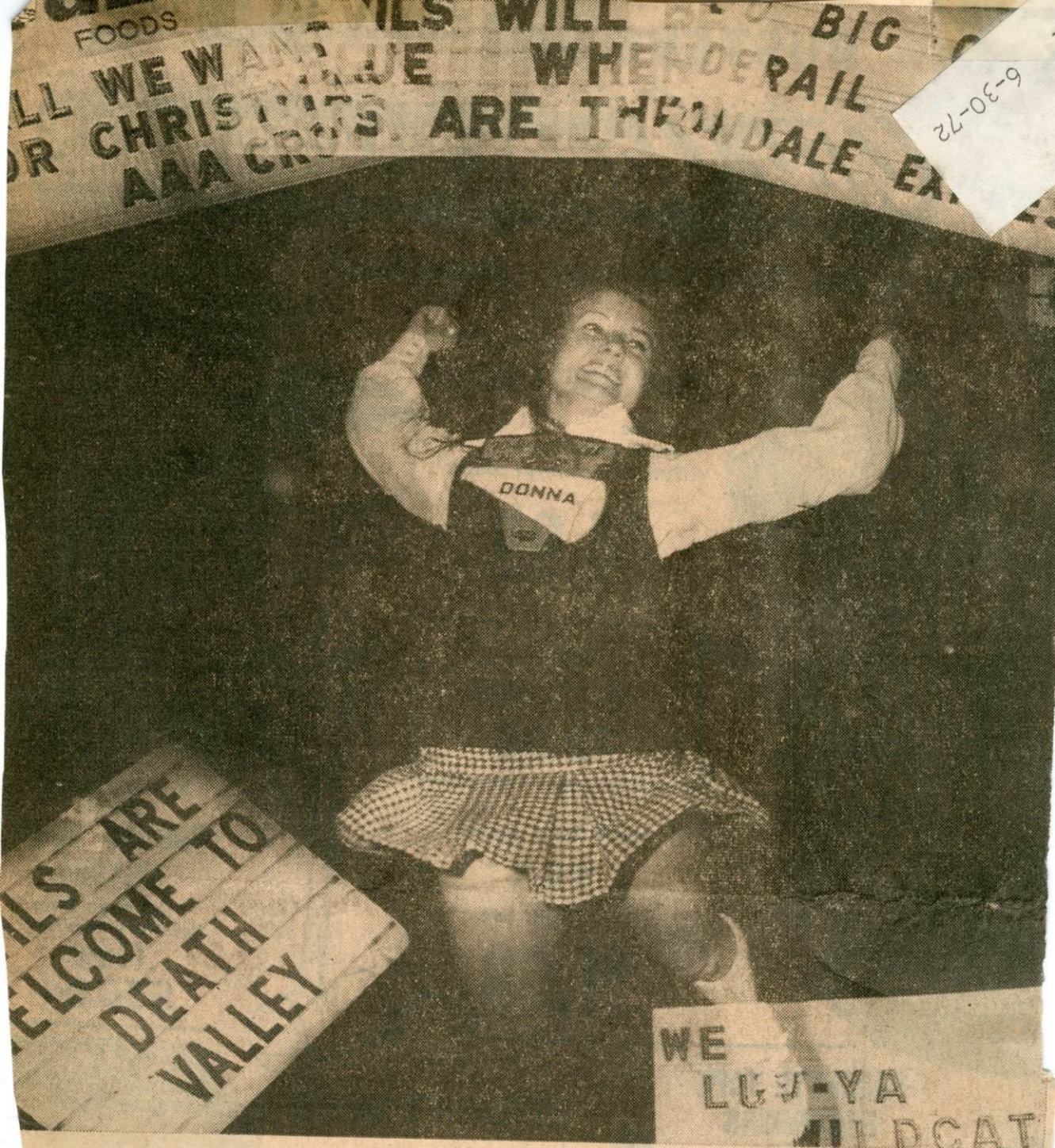
boss.

Bazemore became the VHS head football coach in 1941 and has served in that capacity since, except for three years he spent in the U. S. Navy during World War II.

His teams have compiled the

amazing overall record of 290-43-6 and the 'Cats have won 15 state championships since '40. Including the one the Wildcats earned with a 62-12 victory over Avondale this past Saturday. Valdosta has ruled the

See Bazemore — Page 2



Wildcat Fever Leaps High

-Times Staff Photo by Robert Winter III

All over town it is the same! Wildcat fever! That's because tonight the Valdosta High School Wildcats are on the Blue Devils of Avondale here for the AAA football championship. VHS cheerleader

Donna Pitts is surrounded by some of the marquee proclaiming support for the hometown team in this montage photograph. More on the game, page 10.

Baze Ranks With All-Time Greats

It hardly came as a surprise to anyone when Wright Bazemore asked for and received permission from the Valdosta city school system's board of education to be relieved of his coaching duties.

Baze began talking about the possibility of his stepping down as the Valdosta High Wildcats' head football mentor quite a while back. As long as a year ago the talk grew more serious. In recent days it became general knowledge that this was his final season as the guiding hand behind the famed 'Cats.



GLASSMAN

AAA level since 1960. The latest title came just this past Saturday night when the Wildcats steamrolled Avondale, 62-12.

The honors he has earned at the local, state and national level are almost too many to count. He's been there, he's done it all and he has become a living football legend.

Bazemore's contribution on the football field has been vast. His contribution as a man who has given much of himself to his school, his city and to the many young people who have come under his influence is virtually boundless.

Fortunately his positive influence will continue here since he will carry on with his duties as the athletic director at Valdosta High and of the Valdosta city school systems and one of his long-time aides, Charlie Greene, will become the 'Cats new head coach.

An extremely hard worker and a fierce, but gentlemanly, competition, Baze has asked much from his players and the members of his staff — but has given more of himself.

Praises Staff

"Sure I'm sad about giving up coaching," he said. "But I'm a fortunate man, a very fortunate man who has been associated with many wonderful people. I owe thanks to so many people, especially to all of my players and to the members of my staff.

"As for my staff, it's the best in the country, and that includes college and professional football. Each is a great coach in his own right.

"Team effort is the secret to our success. That team effort includes all our coaches, all our players, our school administrators, band and cheerleaders, our students and all the other wonderful fans here who are led by our Touchdown Club. Valdosta is the greatest place in the world to coach.

"But it's time to quit. The pressure on me, especially in recent years, has become unbearable. I've wanted our players to win so badly because I've known how much it means to them. I may go nuts sitting up there in the stands, but I had to make this decision."

More To Be Said

Team effort has indeed been the key to the 'Cats' success. The leader of that team effort has been Wright Bazemore, one of America's all-time great coaches.

What more is there to be said about the man? Actually a whole lot. And much will be said in his praise at future occasions. The TD Club here and the Georgia High School Associations are just two groups which have already indicated they will honor Bazemore in special ways.

As for the Wildcats' football future, it is in very capable hands. The 'Cats' new grid boss, Charlie Greene, is a dedicated young man with an outstanding knowledge of the game. He grew up here, played in high school under Bazemore and has been a member of his staff for 10 years.

Greene is aware of the football tradition which Bazemore has built. He will, to be sure, do everything within his power to continue that tradition.

Wildcats, Imps Tangle Tonight

BY TIMES STAFF WRITER

After an 11-year wait Valdosta's Wildcats and Avondale's Blue Devils are to meet again here tonight at Cleveland Field with the state Class AAA high school football crown on the line.

The state title match between coach Wright Bazemore's 'Cats and coach Crawford Kennedy's Blue Devils from Avondale Estates is slated to begin at 8 p.m.

Valdosta, which belongs to Region 1AAA, will bring a 12-0 record into the game. Avondale, a member of Region -AAA, will come into the contest with an 11-1-1 chart. Both have already survived two rounds of playoff action.

The last time they met here in the state finals was back in 1960. The 'Cats came away with a victory that time, but had to score a touchdown in the final minutes of play to overhaul the Blue Devils, 20-14.

Since then the Wildcats claimed the "AAA" state title six more times for a total of ten. They've actually captured a total of 14 state championships in all classifications since Bazemore joined the VHS coaching staff in 1940.

This will be Avondale's third trip to the state finals since that 1960 meeting with 'Dosta. They came away the winner over Moultrie in 1963 and lost to Glynn Academy (Brunswick) in the 1964 showdown.

With fan interest running high a capacity crowd of approximately 10,000 is expected for tonight's outing.

The Imps will pin their offensive hopes on wishbone-T attack Doug Elstead, who has passed for more than 1,200 yards, and fullback Greg Sizemore, who has romped for more than 1,000 yards.

Avondale's defense is noted for its quickness and its ability to stall an opponents aerial game.

Valdosta's offensive leaders include quarterback Stanley Bounds, split end Stanford Rome, halfback Robert Daniels and fullback Pat O'Neal.

Bounds has 2,929 yards in total offense and he accounted for 2,506 of it through the air with 128 completions in 243 tries. Rome had made 66 catches for 1,48 yards.

Daniels, with 48 yards on 74 carries, in the Wildcats' leading rusher with O'Neal, 71-442, a very close second.

In earlier playoff action this year VHS turned back Warner Robins, 35-6, and beat Laney of Augusta, 54-20. To reach the finals Avondale spanked Henderson, 10-8, and clipped Forest Park, 19-10.

'Cats 'Storm' To Championship

Rock Imps

By 62-12

Margin

By SAMMY GLASSMAN
Times Sports Editor

Valdosta's Wildcats unleashed a storm of offensive lightning and defense thunder and swept away Avondale's Blue Devils, 62-12, to win Georgia's 1971 state Class AAA high school football championship in electrifying fashion here Saturday night.

With the triumph coach Wright Bazemore's 'Cats climaxed their season with a perfect 13-0 record and earned for VHS its 15th state grid crown since Baze joined the Wildcat coaching staff in 1940. It is 'Dosta's eighth Georgia diadem at the Class AAA level since 1960.

For coach Crawford Kennedy's Blue Devils from Avondale Estates, the defeat left them with an 11-2-1 chart and

STATISTICS

	Valdosta	Avondale
First Downs	29	13
Yards Rushing	349	71
Yards Passing	288	172
Passes	14-7	10-25
Passes Intc. by	0	1
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Punting	0-0	6-33.6
Penalties	6-50	2-19

they had to come away from the game feeling as if they had just ridden through the eye of a hurricane while clinging to the tail of a flimsy kite.

Someone opened the door to the Valdosta dressing room and the Wildcats came roaring out and blew down everything in sight while a capacity crowd of approximately 11,000, composed mostly of VHS faithfuls, cheered approval.

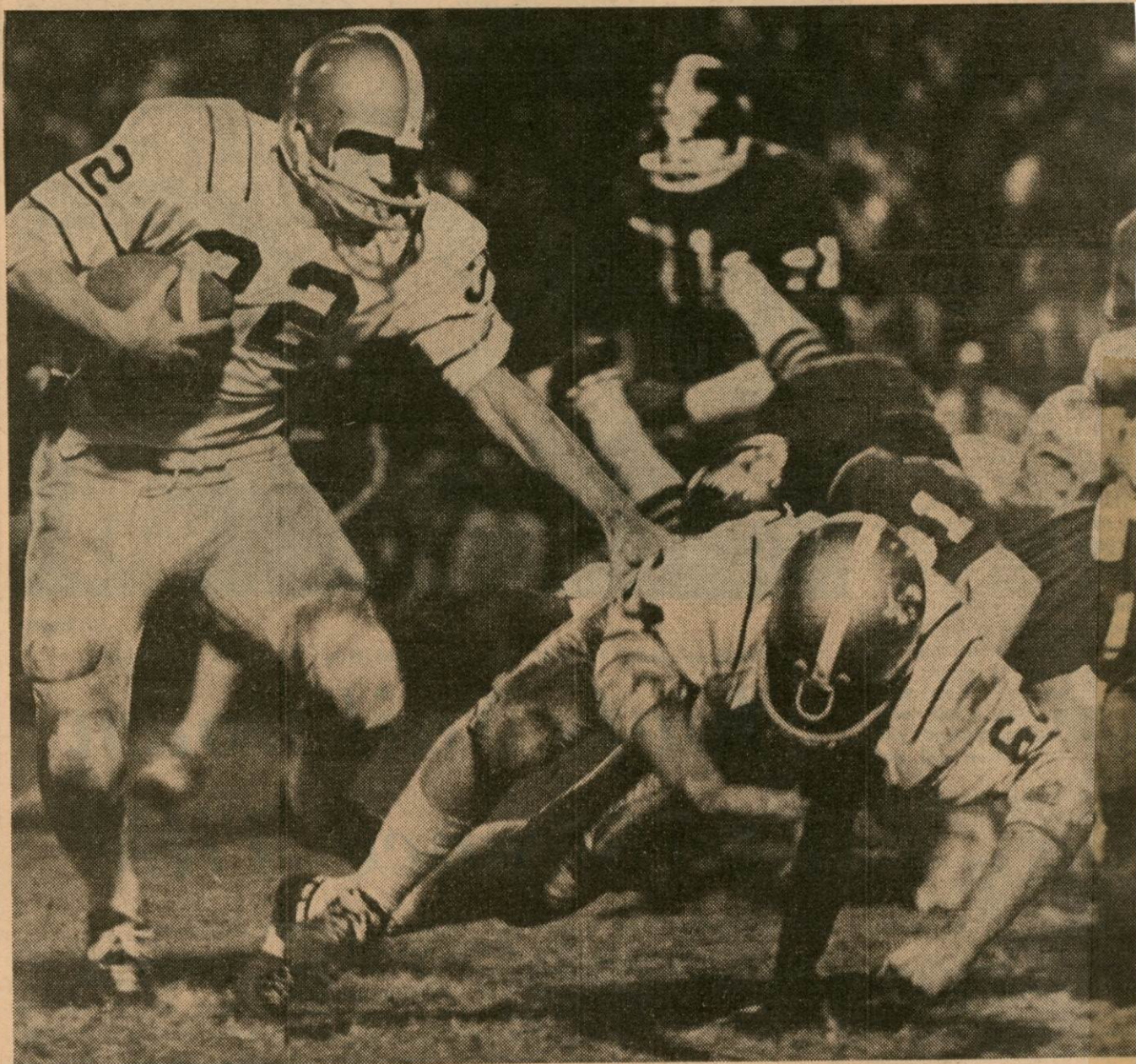
It took the 'Cats exactly two minutes of playing time to score their first touchdown, they had a 21-point bulge before the game was seven and a half minutes old and they went on to pile up the biggest score ever for a VHS team in a state title match. The previous high, according to Bazemore, was 48-

While lighting up the scoreboard with nine touchdowns, the Wildcats made 29 first downs and compiled 637 yards in total offense, 349 rushing and 288 passing. VHS' hard-hitting and alert defense limited Avondale's supposed-to-be potent wishbone-T ground attack to just 71 yards and a lone TD. The other Blue Devil tally came on a long pass against the VHS reserves in the final minutes of play, which was long after the issue had been settled.

In all some 80 Valdosta players saw action in the game and had a share in the sparkling triumph.

VHS quarterback Stanley Bounds passed for four TDs and the 'Cats got five more along the ground. Bounds hit split end Stanford Rome with scoring aeriels of 9 and 47 yards, he connected with halfback Clifford Bradley with one that covered 60 yards and still another for 15 yards went to line-man Paul Demersseman on a tackle-eligible play.

Fullback Robert McCaskill galloped for two touchdowns, on



Valdosta Guard David Register (64) Throws A Block And Helps Clear The Way For Fullback Pat O'Neal (32)

runs of 14 and 22 yards, fullback Pat O'Neal scored on an eight-yard sprint and Bounds and Bradley each legged the football across the goal line from three yards out. Dick Parker kicked eight extra points.

For the night Bounds hit on 13 of 16 tosses for 279 yards. The top receivers were Bradley (3-118) and Rome (6-86). McCaskill picked up 114 yards on eight runs, followed by O'Neal (7-72), Bounds (6-62), and halfback George Rountree (5-42).

Besides those already mentioned, go-team members who play major roles in the triumph included halfback Robert Daniels, tackle Wade Johnson, end Scott Griffin, guards Sidney Earnest,

Calvin Lester, David Register and Robert Joseph and center Paul Lore.

On defense linebacker Ronald Daniels was VHS' leading tackler with nine, followed by tackle Steve Stanaland, eight; end Alvin Payton, six and safetyman Gary Rowe and middle guard Freddie Wilbon, five each.

Other stop'em crew members who carried heavy loads were David Berrien, tackle Gary Irby, linebackers Parker, Jim Clarkston and Edwin Pompey and safetyman O. D. Netter.

Rowe and guard Arthur Massey both recovered Avondale fumbles near the Blue Devils' goal line which set up two of VHS' touchdowns.

On both offense and defense

the Wildcats were the masters all the way in the line, where the real issue in any football game is settled.

Avondale's first TD came early in the second period, after 'Dosta had jumped to a 21-point lead. The Blue Devils drove 73 yards in 19 plays, with halfback David Maher scoring on a three-yard run.

The Imps threatened in the third period, but were halted at the 11 yard line. Their final score came on a 72-yard pass from quarterback Doug Elstad to end Jim Helms with only 3:29 left to play in the game.

Fullback Buck Sherman was Avondale's leading rusher with 48 yards on a dozen carries. Elstad hit on 10 of 25 passes for

172 yards, but VHS defenders nailed him behind the line of scrimmage nine times.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing: Valdosta — Bounds 6-62, O'Neal 7-72, Bradley 2-5, Rountree 5-42, McCaskill 8-114, Daniels 3-17, Morrison 6-33, Hutchens 1-2, Hilton 1-2; Avondale — Elstad 13 minus 11, Maher 2-5, Landers 6-23, Sherman 12-48, Kimbell 2-6.

Passing: Valdosta — Bounds 13-16-279, Hilton 1-1-9; Avondale — Elstad 10-25-172.

Pass Receiving: Valdosta — Rowe 6-86, Bradley 3-118, Demersseman 1-15, Rountree 1-56, Griffin 1-3, Johnson 1-27; Avondale — Beall 3-58, Helms 4-107, Maher 1-13, Sherman 1-4, Partridge 1-19.

Punt Returns: Valdosta — Rome 3-3. Kickoff Returns: Valdosta — Rome 1-16, Bradley 1-8, Morrison 1-2; Avondale — Lucas 3-45, Sherman 1-8, Maher 4-43, Geiger 1-14.

Defense (Number of Tackles): Valdosta — Ron Daniels 9, Stanaland 7, Payton 6, Rowe 5, Wilbon 5, Irby 4, G. Rountree 4, Clarkston 3, Netter 3, Pompey 3, Avondale — Partridge 6, Gravelly 6, Brall 5, Maher 5, Buky 5, Bunder 5, Helms 4, Weldon 4, Hagge 4.

LINEUPS

VALDOSTA
Ends: Griffin, J. Berrien, D. Berrien, Clarkston, G. Rountree, Cobb, Adams, Hilton.

Tackles: Johnson, Brantley, Irby, Wilbon, Demersseman, Mitchell, Dodson, Griffith, Cutchens, Moorehead, Williams. Guards: Ron Daniels, Sullivan, Nijem, Register, Massey, Earnest, Joseph, Lester, Christian, Franklin, Holloway.

Centers: Stanaland, Lore, Scruggs, Nowell.

Backs: Rome, Parker, Bounds, Bradley, Roger Rountree, O. Netter, Rowe, Payton, Goodin, O'Neal, Pompey, McCaskill, Robert Daniels, Manuel, Lane, Morrison, Peterson, Hutchens, Hilton, Sheffield, Cooper, King, Mears, Richardson, N. Netter, Griner, Anderson, Bea.

AVONDALE
Ends: Hospkins, Helms, Hagge, Buky, Bunder.

Tackles: May, Reeves, Alderman, Goodwin, Weldon.

Guards: Williams, Nelson, Pruitt.

Centers: Gravelly, Shaw.

Backs: Landers, Elstad, Partridge, Beall, Sherman, Lucas, Maher, Raines, Sizemore, Kimball, Battle, Simon.

Score by Quarters:

Valdosta 21 14 20 7-62

Avondale 0 6 0 6-12

Scoring: Valdosta — TDs — Rome 2 (9, 47 yd. passes from Bounds), McCaskill 2 (14, 22 yd. runs), Bradley (60 yd. pass from Bounds), Demersseman (15 yd. pass from Bounds), O'Neal (8 yd. run), Bradley (3 yd. run), Bounds (3 yd. run); PATs — Parker 8 (placements). Avondale — TDs — Maher (3 yd. run), Helms (72 yd. pass from Elstad).



Valdosta's Enthusiastic Students Stand And Cheer Their Football Team To Victory

SAMMY

Glassman

Times Sports Editor

Wildcats Of '71 Rank With Best

Week after week during the regular season the 1971 Valdosta High football Wildcats steamrolled their way past opponent after opponent.

After 10 straight wins they had the Region 1-AAA title nailed down and no one had gotten within 21 points of them.

This was, in some respects surprising. After all this was a relatively inexperienced VHS team with only seven returning regulars from 1970.

A question had to pop up. Were the '71 'Cats really that good or was the competition in 1-AAA below par? Now three playoff games and a state championship later the answer is clear. The 1971 Wildcats are great and must be ranked with the very best of VHS' many super talented teams.

Certainly there isn't another high school team in Georgia this year which is in anywhere near the same class with head coach Wright Bazemore's latest gridiron edition. Just look at the record for proof.

After dusting off every-



GLASSMAN

one in their own league the 'Cats, in state playoff action, blasted down Warner Robins, 35-6; Laney of Augusta, 54-20, and North Georgia king Avondale, 62-12. If anyone in any other part of the state had even a slight doubt about the 'Cats being the best prep football team in Georgia they have now become firm believers.

What an amazing set of statistics this VHS football team has compiled. While winning 13 in a row, all by onesided margins, they averaged 431 yards in total offense (200 rushing and 231 passing) and 48.1 points per game. On defense they gave up an average of 205.3 yards (94.7 rushing and 110.6 passing) and 10.5 points per outing. Now keep in mind that a lot of the opponents' yardage and points came late in games against the reserves.

Team Effort

There were individuals who sparkled. One was senior quarterback Stanley Bounds, who hit on 141 of 259 passes for 2,785 yards and 30 touchdowns. He also legged it for 485 yards and 23 TDs. He had 3,270 yards in total offense and had a hand in the scoring of 323 of the total 629 points racked up by the 'Cats.

Another was split end Stanford Rome, who made 72 pass receptions for 1,573 yards and 21 TDs. Both he and Bounds were individual record breakers.

But the 'Cats definitely weren't a one or two man team. There were others, many, many others, who with hard work and determination blended their talents and gave the kind of team effort which made this team great. This includes all of those who were regulars on both offense and defense, plus the reserves who took their lumps in practice day after day, but got to see little action on a game night. Each and everyone was vital to the cause.

Outstanding Job

Bazemore said just after that big triumph over Avondale that he has the finest group of coaches on his staff that any head mentor could ask for. He's right. The group includes Charlie Greene, Joe Wilson, Jack Rudolph, Julian LeFiles, Joe Mercer and Edward Jones. What an outstanding coaching job they and Baze have done this season.

And the team effort which brought success includes the fine support the Wildcats got from VHS school officials, the students, the Marchin' 'Cats band, the cheerleaders, and all the other fans here, spearheaded by that dedicated and hard-working group known as the Valdosta Touchdown Club.

"You just can't win without team effort," Bazemore said. "We had it among our players and coaches and had it throughout our school and our city. I want to thank everyone."

Valdosta High has a football tradition unmatched by any school in our state. The Wildcats of 1971 have added even more brilliance to that tradition.

VHS Tackle

Is Signed

By Georgia

BY TIMES STAFF WRITER

Offensive tackle Paul Demersseman has become the first member of Valdosta High's state championship football team to accept the offer of a college grid scholarship.

Demersseman, who stands 6-3 and weighs 220 pounds, has "signed" with the University of Georgia.

A standout blocker, Demersseman was one of the key men in VHS' offensive line which opened up the way for the Wildcats to pile up more than 600 yards in total offense and score a 62-12 win over Avondale.

While Demersseman is the only senior on coach Wright Bazemore's championship crew to sign so far, others are sure to follow.

Quarterback Stanley Bounds, who generated more than 3,000 yards in total offense while leading VHS to a 13-0 record, is one of the state's most sought after prep players.

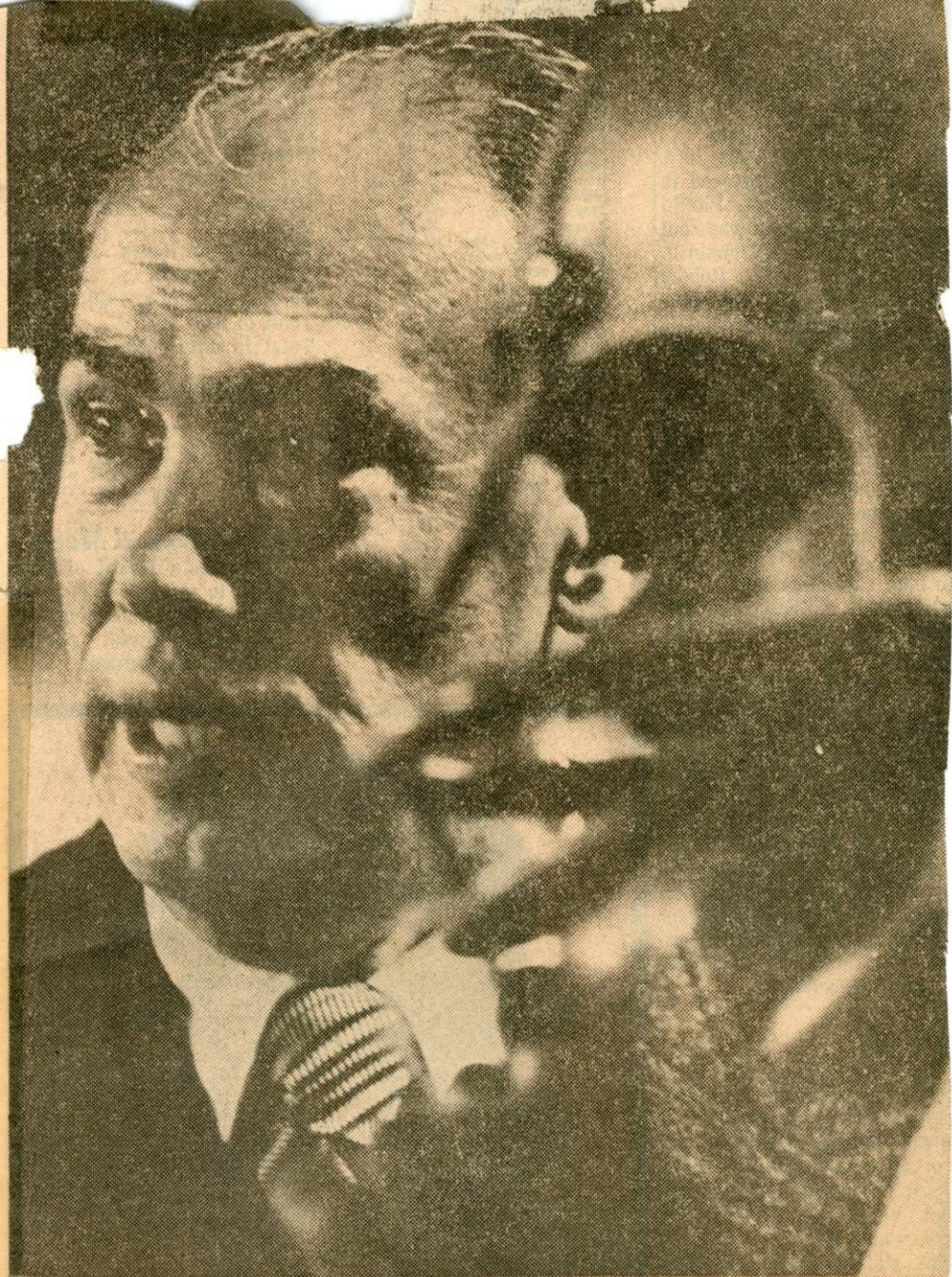
Bounds has been literally swamped with college offers, including those from virtually every major football power in the Southeast.

The 6-0, 175-pound passing and running whiz has given no indication of when he might make his choice.

Another Valdosta player who is still sorting through a lot of scholarship offers is defensive tackle Steve Stanaland. A hard-hitting 220 pounder, Stanaland was one of the anchors on the Wildcats' defensive unit.

Stanaland has also seen heavy duty on offense, playing at times at center, tackle and guard.

Steve was recently rated among the top-50 interior linemen among the prep football players in the country by Letterman magazine.



—Times Staff Photo by Robert Winter I

The Champions Plan

Coach Wright Bazemore and one of his Valdosta High School Wildcats, halfback George Rountree, discuss game plans in the thick of the State Class AAA high school football championship contest at Cleveland Field

Saturday night. The 'Cats defeated Avondale's Blue Devils 62-12 to claim their 15th state title since Bazemore came to VHS in 1940. See other stories and pictures on pages 16 and 17.