

# Region Champions

## It's VHS Vs. Westside In State Playoffs

BY MIKE CHASON —  
 THOMASVILLE — Rodney Gordon wrote "The Agony and the Ecstasy" Friday night. But instead of penning his thoughts to paper, he lived through the alltime classic on a high school football field moistened by the tears of both losers and winners.

Chastain rolled left, scanned his receivers and spotted 6-foot, 4-inch tight end Guy McIntyre standing alone behind the Valdosta secondary.



turned the tide in his favor when it took the second half and rolled down to the Valdosta 18-yard line, spurred by the efforts of Johnny Kavouktsis, who had 77 yards in 14 carries and Cary Clark, who had 65 yards in 11 trips.

not the play we should have run under those circumstances." As Hughes clenched his teeth, Rudolph unloosed the lead in his throat. "If they would have gotten that first down, Old Mo would have moved into a lower yardage area," Rudolph said. "That play and the fumble we got and scored on had to be the two turning points of the game."

VALDOSTA

|                    |             |             |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| First Downs        | Valdosta 17 | Westside 10 |
| Yards Rushing      | 277         | 130         |
| Passing            | 10          | 10          |
| Punting            | 6:13        | 5:11        |
| Time of Possession | 32:22       | 27:38       |
| Fumbles            | 2           | 3           |
| Penalties          | 5-65        | 5-52        |
| Turnovers          | 5-65        | 1-13        |

Calvin Wheeler kicked the extra point with 23 seconds to go in the second quarter to give Thomasville a 7-0 lead and put the Cats behind for only the second time all season.

But the Bulldogs didn't get six out of it. Instead, Chastain missed on a fourth down pass which might have drawn an interference call against Valdosta's Carl Roe in the end zone but didn't.

Then came the Chastain-to-Roe conversion that would give Valdosta the lead in the third quarter.

"We expected Kavouktsis to carry it out," said Troy Thomas, just made a good stop on Chastain. I didn't know if he intended to carry the ball all the way or not."

Valdosta cornerbacks Jeff Blain and Steve Johnson aided all hopes of a Bulldog triumph with a clutch interception in the closing seconds.

Valdosta also trailed Crisp County (Cordele) early in the campaign.

King fumbled four yards from the goal line early in the fourth quarter to wipe out another possible six points from the region's third-leading scorer this year.

With 8:17 to play, the Bulldogs then initiated a drive which most folks felt would be their last. It was one of these now-or-never, do-or-die deals.

"We wanted to keep the ball as long as we could and get it as far as we could," Lastering said. The Bulldogs did get the ball back with 1:08 on the clock 87 yards from the game-winner when Lastering's dive for a first down was short.

Gordon's effort closed the book on a 127 Valdosta victory in a game which should rank near the top in excitement, chills and thrills in a rivalry which began in 1914. It was the visiting Wildcats' 43rd win against 13 losses and five ties against Thomasville and sent VHS into the Region 4 AAAA formerly AAAA tournament for the second straight year.

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Wildcats' Ernest King Tries To Escape The Grasp Of Bulldog's Charles Bates



Wildcat Defender Begins Move Toward Lowering The Boom On Thomasville Running Back Johnny Kavouktsis

## Hyder Calls Game 'Toughest' Of All

BY MIKE HAGOOD —  
 THOMASVILLE — Thomasville gave Valdosta what Wildcat Coach Nick Hyder called "the toughest game we've had all year" in the Region 4 AAAA high school football championship game here Friday night.

The Valdosta Daily Times  
 SPORTS

### Prep Football Roundup

**Lakeside Whips Cedar Shoals, 6-2**

By The Associated Press

Savannah Country Day's lopsided 20-0 defeat at the hands of Johnson County in the Region 3A championship was the main surprise Friday night in Georgia high school football regional playoffs.

The football championships had been decided in all but three of Georgia's 32 high school athletic regions after Friday night's games which brought few shocks. Only the 6AA, 5AAA and 7AAA championships remained to be decided today.

Savannah Country Day, which had split its two regular season games against Johnson County, never penetrated past the Trojans' 42-yard line Friday. Johnson County talkback Herschel Walker finished 238 yards and made three touchdowns.

In other playoff games, Lakeside edged Cedar Shoals 6-2 in 8AAA. Benedictine

whipped Savannah 28-12 in 3AAA. Sprayberry downed Marietta 11-10 in 5AAA. Douglas beat Southwest DeKalb 10-7 in 7AAA and Westminster defeated Marietta 12-10 in 4AAA play.

Timmy McCrary ran for 242 yards and five touchdowns to lead the Ware County Gators to their 34-23 victory over Worth County for the 1AAA championship. His longest journey was 93 yards with 11 seconds remaining in the first half.

Giffin scored two touchdowns in the first 4 1/2 minutes of the second half to overtake Newnan and cruise to its 20-6 Region 6AAA victory. Newnan had taken a 6-0 lead on a 22-yard touchdown pass play from Chuck Barrett to Stan Hill.

Giffin's scores were on 13- and 1-yard runs by quarterback Jeff Ector and an 83-yarder by Ricky Williams.

Americus threw up a quick 19-0 first-quarter lead and coasted the rest of the way in its 37-7 win over Perry in Region 3AAA. Daniel Colwell carried 129 yards and scored two touchdowns in 12 carries, and Dennis King had 119 yards and two TDs in 13 carries for Americus.

Donald Green scored for Perry on a 2-yard touchdown run set up by a 31-yard halfback pass play from Sam Kendrick to Willie Harris.

Johnny Tull ran 287 yards in 17 carries to set an East Rome record as the Gladiators defeated Bowdon 27-9 in the 7AA playoff. Halfback Tull had touchdown runs of 63, 78 and 39 yards. Quarterback Johnny Tull aided a fourth touchdown with a 31-yard sneak.

Valdosta was trailing Thomasville 7-6 late in the third quarter when a Thomasville

calling intentional grounding, the official ruled the play a fumble after Thomasville's Oscar Morris recovered.

But Ernest King almost got it right back for Valdosta when he zipped 64 yards with the resulting kickoff with 11 seconds still on the clock.

Nothing changed about the VHS defense. Thomasville stalled again.

When VHS got the ball back, Irvin Roe rolled out for a halfback pass, saw he was trapped and threw the ball straight down into the ground. However, instead of

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Thomasville Coach Jim Hughes shuffled his cards and lost on a fourth down which put Valdosta on the Valdosta 47-yard line. Chastain came up six inches short on the run.

"I should have utilized my timeout and selected a better play," Hughes said. "John Chastain made the best of a real poor situation. That was

Hyder told him. He should be ready next week."

Through the rest of the first half, both teams showed the ability to move the ball, but both were unable to score again. With 2:30 seconds left in the half, Irvin Roe lost the ball on a fumble and the Bulldogs' Oscar Morris recovered at the Valdosta 41-yard line.

Then Thomasville struck for the lead.

Chastain rolled out, he faked and then threw to McIntyre on a well executed play. It was just good sound football," said Hyder.

Hyder and his staff were forced to go to the dressing room behind 7-6. The only other time the Cats had trailed this season was 7-0 against Crisp County (Cordele).

Hyder told his players at halftime, "if they want to be champions they had to get out and get it. It was just good to bruise yourself a little bit."

The Wildcats went out and got bruised the second half. The defense rose to the occasion on key situations and the offense took its cue to take a precious lead.

Valdosta's second six-point play was set up when Clifford Johnson recovered a Cary Clark fumble.

"We lost the football that led to their second touchdown," said Thomasville Coach Jim Hughes. "Good teams force fumbles. Championship teams minimize fumbles."

"They'll live the playoffs," said a dejected Hughes as he walked from the field with a fearful daughter in his arms. "I didn't expect to lose."

Later a slightly more composed Hughes said, "they are an excellent team. They

have an excellent chance to win the state championship. They will have the home field advantage."

Hughes blamed himself for Thomasville's failure to convert the lead on the Bulldogs next to last possession.

He said, "our failure was due to some confusion on my part. I must have used a time out. John Chastain made the most of a difficult situation and did not play for that situation."

That situation was a fourth down and about two yards to go for a first down on the third and long Troy Thomas had made a beautiful stop on tight end Guy Lastering, two yards short of a first down. Chastain tried to run off tackle for the first down and was stopped again by Thomas and the right side of the Valdosta defense.

"Our goal was to play three more minutes and have a time out. John Chastain made the most of a difficult situation and did not play for that situation."

"Practice at this time is not drudgery, it is a privilege. It was almost a great game."

"Realistically at the half we had the score our way, but we were not exactly kicking them around. It could very easily have been a 14-14 tie. The second half was pretty much like the first. At times we moved the ball. At times we were stopped."

"The close-out came on a Rodney Gordon interception of a Chastain pass."

The Wildcats move on to Valdosta's playoffs. They played 10 games. They are not braggarts. They played twelve and are