

TIGER FLASHBACK

CENTRAL GWINNETT

1968

The Central Gwinnett Black Knights ventured up I-85 to Tigertown for the tenth game of the 1968 football campaign, but the Commerce Tigers saved their best effort of the year for the last game of the season, as the Black and Gold of CHS completely demolished the tin clad men to the tune of (34-9).

Commerce jumped out to a 7-0 lead in the first two and one half minutes, added another score before the quarter ended, and then put the game out of reach with scores in each of the remaining three periods.

The Tigers took the opening kickoff and drove 66 yards in seven plays with halfback Keith Massey scoring from five yards out with 9:36 remaining in the opening stanza. Massey and senior halfback Wendell Wilson accounted for most of the yardage, while quarterback John Fleming added a seven yard pass to Wilson for good measure.

The big play in the drive was Massey's 25-yard gallop to the Knight five, whereupon he scored on the next play. Wilson kicked the PAT for a (7-0) Tiger lead and one that they would never relinquish.

Midway through the first period, the Knights got on the scoreboard with a safety that proved to be their only scoring until the fourth period when the issue had long since been decided. The safety came when the Central defense dropped halfback Dusty Brown for a loss in the Tiger end zone cutting the Tiger lead to (7-2).

This didn't help the Black Knights much, for the Tigers on their next possession stormed 93 yards back down the field for their second score.

This time Wilson was responsible for most of the damage with 77 yards on three carries, one was a beautiful 61 yard scamper and the final four came on a sweep around end for the tally. He then booted the PAT to give Commerce a (14-2) advantage as the first quarter expired.

Just before the halftime horn sounded, the Tigers made it (20-2), after Tony Barnett recovered a Black Knight fumble at the Central 40. Wilson reeled off 18 yards and Fleming on a sweep added 16 more down to the visitors' six yard line. Three plays later, fullback Roger Beauchamp blasted over guard from the one yard line for the Tigers third TD of the first half. Wilson's PAT kick was wide, but Coach Ray Lamb's men took a (20-2) lead into the halftime rest period.

The second half, like the first, belonged to the gold and black felines, as it was only

three minutes old before Commerce found the end zone once more, this time with Beauchamp again delivering the knockout blow on a 6-yard buck up the Black Knights' defensive middle.

Defensive tackle Tommy Andrews set it all up when he claimed a Central Gwinnett fumble at the Knights 13. Sophomore Stanley Seagraves kicked his first of two PAT's in the second half for a (27-2) Tiger lead.

Early in the fourth period, Central Gwinnett scored its only TD of the game on a 37-yard TD pass from quarterback Jimmy Braney to Gerald Watson. The PAT was successful cutting the Tiger margin to (27-9). However, the fireworks were not over on this cool night.

The Tigers got one last score for the 1968 season, and this time they not only used some new faces that would be seen a lot in the '69 campaign but used the whole field to do their damage.

Mike Carlan started it all by intercepting a Black Knight pass at the Tiger one to thwart the only other real scoring threat of the night for Central Gwinnett.

Commerce then went on a 99-yard march. Behind the bruising runs of Massey and Beauchamp, Coach Ray Lamb's forces moved the ball to the Tiger 20, and then the highlight of the drive was a 45-yard strike from Fleming to young Oral Chester who carried the pigskin to the CG 35.

Dusty Brown then ripped off nine more before a roughing penalty moved the ball to the CG 13. Brown, a few plays later, made up for the two point safety that he cost the Tigers earlier in the game, when he bolted up the middle for the touchdown from nine yards out with 1:29 left in the contest.

Seagraves' booming kick was again true, as the Tigers ended the season with a (34-9) romp over the visiting Black Knights who loaded up the bus and took their armor southward to get it repolished for next year.

Commerce ended the season with a 4-5-1 record also defeating: Milton, Rockdale County and Madison County while losing to Norcross, South Habersham, Jefferson, Monroe Area and South Gwinnett while tying Stone Mountain 7-7 midway through the season.

Others on the 1968 team were: George Allen, Keith Ariail, Doug Bolton, Ricky Chandler, Danny Cotrell, Al Fleming, Tim Garrett, Richard Hanley, Pat Hodsdon, Gene Jacobs, Dennis Kesler, Shirley Lord, John Mize, Danny Morgan, Steve Perry, Alfred Smith, Greg Smith, Mike Whitfield and Dennis Wilbanks.

Primarily compiled from *THE COMMERCE NEWS* reports

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