

TIGER FLASHBACK

JEFFERSON

1947

In one of the most historic games in Commerce football history, the 1947 Tigers entertained the Jefferson “Mud Turtles” in the first ever football game between the two schools. On this rainy and muddy night on the new football field located behind Commerce High School which was situated on Shankle Heights Road in Commerce, the Tigers mauled the visitors, as they scored all 32 of their points in two quarters—nineteen in the second and thirteen in the third for a (32-0) shellacking of the team from south of the river. Following the game, the reptiles tucked their tails and ambled back over the North Oconee River to Jefferson to lick their wounds.

Two weeks later, Commerce would travel to Jefferson to once more play their rivals in the rain and mud. Commerce again pitched a shutout, but this time the score was a little closer at (13-0). The only other time that the two teams would play twice in a single season would be in 1995 with the second contest being a playoff game.

In this fourth game of the season, the contest began in a slow fashion, as the two rivals sparred with each other for a quarter before Commerce exploded for 19 points in the second stanza. The last half was left to the reserves who chalked up two tallies of their own.

Receiving the opening kickoff, the Commerce Tigers were unable to move consistently and eventually punted to Jefferson. The visitors immediately punched out their only first down on their initial drive of the night, but the Tiger defense stiffened and forced a punt in this uneventful quarter of play.

In the second stanza, Commerce got its offensive machine in gear as the Tigers began to roar. Fullback C.W. Crawford set sail on a 55-yard run for a TD that was called back on a backfield in motion penalty. The drive stalled and Commerce punted.

The Jefferson punt returner bobbed the wet pigskin but recovered back on the reptile 20 yard line. Four plays later, Tiger lineman Sidney “Pig” Waters broke through the line and blocked a Jefferson punt that was recovered by teammate Hayward Tarpley in the Jefferson end zone for a touchdown. The PAT kick was missed by Don Burchett and the score remained (6-0) for the Tigers.

This blocked punt return for a TD was the first known return of a blocked punt for a touchdown in Tiger history.

Later in the middle of the second period after a 60 yard drive, fullback Crawford smashed over center behind good blocking from two yards out to increase the Tiger lead to (12-0). Burchett's try for the PAT kick again was missed, but the Tigers now led by twelve.

Thirty seconds before the halftime intermission horn sounded, Tarpley raced 55 yards on a double reverse for the third Commerce touchdown in this eventful second period. The blocking was superb and the play caught the "Mud Turtles" completely by surprise, as the Tiger speedster was untouched on the play. Crawford then hit the middle of the Jefferson defense for the successful PAT run, and the score at the half had Commerce pitching a shutout at (19-0).

In the second half, Commerce played mainly second teamers. HB Tommy Syfan returned a punt 50 yards for a TD in the third period. Tiger players set up a return wall and blocked to precision, as the young back waltzed into the end zone untouched. With the missed PAT, Commerce now led convincingly (25-0).

A few minutes later in the third period, Crawford passed to Tarpley in the right flat. The young end then lateraled to Howell Little out of the backfield who ripped down the sideline for 15 yards and the final venture into pay dirt on the night for Commerce. From his quarterback position, Little then ran over for the successful PAT to make the final score read COMMERCE—32, JEFFERSON—0 in the initial football encounter between the two intra-county schools.

These two schools have played each year since 1947 with the exception of 1950, and Commerce owns a sizeable won-loss advantage over the Dragons with a commanding record of (40-15-5).

The 1947 Tigers went on to post a fine season record of (6-3-0), as they defeated Jefferson twice as well as Ellijay, Eastanollee, Jonesboro and Cornelia while losing to Toccoa, Washington and Buford the last two defeats being close one touchdown decisions.

Others on the 1947 team were: Ray Adams, Richard Alexander, Gene Baird, Bradley Caudell, Verne Davis, Otho Dodd, Curtis Elliott, Glenn Farmer, Ray Fruit, Roy Fruit, Ralph Green, Buddy Harber, Weymond Ingram, Ebb Kilpatrick, Richard Kirby, DeWoodie Martin, Gerald McClelland, Herman Smallwood, Charlie Ray Stephenson, Curtis Stowe, Thomas Sweetser, Warren Toney and Amory Williams.

Primarily compiled from *THE COMMERCE NEWS* reports

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Commerce-Jefferson Series

Record-----(41-16-5)
Home------(22-7-2)
Away------(19-9-3)

Shutouts

Commerce-----13
Jefferson-----6

Record By Decade

40's------(4-0-0)
50's------(4-3-2)
60's------(5-3-2)
70's------(4-5-1)
80's------(8-2-0)
90's------(9-2-0)
2000's------(7-1-0)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Commerce</u>	<u>Jefferson</u>
1947*	32	0
1947	13	0
1948*	38	6
1949	61	0
1950-	----no game played----	
1951*	13	8
1952	6	6
1953*	14	7
1954	13	13
1955*	13	27
1956	0	12
1957*	13	6
1958	13	7
1959*	7	26
1960	0	0
1961*	13	7
1962	32	7
1963*	0	0

1964	20	0
1965*	41	8
1966	20	0
1967*	6	7
1968	6	20
1969*	0	19
1970	0	14
1971*	6	33
1972	42	14
1973*	28	3
1974	7	22
1975*	12	14
1976	28	14
1977*	21	0
1978*	14	14
1979	18	34
1980	7	10
1981*	35	8
1982	0	10
1983*	28	9
1984	12	8
1985*	48	7
1986	34	7
1987*	6	0
1988	33	0
1989*	29	20
1990*	59	20
1991	42	0
1992*	14	12
1993	26	6
1994	6	9
1995*	7	21
1995#	22	18
1996	40	0
1997*	27	7
1998*	49	18
1999	56	27
2000*	42	14
2001	14	0
2002*	36	7
2003	35	13
2004	34	31, 20T
2005*	33	15
2006*	15	13
2007	7	42

62 games	1357	700
average	21.89	11.29

*-----Home Games

#-----Playoff Game