

Gateway's quickness, speed still too much for Wildcats, 38-7

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Well, it's a start.

For the first time in three years, Greater Latrobe scored on Gateway.

Going into Friday night's WPIAL Quad-A South Conference opener, Greater Latrobe had not only been shut out, but outscored by a margin of 91-0 in its two previous games against Gateway.

The Wildcats finally ended that drought that lasted nearly 11 full quarters, but Gateway's quickness and speed was still too much for them as the visiting Gators won for the first time this season while handing Greater Latrobe its initial loss, 38-7, last night at Memorial Stadium.

"This was a good thing about telling us where we have to get to," stated GL's Ray Reitz, who talked earlier in the week about finding out just how far his team had come in a little more than a year with him as head coach. "I want to say we learned a lot tonight.

"I think we stepped up in class and we just didn't handle it very well. We just didn't make plays tonight as a group."

Greater Latrobe (0-1, 2-1) managed just 131 yards with 93 of those coming on the ground. Conversely, Gateway — which had scored only seven points and with its leading rusher, sophomore Darin Franklin, having a mere 68 yards in two games — amassed 361 yards that included 143 passing by sophomore quarterback Thomas Woodson.

And Franklin had more yards rushing in the first quarter — 78 — than he had coming in. He finished with 127 on 24 carries, just two less attempts than in the first two weeks, and scored twice — the Gators' first two touchdowns.

The Wildcats also turned the ball over four times — all fumbles — after putting the football on the ground six times. Three of those led to 21 points for Gateway (1-0, 1-2), one directly on a short fumble return of 14 yards.

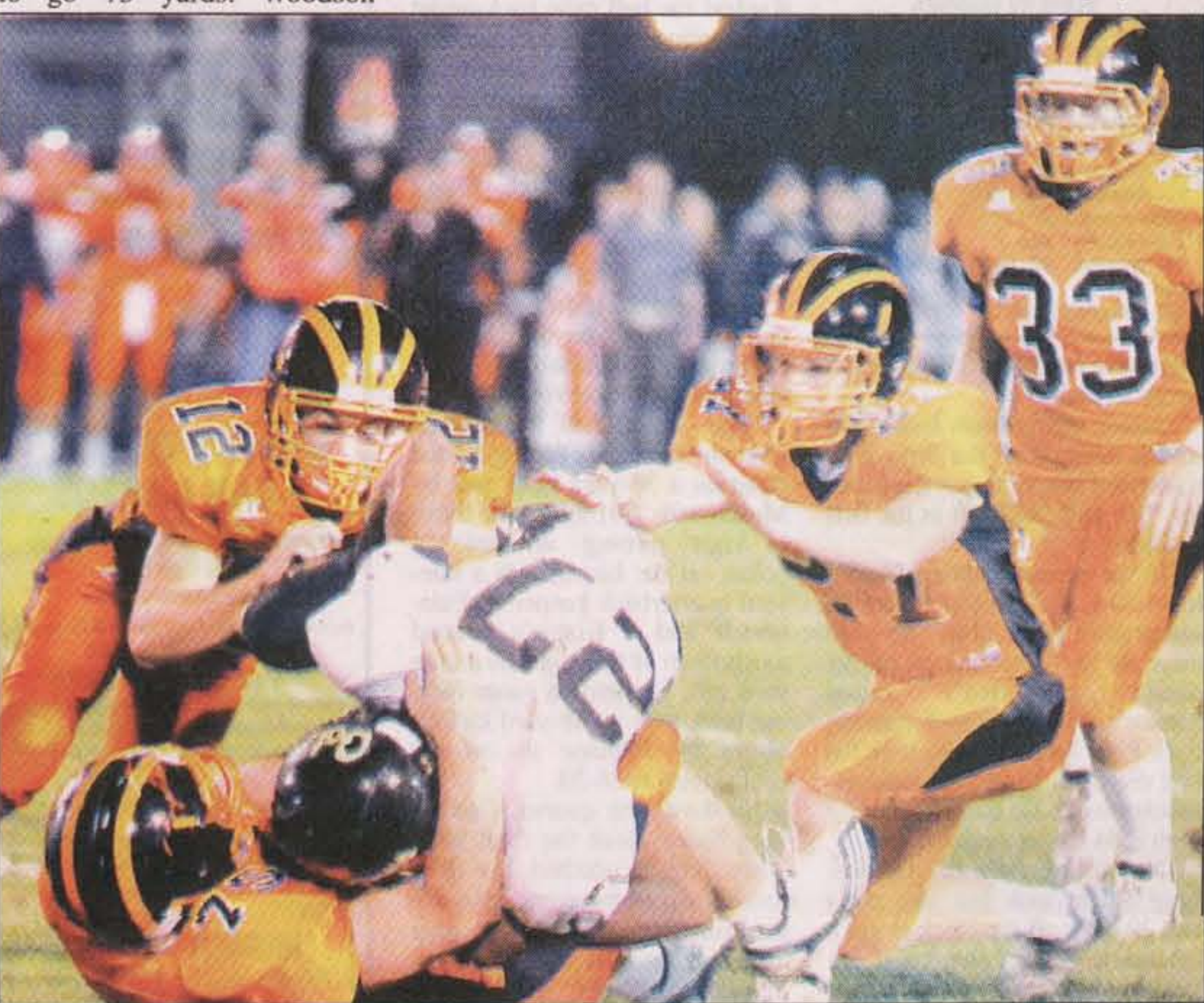
"I know they played a lot better than us," Reitz simplified.

"We had our opportunities. We just didn't make plays."

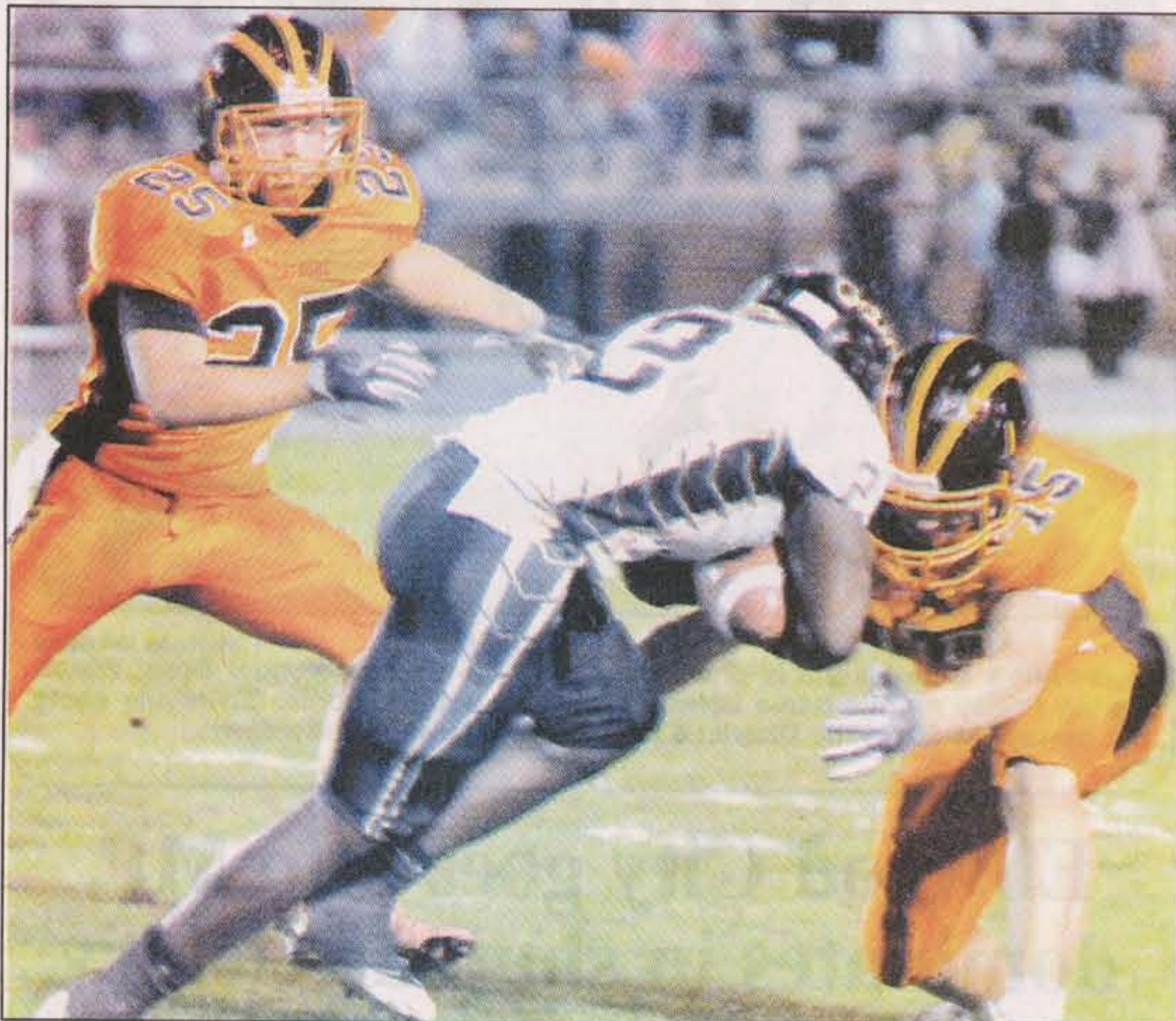
GL had a chance early on when Gateway's Franklin fumbled on the second play of the game with defensive back Derrick Zavatsky recovering. But the Wildcats gave it right back on their second snap, and — on second down — Franklin went 45 yard around right end for the score with Eric Fitchwell kicking the first of his five extra points just a minute and 20 seconds in.

The next time Gateway had the ball, it drove it 57 yards in 15 plays. The Gators picked up 18 yards in two plays on third and 18 and then fourth and inches, and Williams eventually went in again, weaving his way through the GL defense on an eight-yard touchdown run with 1:48 left in the first quarter.

Once again, the 'Cats converged up the ball on their next series, and — this time — Gateway needed only six plays to go 75 yards. Woodson



Greater Latrobe defenders Rich Hall (12), Carmen Sylvania (75), Philip Piontkowski (27), and Ean Jury (33) converge to bring down Gateway's Darin Franklin during a punt return.



Greater Latrobe defenders Dan Ferguson (15) and Derrick Zavatsky (25) try to bring down Gateway running back Brian Jones during the Wildcats' 38-7 loss to the Gators Friday night at Memorial Stadium. Jones had 120 all-purpose yards, including five receptions for 78 yards and a score. GL tries some trickery (below) as Zavatsky gives the ball to halfback Scott Mohring during a double handoff.

Photos by Ernie Sistek

Gateway 38		Greater Latrobe 7	
	G	GL	
First downs	16	11	
Rushes-yds	43-218	44-93	
Passing yds	143	48	
Passes-int	10-14-0	5-10-0	
Fumbles-lost	4-2	6-4	
Penalties-yds	8-85	5-40	
Punts-avg	2-33	3-31.5	
Total offense	361	131	

Score by Quarters	
Gateway	14 10 7 7 — 38
Gr. Latrobe	0 0 7 0 — 7

Scoring	
G—Franklin 45 run (Fitchwell kick)	
G—Franklin 8 run (Fitchwell kick)	
G—Williams 26 pass from Woodson (Fitchwell kick)	
G—Fitchwell 21 field goal	
G—Jones 28 pass from Woodson (Fitchwell kick)	
GL—Mohring 21 run (Drake kick)	
GL—Haynes 14 fumble return (Fitchwell kick)	

Rushing	
G—Franklin 24-127; Jones 6-42; Davis 1-41; Williams 3-6; Snow 2-3; Woodson 7-(-1)	
GL—Lonigro 14-41; Mohring 8-26; Taylor 10-23; Hall 2-17; Finley 4-13; Zavatsky 1-3; Siwiak 1-2; Rossi 1-(-3); O'Neal 1-(-10); Wojciechowski 2-(-19)	

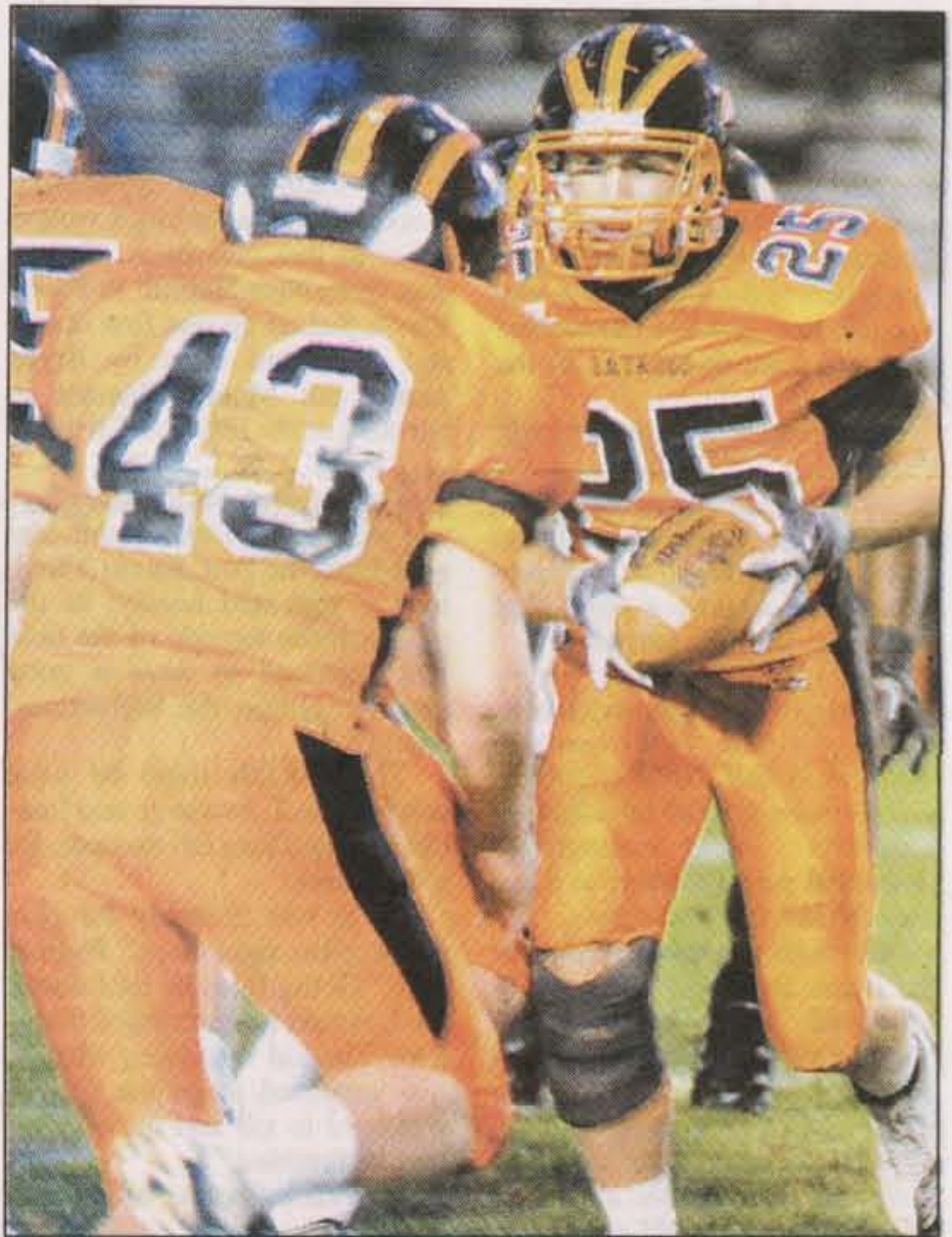
Passing	
G—Woodson 10-14-0-143	
GL—Lonigro 3-8-0-38; Wojciechowski 2-2-0-10	

Receiving	
G—Jones 5-78; Williams 2-43; Blye 2-13; Robinson 1-9	
GL—Finley 1-22; Mohring 1-10; Siwiak 1-8; Taylor 1-6; Weltz 1-2	

hooked up in the back left corner of the endzone with senior wide receiver Armstead Williams, who made a juggling catch at the 9:51-mark of the second quarter to make it 21-0.

The only other score of the half was a 21-yard field goal by Fitchwell with 2:53 left. That was set up by a high snap on a Wildcats' punt attempt that gave the Gators the ball on the GL 45.

Gateway then scored first in the third quarter, at 4:53, to cap another short series that lasted



only five plays but covered 62 yards. And that touchdown came on a broken play.

In shotgun formation, Woodson had to bring in a high snap and then scramble out of the pocket. When he did, junior running back Brian Jones hauled in a pass and took it the rest of the way for a 28-yard TD, and it was 31-0.

Greater Latrobe's lone touchdown came on the ensuing possession, it's first — and only — points against Gateway in three meetings. The Wildcats went 60 yards in nine plays with

senior halfback Scott Mohring running off the right side from 21 yards out with Scott Drake adding the extra point.

"I thought the kids played hard in the second half," Reitz offered.

Gateway's final score came after yet another GL fumble, and this one was deep in its territory. Defensive end Demond Haynes scooped it up at the 14 and ran it in with 5:54 left in the game.

"They're a good club," Reitz said of the Gators, "and we gave them way too much respect. "But I don't want to take anything away from Gateway.

"They're a very good team. They're very quick.

"We just got to get over the hump. "We got to go back and keep working."

The leading rusher for the Wildcats was actually senior quarterback D.J. Lonigro, although he had just 41 yards on 14 carries. He completed five of 10 passes for 48 yards while Mohring ran for only 26.

"We got knocked down tonight," Reitz conceded. "Now, we'll see who the men are.

"We got to get back up. That's what it's all about. It's about dealing with adversity.

"It's like life. You get knocked down a lot of times in life...you have to get back up.

"You don't quit. And our kids won't quit.

"We got to get back and keep working harder. We can still make the playoffs, and that's what it's all about.

"We'll get better. We'll be back."

GL's next conference game is Friday at winless Conneville (0-1, 0-3). The Falcons have now lost 29 straight games.