

TIGER FLASHBACK

MONROE AREA

1964

The Commerce Tigers and Monroe Purple Hurricanes rolled into Jefferson, a neutral site, for the game that would determine the champion of Region 4A.

The Tigers down 14-0 at the half came roaring back in the second half with 31 points to change the Purple Hurricanes of Monroe into a little zephyr and claim the region title for the first time since the 1961 team had defeated Toccoa for the region title. The Tigers won a thrilling come-from-behind (31-14) victory at Jefferson's Memorial Stadium there at the county seat.

The Hurricanes took advantage of two Tiger miscues in the first stanza to take an early lead. With two minutes gone in the game, Monroe defensive back David Hood intercepted Tiger quarterback Johnny Nix's pass and raced 52 yards to pay dirt and the game's first tally.

On the first play from scrimmage following the ensuing kickoff, Commerce fumbled the pigskin away at its own 18 yard line. Six plays later, Hurricane quarterback Jimmy Bolton sneaked over the goal line for the second Monroe touchdown of the night. Stanley Hutchins booted both PAT's and the Purple Hurricanes held a quick (14-0) advantage early in the contest.

This score stood until the half with neither team being able to move consistently during the second period.

Whatever Coaches Jeff Davis and Hayden Hays had to say at intermission seemed to get the attention of the young men of Black and Gold from Tigertown, for during the second half, the Hurricanes could do nothing right and the Tigers could do no wrong.

Monroe wasn't unable to gain a single yard during the third and fourth quarters against the vaunted Tiger defense, as they mounted no threat whatsoever against the peerless Commerce defense which intercepted six errant Monroe passes on the night.

In the meantime, the Tiger offense had come alive in gaining 194 yards, nine first downs, and scoring 5 touchdowns in the second half of the game.

Tiger quarterback Nix connected with end David Herbert for two scoring strikes of 42

and 11 yards in the third quarter to narrow the Hurricane lead to (14-12) after two failed Tiger PAT attempts. He then threw another 5-yard TD strike to halfback Darrell Massey as the Tiger offense took the lead at (18-14).

Later, Nix ran 21 yards for another touchdown to increase the Tiger advantage to (24-14) in the fourth quarter.

The final tally against the distraught and shell-shocked Monroviaans came on a one-yard plunge by fullback Chuck Vaughn to pay dirt to climax the Tigers second half onslaught. Max Carnes then kicked the lone Tiger PAT of the night giving the victorious Commerce Tigers a hard-fought, second half rally for the (31-14) victory and the Region 4A title.

Fullback Tim Miller played an outstanding game rushing for 45 yards and intercepting two enemy passes.

In the North Georgia title game, Commerce lost to eventual state champion Carrollton by a score of 13-0 and ended the season with an 11-2 record. This contest was also played at Jefferson's Memorial Stadium.

During the 1964 season, Commerce also defeated Stephens County, East Hall, Jefferson, North Habersham, Madison County, North Hall, Rabun County, White County, Franklin County and South Habersham in the Region 4A North playoff game at City Park in Gainesville. The only other loss by the Tigers was to South Habersham in a regular season game besides the defeat to Carrollton.

Others who played on the 1964 team were: Larry Pardue, Robert Oliver, Joe James, Garold Jordan, Charles Tittle, Billy Cushing, Robert Purcell, Thomas Parks, Mike Richey, Ronnie McDonald, Darold Crocker, Mitch Whitfield, Tripp Rogers, Curt Massey, Mike McClure, Tony Evans, Larry Presley, Melvin Cooper, Danny Sorrow, John Richey, Freddie Smith, Steve Gary, Max Carnes, Greg Perry, Johnny Tolbert, Mike Archer and Wayne Wilbanks.

Primarily compiled from *THE COMMERCE NEWS* reports

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