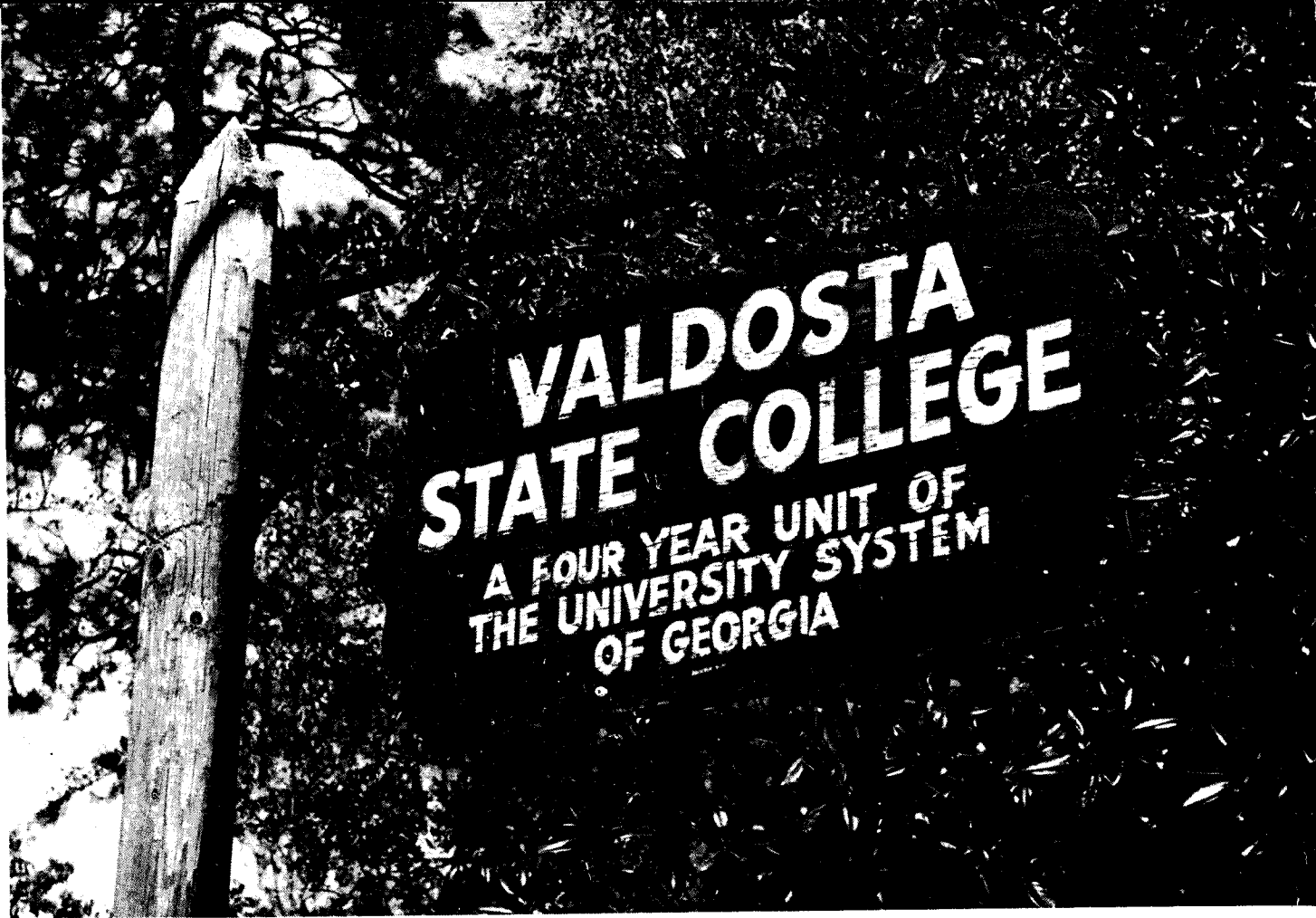


1955-71



**VALDOSTA  
STATE COLLEGE**  
A FOUR YEAR UNIT OF  
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
OF GEORGIA

VALDOSTA STATE SPORT HISTORY  
BOOK 1 -- BASEBALL  
VOLUME ONE

# THE YEARS



## PREFACE

Enclosed, you will find the statistical history of Valdosta State College baseball, from 1955 through 1977. This is Volume I, The Years. It contains, to the best of my knowledge, each, and every player, who ever batted, or pitched for Valdosta State, and that player's correct, yearly statistics.

Volume II, The Players, contains year-by-year, and career statistics on each player in Valdosta State baseball history, and also includes hitting totals, pitching totals, tournament records, and all the other records that make baseball a statisticians dream.

I want to thank, Steve Roberts, Gene Felts, Bill Thomas, Coach Tommy Thomas, Coach Bill Grant, the 1976 Blazer baseball team, and Dr. Floyd Toth, for their help in the preparation of these volumes. I especially want to say, "thanks," to my wife, Jody, for putting-up with me while I prepared this work.

All the mistakes are mine. That includes-- statistical, pictorial, spelling, typing, and characterization. I hope that my grammar, and other English usage is correct. Even if it is not, I assume that you will still get the meaning.

Because of the lack of scorebooks, from the 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, and 1961 seasons, statistics from these years are as correct as possible. Please bring to my attention any errors in this text, and I will include corrections when this volume is updated in 1982. I hope that you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed preparing it.

Dave Waples  
Athletic Department  
Valdosta State College  
Valdosta, Ga. 31601

## IMPORTANT DATES IN VSC BASEBALL HISTORY

1954-- First baseball season ... went 3-2 against JUCO competition. 1955-- First season of "official" intercollegiate competition ... with Walter Cottingham as coach, VSC was 6-5. 1958-- VSC joined the Georgia Conference (GIAC). 1959-- Gary Colson became coach, as VSC went 10-11. 1960-- Bill Grant became coach, and VSC won the GIAC title (15-5), but had to vacate because of ineligible players. 1962-- Coach Grant finished constructing Rebel Field, and VSC joined the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). 1965-- VSC won their first "official" Georgia Conference championship, and received a bid to NAIA District-25 play. 1968-- Tommy Thomas became coach ... VSC went 15-9 this season. 1969-- VSC won both the GIAC, and the District-25 tournament ... entered NAIA Area-5 play-offs for the first time ... had the best record in history (27-10). 1970-- Repeated GIAC, and District-25 titles. 1971-- Again, repeated GIAC, and District-25 titles. 1972-- Won Georgia Conference, and District-25, for the 4th. consecutive year. 1973-- Nickname changed from Rebels, to Blazers ... won NAIA District, and Area, and competed in the NAIA World Series for the first time in history ... dropped from GIAC. 1974-- Won the newly formed South Atlantic Conference, and the NCAA Regional ... competed in the NCAA World Series ... joined the NCAA. 1975-- received a bid to the NCAA Regional. 1977-- Won the South Atlantic Conference, and hosted the NCAA Regionals ... won the Regionals on a bottom-of-the-ninth, two-run-homer by Craig Viers, to advance to their second appearance at the NCAA World Series.

Valdosta State has had three first-team All-Americans-- Gene Felts by the NAIA in both 1972, and 1973; Sam Bowen by the NCAA in 1974; and, Viers by the NCAA in 1977. Also, three Blazers were named second-team, NCAA, All-American-- Skip Fite, Steve McDiffitt, and Cecil Whitehead (all in 1977).



*Miss U. S. C.*

GAYLE ARLINE  
Thomasville

'55



## 1955 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

Valdosta State began its baseball program in 1954, playing a 5-game junior college schedule, winning 3, and losing 2. In 1955, under the prodding of freshman, baseball nut, Emory Mobley, Coach Walter Cottingham made baseball an official sport, by embarking on an 11-game schedule, along with several exhibition games against JC's. The VSC athletic teams (which only included basketball and baseball at this point) received a nickname in the Spring of this year, when the student body voted to adopt the REBEL as their mascot.

This first VSC team suffered from a lack of funds, equipment, and coaching. Mr. Cottingham acknowledged his lack of expertise about the game, and practices were haphazardly held, and organized. Players often had to supply their own bats and balls, and the campus area (where Patterson Hall is now located) where practice was held, was both bumpy and unfit for suitable drills.

Most games were played on the road (a few were held at Pendleton Park, where Valdosta's Class-D team performed), often on 2 and 3 day road-trips. Private cars were used for travel, with Coach Cottingham's station wagon being the least desirable, since the coach had a propensity for often running along the berm of the road. Mobley, when forced to ride with the coach, demanded (and wore) the catcher's equipment; sitting in the back seat, and holding on for dear life. As the wagon began its treacherous trip, Mobley would always yell, "Give it some gas, 'Mad-Man-Muntz'."

The Rebels went 6-5 this first year, beating Piedmont and Oglethorpe three times each, but losing to the more experienced clubs from Georgia Teachers, and North Georgia. Marvin Hatcher (3-2), and Bob McElvey (2-2) handled the majority of the pitching chores, and suffered from both wildness, and shoddy fielding on the part of the team.

Hitting was sufficient, with right-fielder Roy McQuaig (.395), shortstop Gene Gray (.356), and center-fielder Bob Green (.333) leading the way, but against top pitching offered by Teachers and North Georgia, the Rebs suffered, scoring only 12 total runs in their five losses.

These first team members, however, were pioneers for players that would later put Valdosta State on the baseball map. Had these men had the advantages of good coaching, proper equipment and practice facilities, their record would have been much better.



THE LIBRARY



POUND HALL ON NORTH CAMPUS

VALDOSTA STATE  
1955 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 6 - lost 5

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Roy McQuaig, rf	38	12	15	---	.395	--	-	-	--
Gene Gray, ss	45	15	16	---	.356	--	-	-	--
Bob Green, cf	36	9	12	---	.333	--	-	-	--
Marvin Hatcher, p	15	4	5	---	.333	--	-	-	--
Noel George, 3b	44	6	12	---	.273	--	-	-	--
Emory Mobley, 2b	37	7	9	---	.243	--	-	-	--
Ed Deaton, 1b	30	6	7	---	.233	--	-	-	--
Bill Long, c	32	6	7	---	.219	--	-	-	--
Bob McElvey, p	13	5	2	---	.154	--	-	-	--
Jack Knight, lf	35	11	5	---	.143	--	-	-	--
TOTALS	358	86	97	---	.271	--	-	-	--

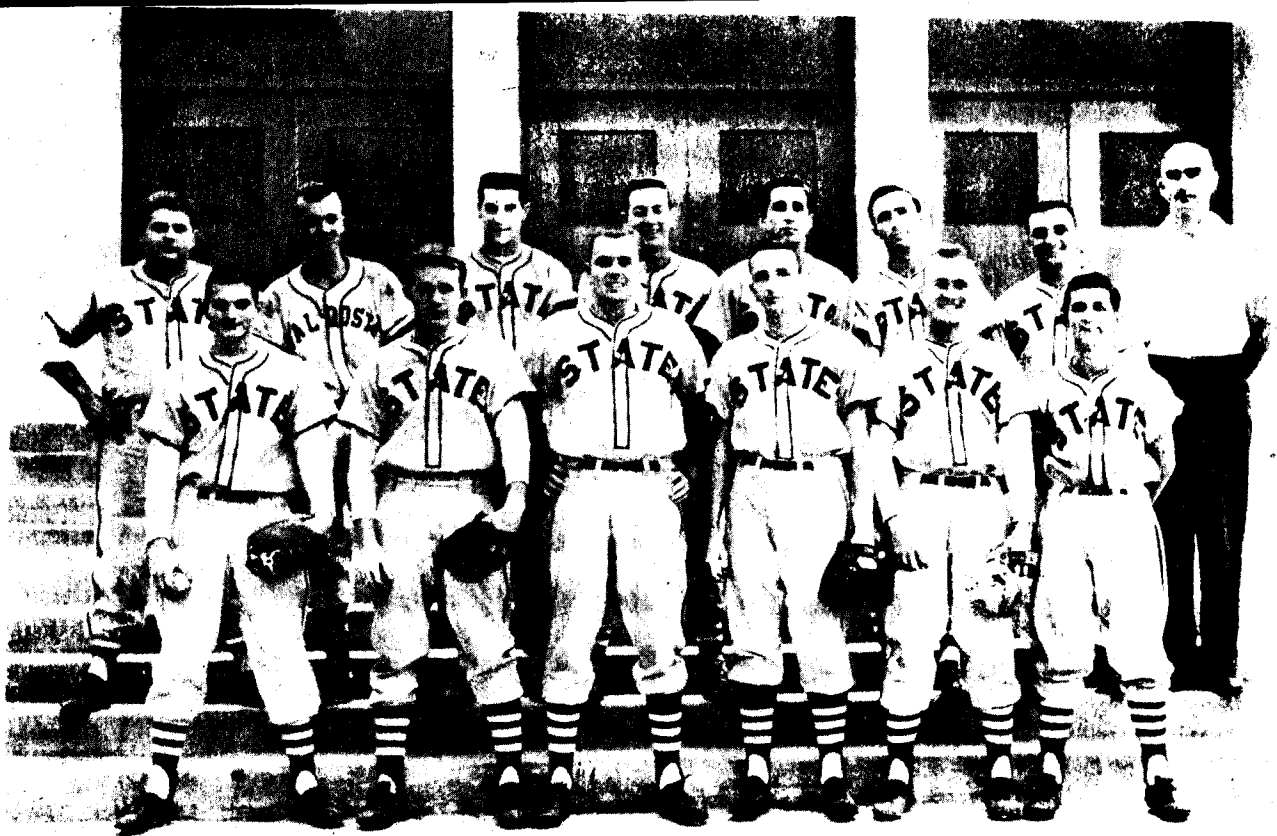
(Murray Comer, rf 7-2, .286; Larry Massey, rf 7-2, .286; John Nossick, 1b 8-2, .250; Jack Bates, lf 8-1, .125; Ashley Hill, lf 2-0, .000; Sam McGowan, rf 1-0, .000)

	WON	LOST	PCT.
Jack Knight	1	0	1.000
Marvin Hatcher	3	2	.600
Bob McElvey	2	2	.500
Roy McQuaig	0	1	.000
TOTALS	6	5	.545

VSC 19, Piedmont .....	1
VSC 6, Piedmont .....	0
(L) VSC 3, Georgia Teachers ...	7
(L) VSC 3, Georgia Teachers ...	14
(L) VSC 0, Georgia Teachers ...	13
VSC 21, Oglethorpe .....	2
VSC 7, Oglethorpe .....	0
VSC 10, Oglethorpe .....	3
VSC 11, Piedmont .....	9
(L) VSC 3, North Georgia .....	5
(L) VSC 3, North Georgia .....	8

NOTE: only those batting and pitching statistics available, are shown. Only those game results available, are calculated into statistics. Only games versus senior, degree-granting, college institutions are calculated into statistics.

Georgia Teachers is now Georgia Southern.



Row One: Sam McGowen, Murray Comer, Jack Knight, Buck Pafford, Ashley Hill, Jack Bates. Row Two: Ed Deaton, John Mobley, Gene Gray, Robert McElvey, Milton Blaine, Bob Green, Noel George, Coach Cottingham.



The Administration Building as seen from Patterson Street.

MISS VALDOSTA STATE COLLEGE

*miss shirley mcgowan*



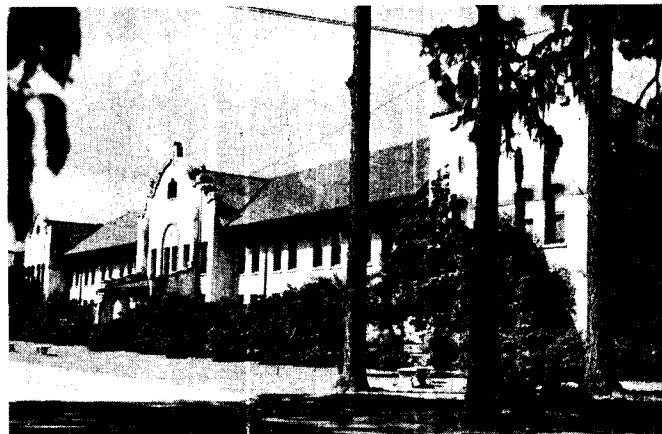
'56

## 1956 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

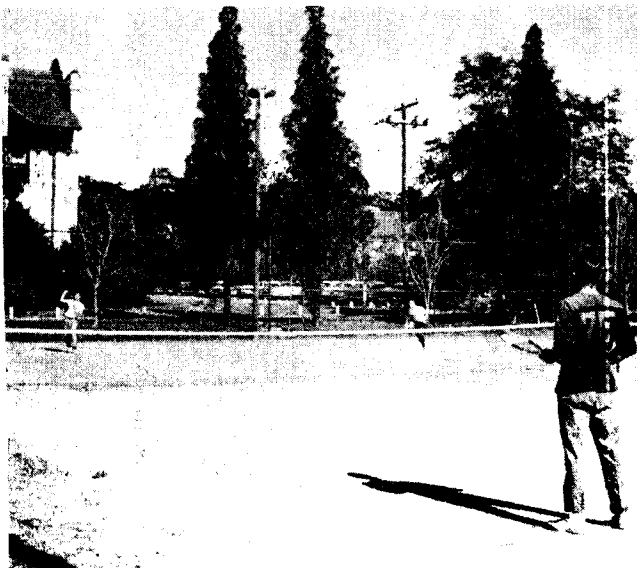
1956 was a "bummer" for VSC baseball. After a successful 6-5 beginning in 1955, the Rebels dropped to 2-8 against senior college competition. The club had Marvin Hatcher back as their ace, but the Columbus, Ga. native suffered from anemic team offense and could only show a 2-5 mark for his efforts.

Left-fielder Dick Smith, who saw limited action, led the hitters with a .400 average, but no regular hit over the prized .300 mark. The loss of stalwarts Roy McQuaig and Noel George helped lead to the team's downfall, and only sophomore center-fielder Ashley Hill (.244), and third-baseman Gene Gray (.279) supplied any offensive power.

Coach Cottingham saw the season begin on a losing note, by dropping two single games to Florida Southern (5-4 and 6-0) in Lakeland. The Rebels did defeat North Georgia 8-1, behind Hatcher's four-hitter, but could win only one of three from Piedmont, while losing two to both Georgia Teachers and North Georgia.



ASHLEY HALL



Tennis Class in Session.



Student Golfers Tee Off.

VALDOSTA STATE  
1956 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 2 - lost 8

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Dick Smith, lf	20	4	8	--	.400	--	-	-	--
Charles Sheffield, of-p	10	1	3	--	.300	--	-	-	--
Gene Gray, 3b	43	6	12	--	.279	--	-	-	--
Ed Deaton, 1b	37	3	10	--	.270	--	-	-	--
John McLeod, ss	38	4	10	--	.263	--	-	-	--
Walter Bartee, of	12	1	3	--	.250	--	-	-	--
Ashley Hill, cf	41	5	10	--	.244	--	-	-	--
Joe Wilson, 1b-of	39	4	8	--	.205	--	-	-	--
Emory Mobley, 2b	25	3	5	--	.200	--	-	-	--
Joe Tarpley, c	32	6	6	--	.188	--	-	-	--
Marvin Hatcher, p	16	4	3	--	.188	--	-	-	--
Hugh Stephenson, inf	16	1	2	--	.125	--	-	-	--
TOTALS	343	42	82	--	.239	--	-	-	--

(Chip Washington, p 7-2, .286; Billy Watson, c 4-0, .000; Garmon Joiner, 1b 2-0, .000; Jimmy Devane, p 1-0, .000)

	WON	LOST	PCT.
Marvin Hatcher	2	5	.286
Charles Sheffield	0	1	.000
Chip Washington	0	2	.000
TOTALS	2	8	.200

(L) VSC	4, Florida Southern	....	5	
(L) VSC	0, Florida Southern	....	6	
	VSC	8, North Georgia	.....	1
(L) VSC	8, North Georgia	.....	9	
(L) VSC	5, Piedmont	.....	6	
(L) VSC	1, Georgia Teachers	....	10	
(L) VSC	1, Georgia Teachers	....	8	
	VSC	10, Piedmont	.....	6
(L) VSC	2, Piedmont	.....	3	
(L) VSC	3, North Georgia	.....	13	

NOTE: only those batting and pitching statistics available, are shown. Only those game results available, are calculated into statistics. Only games versus senior, degree-granting, college institutions are calculated into statistics.

Georgia Teachers is now Georgia Southern.



JO ANN DANIEL  
*Montezuma, Ga.*

*Miss U.S.C.*

'57

VALDOSTA STATE  
1957 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 2 - lost 7

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Noel George, ss	31	12	13	--	.419	--	-	-	--
Gerald DeLaney, 3b	32	2	10	--	.313	--	-	-	--
Emory Mobley, 2b	30	7	8	--	.267	--	-	-	--
Ashley Hill, cf	25	6	6	--	.240	--	-	-	--
Joe Tarpley, c	33	5	7	--	.212	--	-	-	--
Johnny Purvis, lf-1b	29	2	6	--	.207	--	-	-	--
Bob McElvey, p-of	20	4	4	--	.200	--	-	-	--
Bennie James, of	10	1	2	--	.200	--	-	-	--
Dickie Allen, rf	28	1	4	--	.143	--	-	-	--
Joe Wilson, 1b	14	2	2	--	.143	--	-	-	--
Chip Washington, p	16	1	0	--	.000	--	-	-	--
TOTALS	296	46	64	--	.216	--	-	-	--

(Ben Wood, rf 7-1, .143; A.J. Jarvis, rf 9-1, .111; Jack Rowe, p 8-0, .000; Jim Hathaway, 1b 3-0, .000; Jack Bates, 2b 1-0, .000)

	WON	LOST	PCT.
Bob McElvey	2	2	.500
Jack Rowe	0	2	.000
Chip Washington	0	3	.000
TOTALS	2	7	.222

(L) VSC 7, Florida Southern ....	15
(L) VSC 5, Florida Southern ....	7
(L) VSC 6, Piedmont .....	9
VSC 8, Piedmont .....	7
(L) VSC 6, North Georgia .....	8
(L) VSC 3, North Georgia .....	6
(L) VSC 1, Jacksonville .....	4
VSC 8, Piedmont .....	7
(L) VSC 2, North Georgia .....	3

NOTE: only those batting and pitching statistics available, are shown. Only those game results available, are calculated into statistics. Only games versus senior, degree-granting, college institutions are calculated into statistics.



## 1957 RESUME

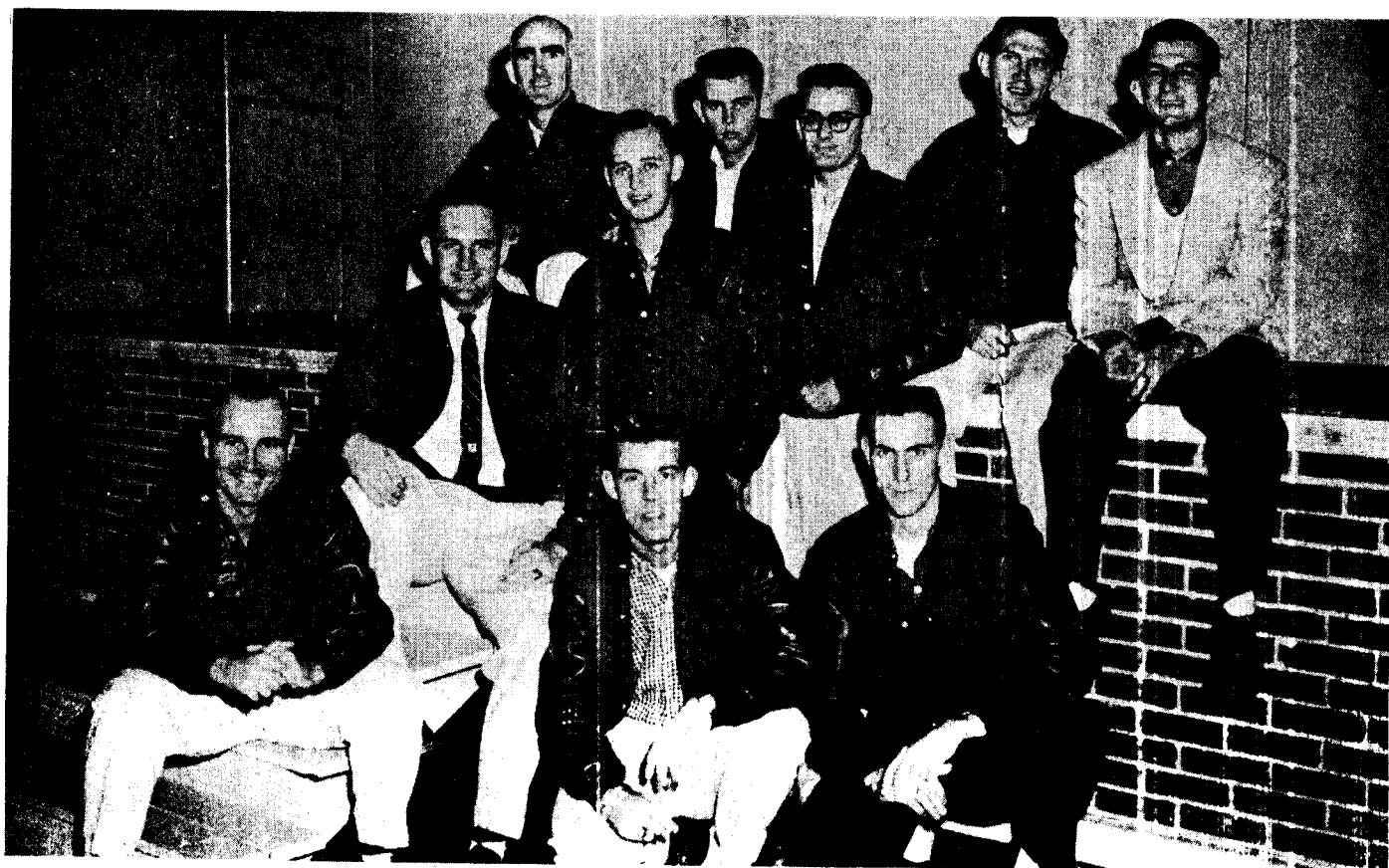
### VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

On paper, the 1957 edition of the baseball Rebels appeared as a "sure-fire" winner. Noel George was back (after a year at South Carolina to play football), and would play short. Emory Mobley was at second, and while he was known as "good-field, no-hit," he was tough in the clutch. Gerald Delaney, one of the school's best ever players, was at third, with Johnny Purvis and Joltin' Joe Wilson sharing duties at first. The veteran Ashley Hill was in center, with Dickie Allen in right, and Purvis, Bennie James, and Bob McElvey sharing left.

Behind the plate was super catcher Joe Tarpley. All of this and a dismal 2-7 record. The Rebels were a good fielding team, with soundness at all positions, but the hitting fell to an all-time low (.216). Even with anemic hitting, the team could have made it, but there was NO pitching; none at all. McElvey (2-2) won the Rebels' only two games (beating Piedmont twice), but neither was a gem.

George (.419), and Delaney (.313) led the hitters, while Hill (.240) and Tarpley supplied the power, but VSC's pitching held opponents under six runs in only two games. The schedule was tougher too. Florida Southern was a major power, while Jacksonville, and North Georgia were very respectable small-college teams.

As in previous years the Rebels did fare very well against junior college competition, winning 7 of 10 games. But even these were slugfests, with VSC's hitters faced every contest with outscoring an opponent with superior pitching.



*Back row: Coach Cottingham, Johnny Purvis, Dewayne Skiles, Jack Rowe, Jack Bates. Second row: Ashley Hill, Jim Stovall, Joe Tarpley. Front row: Jim Hathaway, Ben Wood.*



'58

VALDOSTA STATE  
1958 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 2 - lost 5

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG,	2B	3B	HR	SB
Johnny Purvis, 3b	17	4	6	--	.353	--	-	-	--
Joe Tarpley, c	12	2	4	--	.333	--	-	-	--
Buddy Wilburn, rf	9	0	3	--	.333	--	-	-	--
Ashley Hill, cf	13	5	4	--	.308	--	-	-	--
Ben Wood, 1b	13	2	4	--	.308	--	-	-	--
Eddie Herndon, 2b	17	3	5	--	.294	--	-	-	--
Dickie Allen, ss	14	5	4	--	.286	--	-	-	--
Lamar Pearson, lf	17	3	4	--	.235	--	-	-	--
TOTALS	129	28	35	--	.271	--	-	-	--

(Jack Rowe, p 5-1, .200; Willard Griffis, 2b 4-0, .000; Marvin Hatcher, p 3-0, .000; Bill Hay, 2b 2-0, .000; Jim Hathaway, 1b 2-0, .000; Mike Hampton, ph 1-0, .000)

	WON	LOST	PCT,
Marvin Hatcher	1	1	.500
Jack Rowe	1	2	.333
Mike Hampton	0	2	.000
TOTALS	2	5	.286

(L) VSC 6, Stetson .....	15
(L) VSC 9, North Georgia ....	18*
(L) VSC 5, Piedmont .....	6*
VSC 11, Piedmont .....	6
(L) VSC 2, Mercer .....	5*
VSC 9, Jacksonville .....	5
(L) VSC 2, Jacksonville .....	10

NOTE: only those batting and pitching statistics available, are shown. Only those game results available, are calculated into statistics. Only games versus senior, degree-granting, college institutions are calculated into statistics.

\*denotes that no batting statistics are available for this particular game. 1958 was VSC's first year in the Georgia Conference, and unfortunately of all the early years of Rebel baseball, 1958 has the least information available. The Rebels finished 1-2 in the Conference this season.

## 1958 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

1958 was continued disaster for Valdosta State baseball. The loss of Noel George, and Gerald Delaney, plus the sitting-out of Emory Mobley hurt the team immeasurably. Marvin Hatcher (1-1) returned for his final season on the mound, but received little help from Jack Rowe (1-2), and Mike Hampton (0-2).

The team's hitting was its main forte, with all the regulars over the .286 mark. Third-baseman Johnny Purvis (.353), led the club, with Joe Tarpley (.333), Buddy Wilburn (.333), Ben Wood (.308), and Ashley Hill (.308) close behind.

Even a 205 record was remarkable, considering that every opponent scored at least five runs, with three teams going into double didgets. The season's lone bright spot was a 9-5 win over small-college power Jacksonville, behind Hatcher, aided by the clutch hitting of Purvis and Hill. Stetson, North Georgia, and Mercer brightened their seasons; with convincing wins at the Rebels expense.

This was Coach Cottingham's final year at the helm of the baseball team, and also marked the school's entrance into the Georgia Intercollegiate Baseball Conference. The conference would expand into basketball in 1959, and encompass other sports in the 1960's. VSC ended 1-2, in the conference, this first year, with strong North Georgia winning the championship.

While Coach Cottingham did not produce winning teams regularly, and was often kidded about his driving, all of his former players would agree that he personified a Christian character. He was deeply religious, and insisted upon fair play, and good sportsmanship. His presence at the head of VSC's athletic program brought praise for the college, from the community and sport opponents alike.

His athletes, like all athletes, however, spawned a great area in regard to philosophy, temperment, and actions. One of the more humorous notes occurred on a road-trip in '58. The team was staying together in a barracks arrangement, with chatter among the players, as everyone was preparing for bed. Coach Cottingham, as was his habit, knelt by his bed to say his nightly prayers. One of the players, over the din of his teammates, was attempting to ask the coach a question. After repeated attempts, of which Coach Cottingham was unaware because of his pre-occupation with his prayers, the player blurted out, "God-damn it Coach, are you listening." Such are baseball players.

## SOCIAL SCIENCE



Mr. William M. Gabard  
A.B., M.A.  
Associate Professor of  
History



Miss Mildred M. Price  
A.B., A.M.  
Associate Professor of  
History



Dr. J. Ralph Thaxton  
A.B., M.A., Ph.D.  
Professor of History



Mrs. Joe Wisenbaker  
A.B., M.S.Ed.  
Associate Professor of  
Sociology



Dr. J. A. Durrenberger  
A.B., A.M., Ph.D.  
Professor of Sociology



*Kneeling:* Willard Griffis, Lamar Pearson, Joe Tarpley, Dick Allen, John Purvis, Marvin Hatcher. *Standing:* Ashley Hill, Jack Rowe, Ben Wood, Eddie Herndon, Mike Hampton, Buddy Wilburn, Willie Hay, Coach Cottingham.

## WOMEN'S RESIDENCE HALL COUNCIL

GLENDA ELLIS  
*Second Vice-President*

KATHERINE BELL  
*Social Chairman*

DOTTIE ALFORD  
*President*

ELAINE BARBER  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

MARILYN MILLER  
*First Vice-President*



# '59

SAUNDRA HARDIN



## 1959 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

The 1958-1959 year in Valdosta State athletic history was a "turning-point" of sorts. The college hired Gary Colson, from near-by Dasher, fresh out of David Lipscomb (Tenn.) College, to coach basketball, and also handle baseball in the Spring. Colson immediately recruited some talented round-ball players, and used them in baseball too.

Colson was not a fantastic baseball coach (his love for basketball superceded everything else), but had some players who knew the game, and he also embarked the Rebels on their best schedule ever. Practices, however, did not radically change from the Cottingham era, as freshman Tommy Thomas recalled: "I remember several days that Coach Colson called practice, and only Joe Tarpley, Emory Mobley, and I were there."

From the basketball Rebs, Colson had "Big" Buck Ethredge (.333 and 6-3 on the hill), shortstop Hansel Faulkner (.317), and outfielders Willard Griffis, and Dewey Hulsey. Senior back-stop Tarpley (.313), and second-baseman Mobley (.250) added college experience to the squad. Ethredge threw three (still a school record, although often tied) shut-outs, as the Rebels ended with a 10-11 slate.

VSC started very slow, losing 8 of their first 10, including four games in the conference (each conference team was to play each other conference team twice, with only the first-game of home-and-home doubleheaders counting as a conference fray). Ethredge then shut-out Berry, and the Rebs eventually finished 6-5 in the GIAC.

Included in the team's wins during the season was a 12-4 thumping of soon-to-be arch-rival West Georgia, and a decision over powerful Jacksonville (4-0), behind an Ethredge whitewashing. The worst loss in the school's history also occurred this year. Mercer won a 24-0 laugher, in a game that saw VSC unable to execute either offensively, or defensively.



BUCK ETHRIDGE, PITCHER AND CATCHER

TOMMY THOMAS—PITCHER AND CATCHER





VALDOSTA STATE  
1959 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 10 - lost 11

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.
Buck Ethredge, of-p	51	8	17	12	.333
Hansel Faulkner, ss	60	14	19	6	.317
Joe Tarpley, c	48	11	15	9	.313
Lamar Pearson, cf	59	10	15	4	.254
Emory Mobley, 2b	48	9	12	3	.250
Tommy Thomas, 3b-p	53	7	13	5	.245
Willard Griffis, lf	31	4	7	3	.226
Dewey Hulsey, rf	38	4	6	1	.158
Mike Hampton, 1b-p	24	4	3	4	.125
James David, 1b	23	0	2	0	.087
TOTALS	418	73	113	49	.270

(Jimmy Harrington, rf 14-4, .286; Ray Moore, 1b 10-0, .000; Joe Wilson, 3b 5-0, .000; Jerry Studdard, lf 4-0, .000; Jerry Hancock, ph 1-0, .000)

	WON	LOST	PCT.
Buck Ethredge	6	3	.667
Mike Hampton	2	4	.333
Tommy Thomas	2	4	.333
TOTALS	10	11	.476

(L) VSC 2, Piedmont .....	4	VSC 6, Berry .....	3
(L) VSC 4, Piedmont .....	8	(L) VSC 0, Tampa .....	5
(L) VSC 3, Mercer .....	11	VSC 5, Tampa .....	4
(L) VSC 6, Stetson .....	7	VSC 12, West Georgia .....	4
VSC 13, Stetson .....	11	VSC 8, Berry .....	0*
(L) VSC 2, Oglethorpe .....	14	VSC 4, Jacksonville .....	0*
(L) VSC 1, Jacksonville .....	8*	(L) VSC 0, Mercer .....	24*
VSC 5, North Georgia .....	3	(L) VSC 6, Oglethorpe .....	9*
(L) VSC 0, Piedmont .....	6	VSC 9, Shorter .....	0*
(L) VSC 3, North Georgia .....	7	VSC 7, Shorter .....	0*
VSC 11, Berry .....	0		

NOTE: only those batting and pitching statistics available, are shown. \* denotes that no batting statistics are available for this particular game. RBI's, doubles, triples, home runs, and stolen base statistics were not available. Only the winning, or losing, pitcher was available re: pitching statistics.





# VSC Calendar 1960

DIANE HIGGINBOTHAM

MISS VSC CALENDAR GIRL



DIANE HIGGINBOTHAM  
Valdosta, Georgia

JANUARY 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



VIRGINIA LAMB (KA)  
Thomasville, Georgia

FEBRUARY 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					



NANCY BAINES  
Athens, Georgia

MARCH 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



MARY CARRELL SMITH (KA)  
Nashville, Georgia

APRIL 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



PENNY WILLIAMS (AAT)  
Valdosta, Georgia

MAY 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



JEAN PHILLIPS (KA)  
Lynx, Georgia

JUNE 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



JEAN HOOKS (AET)  
Sylvester, Georgia

JULY 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



MARY DICKEY (AAT)  
Valdosta, Georgia

AUGUST 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



BARBARA WALKER  
Valdosta, Georgia

SEPTEMBER 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



TONI STEELE  
Moultrie, Georgia

OCTOBER 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29



BARBARA ANN GEORGE  
Valdosta, Georgia

NOVEMBER 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



FAYE FUSSELL  
Aston, Georgia

DECEMBER 1960						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# Grant Is Believer In The Soft Sell Approach To Life

By JULIAN MILLER

Billy Grant built Valdosta State College's Blazer Field baseball park with his own two hands. But he built the VSC athletic programs with his personality and determination.

Grant, the 48-year-old athletic director at VSC, takes absolutely no credit for the tremendous success the athletic program has enjoyed. But his co-workers give it all to him.

A Valdosta native who has always excelled in everything from athletics and girls to charming the fangs off a rattlesnake, Grant takes a back seat to most of the action in the school's athletic department.

It's part of his philosophy.

Some may think it laziness or disinterest on Grant's part that his coaches are left to fend for themselves. But most of them vow they would rather have it that way. And they all insist Grant has always been there when they needed him.

## Newsmakers

### ... A Special Insight

"I call it the soft touch," Grant says. "I don't believe in ordering people around. I believe in asking them in a nice way. And if you do, it'll get done."

Grant's the first to admit that doesn't always work so well.

"Take Tommy (Thomas, VSC's baseball coach), I can turn anything over to Tommy and it'll get done. Other people ... well, I might have to prod them a little. But always with the soft touch."

The soft touch is the major part of Grant's easy-going attitude. But don't confuse the soft touch with weakness. Once Grant has his mind made up, it's not likely to change easily.

Lyndal Worth found that out the hard way when she was hired to start the girls basketball program at the school.

When she first took over the helm of the Lady Blazers, she had a giant's goals with a midget's pocketbook. But when she demanded more equal treatment with the men, Grant put his foot down.

"He stood his ground," Mrs. Worth recalls. "I guess I just had to learn he was the boss. The only time he ever raised his voice to me was when I lost my temper at him. I guess you could say he responded in kind."

"I suppose I had backed him into a corner. But other than that instance, he has never been anything but a perfect gentleman around me. And he didn't seem to hold a grudge because of it."

VSC's coaches have a free hand with their program. And most of them have become

super successful because of it.

"Billy believes in giving a coach a certain amount of responsibility and allowing him to work it the way he thinks best," said Dr. Dave Waples, head coach of the cross country Blazers.

"He's there if you need him. If not, he's not there pressuring you every day. It's a lot easier to work under those conditions."

"Billy's not always looking over your shoulder," said Mrs. Worth. "In fact, I guess the thing I like best about working under him is the freedom I have."

Grant got his break when he was young and he has never forgotten it. When he goes looking for a new coach he usually ends up with a young one with unproven talents. And they usually fare quite well.

One of those was Thomas, who Grant watched through high school and college and finally offered a job to even though Thomas didn't plan to go into the coaching field.

"Billy told me if I ever wanted to come back and coach he would do his darndest to help me," the super successful Thomas recalls.

"He's the kind of guy who will give you anything he has."

Success has always been associated with Grant. Even in his high school days, Billy was never one to give up.

"He was a high school All-American in both football and baseball," recalled former Valdosta High School coach Wright Bazemore.

"He was a great competitor ... had all the ability in the world in football and baseball but not much in basketball. Except that he was a scrapper."

"Billy was really too short to be a great basketball player. But he made up for it with his scrapping. He could dribble and shoot with the best of 'em."

Bazemore judged his stars by the fire in their eyes and Grant, he recalls, had more than anyone else.

"He'd scrap your eyes out in everything from football to marbles to tic-tac-toe," Bazemore said. "That's what made him such a great athlete. On top of everything else he was willing to work for it."

Grant, the quarterback on the VHS team in the late '40s, spent many a Saturday and Sunday throwing passes to his best friend, Sonny Stephenson, when the Wildcats were facing a big game, Bazemore recalled.

And because of it, both of them wound up with football scholarships to Georgia.

There he started one football game for the Bulldogs and promptly broke a bone in his ankle, ending his career.

Grant, who played semi-pro baseball for a short time, can remember only one controversy since taking over the AD job at VSC.

It involved another department head who just didn't get along with him. Others say Grant's easy-going attitude let the depart-

## 1960 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

In the Fall of 1959, Valdosta State added Bill Grant to its athletic department. Grant was to assume the role of both Athletic Director and baseball coach, releasing Gary Colson to coach just basketball. A familiar sports figure in Valdosta, Grant had been a great high school star in football, basketball, and baseball. making high school All-America in both the former, and latter. At the University of Georgia he had continued success, being both a football and baseball starter, before coming home to join the Valdosta High School athletic staff in 1958.

Bill Grant was (and still is) a winner. He saw a challenge in attempting to build a winning Rebel baseball team, and his first task was to construct a home field. Begging, and borrowing tools and supplies, from area merchants, and with some help from the college's maintenance department, he built a baseball field (it was fully completed for the 1962 season) on VSC's North campus. The field would eventually become one of the top college baseball facilities in the nation.

Grant's next job was to turn a losing program into a winner. "I knew that we had some good athletes on campus, and I went to President (Ralph) Thaxton, and ask who was eligible to play," Grant said. "President Thaxton told me that any VSC student was eligible to play," Grant stated, "and I took this as the rule. I really wasn't aware of any conference rules; plus, we hadn't joined the NAIA as yet."

The above discourse doesn't mean much until you learn more about Coach Grant's 1960 team. Back was Buck Ethredge (who would go 7-1 on the hill, with a 1.26 ERA), along with other 1959 returnees in Tommy Thomas (.354), Willard Griffis (.235), and Hansel Faulkner (.169). Newcomers included the veteran Gerald Delaney (.273), back from the 1957 club; outfielders Johnny McIntyre (.196), Joe Brock (.188), and Sonny Taylor (.174), and first-baseman Steve Chitty (.182).

Three other players, not mentioned above, however, formed the nucleus of the team. Emory Mobley (.182), back for his "fifth season" at second, solidified as strong an infield that VSC has ever presented. Pitching ace Steve Kebler (7-3, 1.93 ERA), fresh from three years of "professional" ball, with Ethredge formed as solid a 1-2 pitching tandem as the Rebels ever had. First-baseman James Jennings (.314), also a former "professional" player, played only the home-games, but hit with tremendous power.

The 1960 team was a strong club throughout, even though they hit only .228 as a squad. The hitting was timely (as Thomas, Jennings, Ethredge, and Delaney hit well in the clutch), the fielding top-notch, and the pitching (1.64 team ERA) as good as any VSC team ever. The Rebels went 15-5 on the year, which also saw a championship 9-2, GIAC mark. Included were two conference wins over West Georgia, on twin shut-outs by Kebler and Ethredge, and 15 wins in the last 17 outings (the Rebels dropped the first three games of their Florida swing).

Of course, VSC did not retain the conference championship. West Georgia squawked the loudest, and the Rebs abdicated the throne, even though they did not officially forfeit any games. Piedmont claimed the title after the Rebel fall.

ment head take advantage of him. But he refuses to believe it.

"I don't think that's it," said Grant, who all but refuses to even discuss the matter. "It was just a personality conflict. That's all."

When VSC needed a baseball field, it was Grant who climbed aboard an old rusty tractor hardly ready for anything but the junk yard and built one.

Today that same Blazer Field is one of the best parks for a school this size in the country.

"I had taken the cross country team to California one year when someone saw my VSC jacket and said 'Hey Valdosta, say hey to Billy Grant for me,'" Waples recalls.

"That's the way Billy is. People know him all over the country."

Although he stays away from the actual team decisions, Grant is always along when one of his teams hits the road to the playoffs of any sort.

From janitor to college president, Grant treats them all alike. And all give him the same respect.

In Chattanooga, Tenn., one year during post season basketball playoffs, Grant threw a party in his motel room attended by the presidents of the other schools involved.

The next night he struck up a conversation with a student from the school VSC was playing and within minutes had a friend for life.

The student took several color pictures of the team for Grant and ended up insisting on driving Grant and company across town after the game.

People who know him say Grant has the uncanny ability to set his own feelings aside to keep a cool head in almost anything.

The fact was proven several years ago when his wife Marge died of cancer. Sick for several years, she had clung to life with Grant by her side several months longer than doctors felt she would.

At that time Grant rarely talked about the situation. But when he did, it showed a rather unique outlook.

"We just take each day as it comes," he said, showing all the feeling he had usually kept hidden. "She has her good days and her bad days. We try to make the most of them all."

Looking back on his wife's death, now, Grant recalls the philosophy he used during those times.

"It's tough," he admitted. "But things like

that happen to everyone. Just look around. You might feel sad for yourself at times. But go into any hospital and you'll see 100 other cases just like yours."

Grant said knowing what was happening made the end result easier to accept.

"My wife was a very brave woman," he said. "She knew and we knew what was going to happen. We just didn't know when."

"When things happen suddenly and without warning, I would imagine it takes quite a bit out of you. When you know it is going to happen it's a little different."

"You hate to say 'I'm glad it happened the way it did.' But I think it was best for all concerned that she went the way she did... without pain. She never knew exactly what happened."

Just as Grant was able to keep those feelings suppressed, he is a complete failure at keeping his feelings hidden when he's coaching.

Some say he has a record for being thrown out of baseball games while he was head coach of the Rebels (VSC's old nickname).

Grant recalls them all and blames them on "bad calls by the umpires." One that really stands out in his mind is a trip to Lakeland, Fla., where he was ordered out of the game and the ballpark as well.

The action was avenged when the team bus was parked in a nearby orange grove and players filled it with oranges before leaving for Valdosta, some say.

Ask anyone on Grant's staff and they'll agree with him that his greatest strongpoint is his ability to get along with people.

Ask them his greatest weakness and they'll hem and haw — despite the fact that they sometimes gripe about being given too much freedom.

"I don't like being indoors," admits Grant, trying to criticize himself. "I don't like teaching in a classroom. And I guess it usually shows when I do."

Waples is the only staff member who would venture a guess into Grant's weaknesses. He says it's a matter of organization. Not that Grant doesn't have any. He just doesn't like it.

"I just don't think Billy likes to be an organized as he has to be," Waples said. "Don't get me wrong. He is organized. I just don't think he likes it."

May be. But the VSC athletic program's track record sure doesn't show it.

VALDOSTA STATE  
1960 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 15 -- lost 5

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Tommy Thomas, c	65	9	23	10	.354	3	1	1	5
James Jennings, 1b	35	11	11	3	.314	4	4	0	7
Buck Ethredge, p-inf	67	11	19	18	.284	1	1	2	1
Gerald DeLaney, 3b	66	9	18	7	.273	4	1	0	5
Willard Griffis, of	34	6	8	1	.235	0	0	0	10
Johnny McIntyre, cf	56	7	11	9	.196	0	0	0	11
Joe Brock, lf	32	3	6	2	.188	0	0	0	3
Emory Mobley, 2b	44	12	8	5	.182	1	0	1	1
Steve Chitty, 1b	22	3	4	2	.182	0	0	0	2
Steve Kebler, p	28	2	5	2	.179	1	0	0	0
Sonny Taylor, of	23	2	4	1	.174	0	0	0	2
Hansel Faulkner, ss	71	15	12	5	.169	1	2	0	16
TOTALS	583	92	133	65	.228	15	9	4	64

(Jimmy Harrington, of 11-2, .182; Ralph Berryhill, c 6-1, .167; Jerry Norman, cf 16-1, .063; Jerry Greenwald, 1b 7-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Buck Ethredge	8	64.1	37	13	9	11	67	7-1	1.26
Tommy Thomas	3	16	9	10	3	9	13	1-1	1.68
Steve Kebler	10	79	52	20	17	24	75	7-3	1.93
TOTALS	20	159.1	98	43	29	44	155	15-5	1.64

(L)	VSC	0,	Florida Southern	.....	6
(L)	VSC	2,	Florida Southern	.....	3
(L)	VSC	0,	Tampa	.....	3
	VSC	4,	Tampa	.....	3
	VSC	4,	Piedmont	.....	3
	VSC	8,	Jacksonville	.....	6
	VSC	13,	Taylor	.....	1
	VSC	13,	North Georgia	.....	3
	VSC	1,	Oglethorpe	.....	0
	VSC	2,	Jacksonville	.....	1
(L)	VSC	1,	Oglethorpe	.....	3
	VSC	3,	West Georgia	.....	0
	VSC	4,	West Georgia	.....	0
(L)	VSC	0,	Piedmont	.....	6
	VSC	3,	Georgia State	.....	0
	VSC	8,	Georgia State	.....	0
	VSC	9,	Shorter	.....	1
	VSC	4,	Shorter	.....	1
	VSC	5,	Berry	.....	3
	VSC	8,	Berry	.....	0



*First row, left to right: Emory Mobley, capt.; Gerald Delaney, capt.; Buck Ethridge, Jimmy Harrington, Jerry Norman. Second row: James Jennings, Tommy Thomas, Buddy Brock, Sonny Taylor, Steve Chitty. Third row: Johnny McIntyre, Willard Griffis, Steve Kebler, Hansel Faulkner. Back row: Billy Grant, coach; Mike LaHood, manager.*

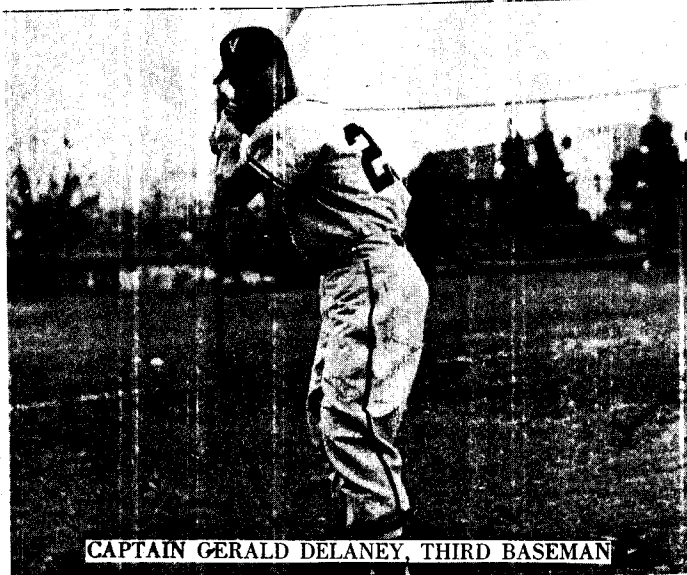




Faulkner flips to Mobley, grabs and flies to first!



The Big "Put one in his ear," STEVE KEBLER!



CAPTAIN GERALD DELANEY, THIRD BASEMAN

## Letterman's Club



First row, left to right: Billy McDaniel, Tim Vinson, Gerald Delany, Sec. and Treas.; Jimmy Harrington, Johnny McIntyre. Second row: Tommy Hatcher, Bernie Brown, Buddy Brock, Charlie Clark, Charlie Green, Vice-Pres.; Bucky Anderson, Steve Chitty. Third row: Emory Mobley, Pres.; Hansel Faulkner, Lamar Pearson, Steve Kebler, Jimmy Melvin, Coach Grant, Sponsor.





'61



## 1961 RESUME VALI-OSTA STATE REBELS

The 1961 season was as dismal as the 1960 campaign had been exciting. Coach Grant's troops dipped to an 8-15 log, and stood at 3-14 at one point in the year. Gone were super-mound-studs Buck Ethredge, and Steve Kebler, and the team ERA ballooned to 4.14.

Hitting wise, only catcher Tommy Thomas (.313) supplied any consistency, while the team average hovered at the .230 mark. The squad could only manage 18 extra-base-hits, and eight of these (four each) belonged to freshmen Joe Dixon (3b), and Angelo DeVivo (ss).

Team fielding was haphazard, and led to the demise of frosh pitchers, Mike Perry (3-6), and Herman Hudson (2-5), who were forced to pitch all of the "big" games. Cultural shock caught Coach Grant's young team early, as they dropped three games each to major powers Vanderbilt, and Florida Southern.

Wins over Jacksonville, Erskine, and Mercer salvaged some pride for the Rebels in their first 17 encounters, but they were eliminated from Georgia Conference contention early, with double-dip losses to both North Georgia and Piedmont. VSC rallied in the late season to finish 5-5 in the league.



TOMMY THOMAS—PITCHER AND CATCHER



STEVE CHITTY, FIRST BASEMAN

VALDOSTA STATE  
1961 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 8 -- lost 15

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Robert Bailey, p	35	4	12	5	.342	3	0	1	2
Tommy Thomas, c-1b	80	14	25	14	.313	1	1	0	6
Joe Dixon, 3b	75	14	22	10	.293	1	1	1	3
Angelo DeVivo, ss	63	16	18	12	.286	1	4	0	2
Johnny McIntyre, cf	68	11	18	4	.267	1	0	0	10
Jerry Norman, lf	62	6	14	6	.226	1	0	0	2
Steve Chitty, 2b	69	9	15	4	.217	0	1	0	3
Mike Perry, p-1b	64	1	11	7	.172	0	0	0	2
Jimmy Hicks, rf	54	6	6	5	.111	0	0	0	1
Herman Hudson, p	41	2	3	0	.073	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	679	92	156	77	.230	8	8	2	32

(Doug Winters, utl 11-3, .273; Jerry Greenwald, 1b 17-4, .236; Lamar Pearson, of 6-1, .167; Jerry Johnson, p 15-2, .133; Kelly Raulerson, 1b 19-2, .105)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Robert Bailey	4	29.2	28	21	12	19	10	2-2	3.64
Mike Perry	11	73.1	66	57	31	53	48	3-6	3.80
Herman Hudson	9	56.1	60	45	29	18	27	2-5	4.63
TOTALS	23	185	179	143	85	96	95	8-15	4.14

(Jerry Johnson 1-1, 3.37; Tommy Thomas 0-1, 4.36; Lamar Pearson 0-0, 4.50; Joe Dixon 0-0, 11.59)

(L) VSC 0, Florida Southern .... 3	VSC 8, Mercer ..... 0
(L) VSC 4, Vanderbilt ..... 5	(L) VSC 6, Mercer ..... 14
(L) VSC 1, Vanderbilt ..... 4	(L) VSC 3, Jacksonville ..... 6
(L) VSC 6, Vanderbilt ..... 11	(L) VSC 3, Piedmont ..... 4
(L) VSC 0, Florida Southern .... 8	(L) VSC 3, Piedmont ..... 5
(L) VSC 0, Florida Southern .... 4	VSC 8, Shorter ..... 2
VSC 4, Jacksonville ..... 1	VSC 7, Shorter ..... 5
(L) VSC 6, Stetson ..... 16	VSC 9, West Georgia ..... 5
(L) VSC 2, Stetson ..... 18	(L) VSC 0, West Georgia ..... 7
VSC 7, Erskine ..... 3	VSC 2, Berry ..... 0
(L) VSC 5, North Georgia ..... 15	VSC 7, Berry ..... 3
(L) VSC 1, North Georgia ..... 4	



'62

## 1962 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

Hope ran high for a great 1962 season, as Coach Grant counted on veterans Tommy Thomas, Angelo DeVivo, and Steve Chitty to steady a host of bright young recruits. Thomas (.343) led the team in hitting for the third consecutive year (a school record), while DeVivo (.324) hit with power, and played super defense at third.

Chitty (.152) had a bad year at the dish, but formed with new, short-stop Bobby Speck (.333) a top double-death combination. But besides catcher Joe George (.302), and centerfielder Johnny McIntyre (.284), the Rebels could muster little other offense. A so-so batting average of .254, was more than off-set by a lack of power (only two team HR's, and 17 total extra-base knocks), and a pitching staff that just did not develop.

Florida Southern and David Lipscomb bopped the Rebs to an early 0-4 chart, and the club could only recover to a 9-9 season log. Sophomore pitchers, Herman Hudson (4-2), and Mike Perry (3-3), were augmented by newcomers Wally Summers (2-3), and Kermit Hunnicutt (0-1) on the hill, but a team ERA of 3.35 demonstrated a lack of clutch hurling.

Even with the poor start, a lack of power, and questionable pitching, VSC had a chance for its first-ever (official) Georgia Conference title. The team stood 4-0 in the loop (9-7 over-all), going into the last regular season games (at home) against league leader West Georgia. A two-game sweep would give the Rebels the crown.

"The best laid plans of mice and men...." The Braves (as they would unfortunately do in subsequent years) swept both games to win the championship. On May 18, West Georgia grabbed an 8-4 win, as Perry and Hudson saw them erupt for four runs in the third, and three in the fourth. VSC was held to six hits.

The next day, the Carrolltonites overcame an early 4-1 Reb lead, exploding for four runs in the seventh against Summers, on their way to a 6-4 decision. Fittingly, Thomas, playing his last game of a super career, went 3x4 for the hometowners.



BOTTOM ROW: Tommy Thomas, Bryant Youmans, Ralph Brandham, Hal Worley, Kermit Hunnicutt, Coach Grant. MIDDLE ROW: Jerry Johnson, Jimmy Hicks, Bobby Speck, Lindey Evans, Eddie Bynum. TOP ROW: Walt Podine, Kelly Raulerson, Steve Chitty, Marcus Shipman, Preston Hodges, Jerry Norman, Wally Summers.

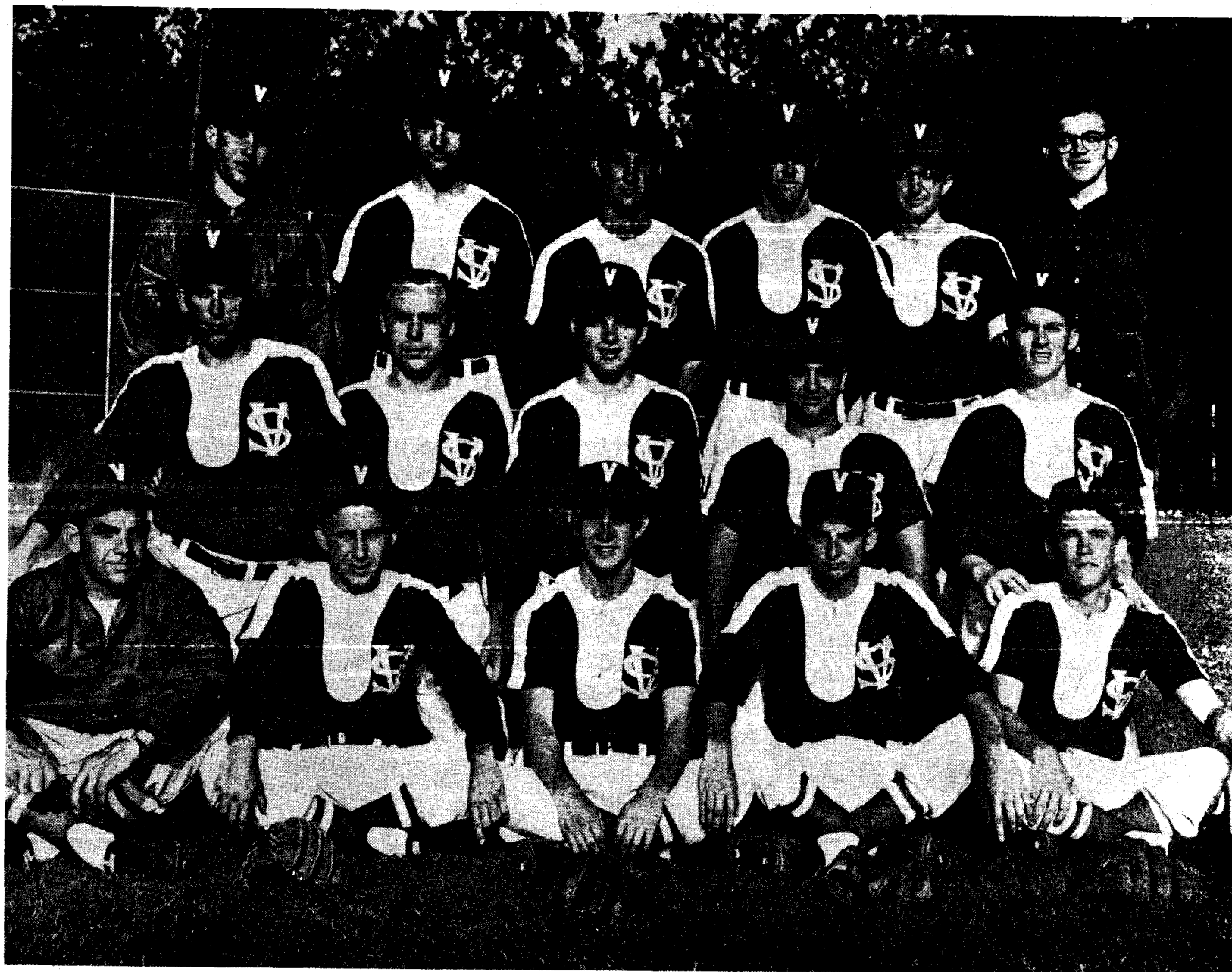
VALDOSTA STATE  
1962 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 9 - lost 9

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Tommy Thomas, c-1b	67	19	23	14	.343	2	2	1	7
Bobby Speck, ss	57	16	19	16	.333	1	1	0	7
Angelo DeVivo, 3b	74	12	24	16	.324	1	3	1	4
Joe George, c	43	5	13	6	.302	1	0	0	0
Wally Summers, p	27	5	8	2	.296	0	0	0	0
Johnny McIntyre, cf	67	15	19	6	.284	3	0	0	8
Herman Hudson, p	28	5	7	4	.250	0	0	0	0
Marcus Shipman, of	30	3	7	6	.233	0	0	0	3
Kermit Hunnicutt, rf	39	2	8	1	.205	0	0	0	0
Mike Perry, p-1b	33	3	6	6	.182	0	0	0	1
Steve Chitty, 2b	66	10	10	7	.152	0	0	0	4
Jerry Norman, lf	41	5	5	1	.146	0	0	0	1
Preston Hodges, of	18	1	2	0	.111	0	0	0	1
TOTALS	617	108	157	89	.254	9	6	2	38

(Lindy Evans, 3b 7-2, .286; Robert Bailey, of 13-3, .231; Skeeter Blanton, of 5-1, .200; Kelly Raulerson, 1b 1-0, .000; Jimmy Hicks, utl 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Kermit Hunnicutt	1	9	6	2	1	0	3	0-1	1.00
Wally Summers	10	48.1	48	32	16	21	25	2-3	2.98
Herman Hudson	8	50.2	52	24	19	16	17	4-2	3.38
Mike Perry	8	45	35	38	21	26	35	3-3	4.20
TOTALS	18	153	141	96	57	63	80	9-9	3.35

(L)	VSC	4, Florida Southern	....	6
(L)	VSC	5, Florida Southern	....	9
(L)	VSC	3, David Lipscomb	.....	11
(L)	VSC	1, David Lipscomb	.....	2
	VSC	2, Vanderbilt	.....	0
(L)	VSC	3, Mercer	.....	4
(L)	VSC	4, Florida Southern	....	5
	VSC	3, Erskine	.....	2
	VSC	4, Erskine	.....	3
	VSC	11, Mercer	.....	2
	VSC	9, Piedmont	.....	3
	VSC	11, Piedmont	.....	6
	VSC	14, Berry	.....	5
	VSC	3, Berry	.....	2
(L)	VSC	7, Stetson	.....	12
	VSC	16, Stetson	.....	10
(L)	VSC	4, West Georgia	.....	8
(L)	VSC	4, West Georgia	.....	6



FIRST ROW: William Grant (coach), Jerry Norman, Bobby Speck, Skeeter Blanton, Johnny McIntyre. SECOND ROW: Wally Summers, Hal Worley (manager), Herman Hudson, Joe George, Robert Bailey. THIRD ROW: Mike Perry, Kermit Hunnicutt, Steve Chitty, Marcus Shipman, Tommy Thomas, Preston Hodges.



'63



## 1963 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

1963 was the year of the "wreck." Although you might assume that the Rebels 4-8 record that year was the "wreck," a far more serious happening curtailed the season, and left coach Bill Grant thanking his lucky stars that no one was seriously injured.

VSC began the year on an encouraging note, as sophomore, right-hander Herman Hudson beat Stetson 7-5, but from there everything went downhill. The team dropped its next five games, before the "wreck" came along. On a trip to Mercer, the team, traveling in two athletic vans, was 10-miles South of Cordele, when the steering rod on the back van broke.

Coach Grant saw in his rear-view mirror, the other van rolling-over-and-over on the road. He, of course, thought the worst, but except for a hip injury to pitcher Robert Hand (0-1), and a shoulder separation to outfielder Bud Bridges (.200), and assorted cuts and bruises, no one was seriously injured. The team didn't continue to Mercer, but unfortunately traveled to Florida State, the next week, with a trimmed-down squad, and absorbed a 14-0 blasting.

Bad luck continued as second-baseman Rusty Deavours (.273) was lost for the season with a broken finger, and freshman infielder-pitcher, Tommy Johnson (1-3) developed arm trouble. VSC finished their shortened season with a small-in-number team, and ended 2-2 in the GIAC.

Warner Webb (.318) was the only hitter over the .300 mark, while Angelo DeVivo (.295) came close. The team batting average was .235, with a gigantic 6.11 team ERA. Perhaps it is fortunate, from a winning standpoint, that several games had to be cancelled.



FRONT ROW: Dennis Fike, Bobby Ritch, Herman Hudson, Bobby Speck, Warner Webb. BACK ROW: Chuck Bonovitch, Ray McCully, Tommy Johnson, Preston Hodges.



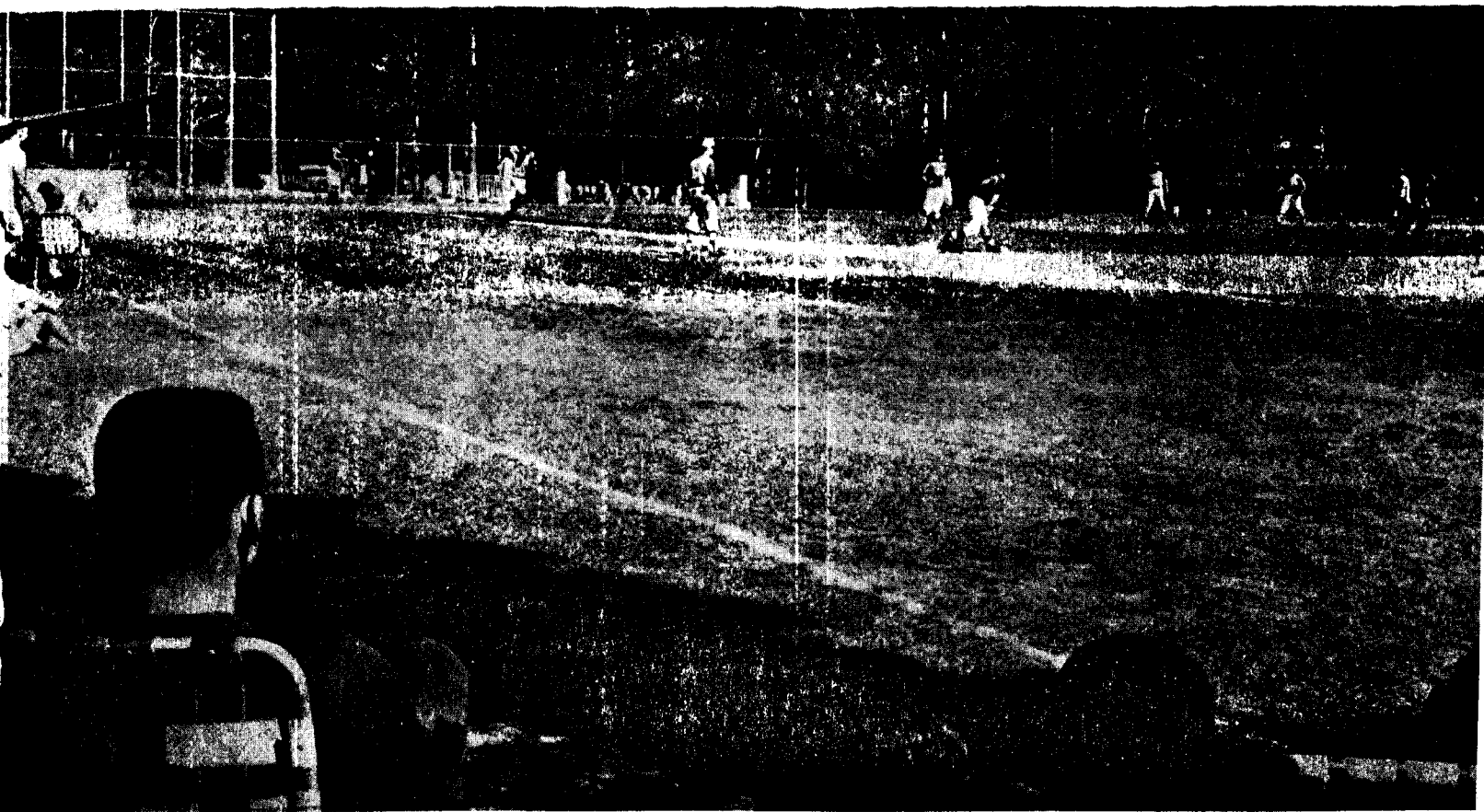
VALDOSTA STATE  
1963 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 4 - lost 8

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Warner Webb, 1b-c	44	8	14	5	.318	2	3	0	3
Angelo DeVivo, 3b	44	8	13	14	.295	3	0	0	2
Rusty Deavours, 2b	29	3	8	2	.273	0	2	0	1
Bobby Speck, cf	45	9	12	5	.267	1	1	0	4
Tommy Johnson, 2b-p	42	11	11	6	.262	1	1	0	3
Herman Hudson, p-1b	28	6	7	2	.250	0	0	0	0
Jimmy Pritchett, ss	48	5	10	9	.208	2	1	1	0
Robert Creel, lf	44	8	9	4	.205	0	1	1	1
Bud Bridges, rf	20	4	4	2	.200	1	0	0	1
Bobby Ritch, of	15	3	3	2	.200	0	0	0	0
Kelly Raulerson, of	14	2	2	1	.143	1	0	0	0
Jerry Norman, c	21	3	2	2	.095	0	0	0	1
TOTALS	408	71	96	54	.235	12	9	2	17

(Lindy Evans, 3b 7-1, .143; Robert Hand, p 2-0, .000; Joe George, c 2-0, .000; Preston Hodges, of 2-0, .000; Jake Rocker, utl 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Herman Hudson	8	58.2	60	37	29	20	26	3-4	4.45
Tommy Johnson	7	36	49	49	30	22	13	1-3	7.50
Robert Hand	3	7.1	12	11	10	5	2	0-1	12.28
TOTALS	12	101.2	121	97	69	47	41	4-8	6.11

VSC	7,	Stetson	5
(L) VSC	3,	Stetson	8
(L) VSC	7,	David Lipscomb	11
(L) VSC	5,	David Lipscomb	6
(L) VSC	3,	Ersine	9
(L) VSC	4,	Ersine	13
(L) VSC	0,	Florida State	14
VSC	12,	Piedmont	0
VSC	15,	Piedmont	3
VSC	8,	Mercer	5
(L) VSC	4,	Berry	5
(L) VSC	3,	Berry	18



Action as Erskine spoils VSC's Homecoming game, 9-3.





# '64

Gerrie Amon reigns as Miss Tau Kappa Epsilon Calendar Girl for 1963-1964.



Representing the twelve months of the year on the TKE Calendar are, FIRST ROW: Dottie Thomas, Carole Wililamson, Gerrie Amon, Ruth Ann Roddey, and Glenda S. SECOND ROW: Patsy Newkam, Andrea Hobbs, Carol Gilson, Gail Thomas, Laura Hobbs, Vicki Tatum and Nancy Smith.

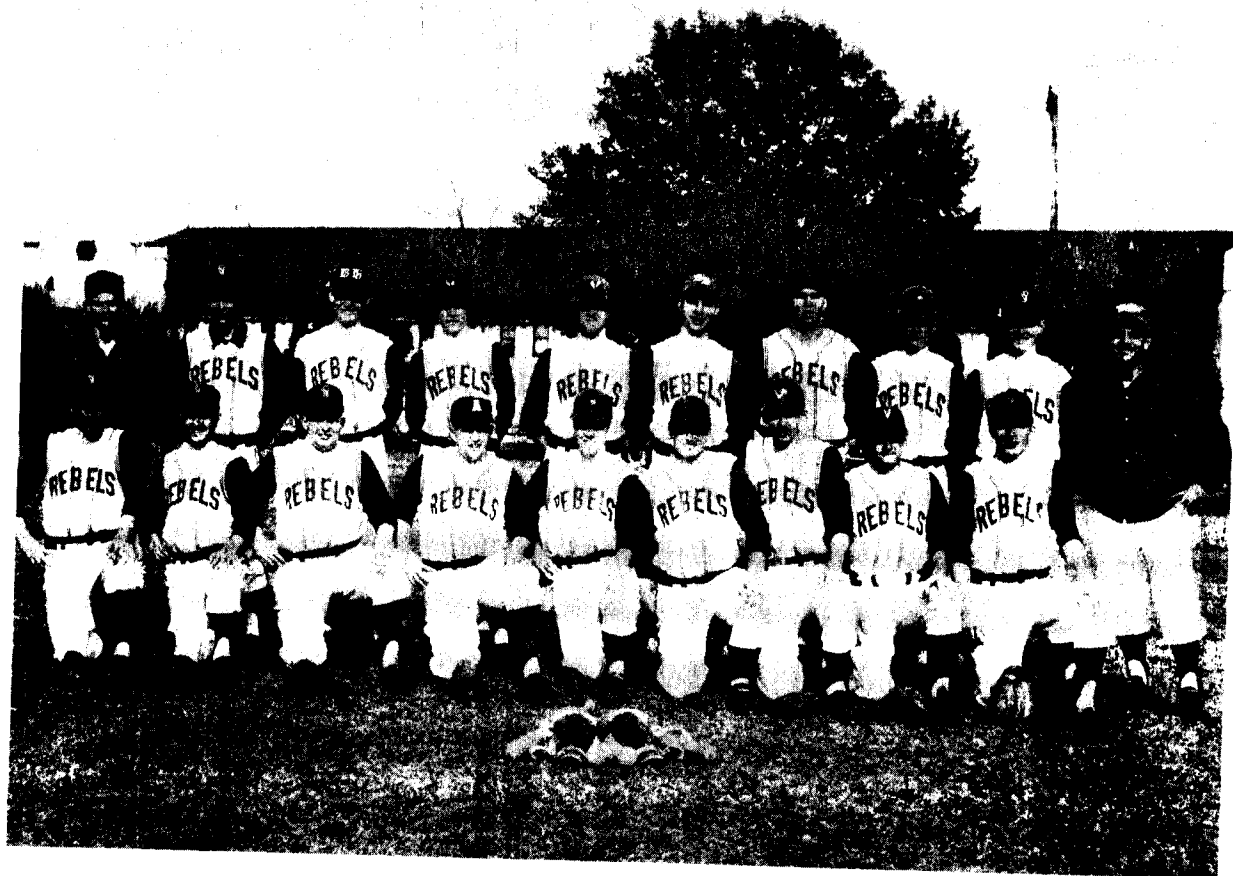
## 1964 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

VSC ended 10-10 in 1964, finishing with a 4-6 Georgia Conference mark. A lack of hitting (the team batting mark was a miserable .232), and fielding led to a late-season downfall, after an early 4-2 won-lost log.

The Rebels were able to end at the .500 mark only because of superb pitching, which saw a final team ERA of 1.45 (a school record, and 4th. best in the nation in '64). Southpaw, Mike Perry posted a 5-2 record, with a nation-leading 0.78 ERA, and was backed by Ray Peters (3-4, 1.58 ERA), and the veteran Herman Hudson (2-4, 1.96 ERA). VSC sandwiched two-game sweeps of Florida Presbyterian and Stetson around losses to tough Florida Southern, on their Southern trip, but were brought back to earth, as they dropped a two-game series to Erskine at Rebel Field.

Perry, Peters, and Hudson held opponents down in the run-department (giving up only 60-total runs all year), but got plate support from only Dennis Fike (.328), and Buddy Bush (.270). The Rebs scored more than 5-runs in only six-games all season.

Perry deserves special mention, not only because of his NAIA best ERA, but because he emerged as VSC baseball's first big star, against formidible opposition. He allowed only six earned-runs in 69 innings, and struck-out 62 hitters, issuing only 30 walks. With a little more team offense, he would surely have been named to the All-American team.



VALDOSTA STATE  
1964 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 10 - lost 10

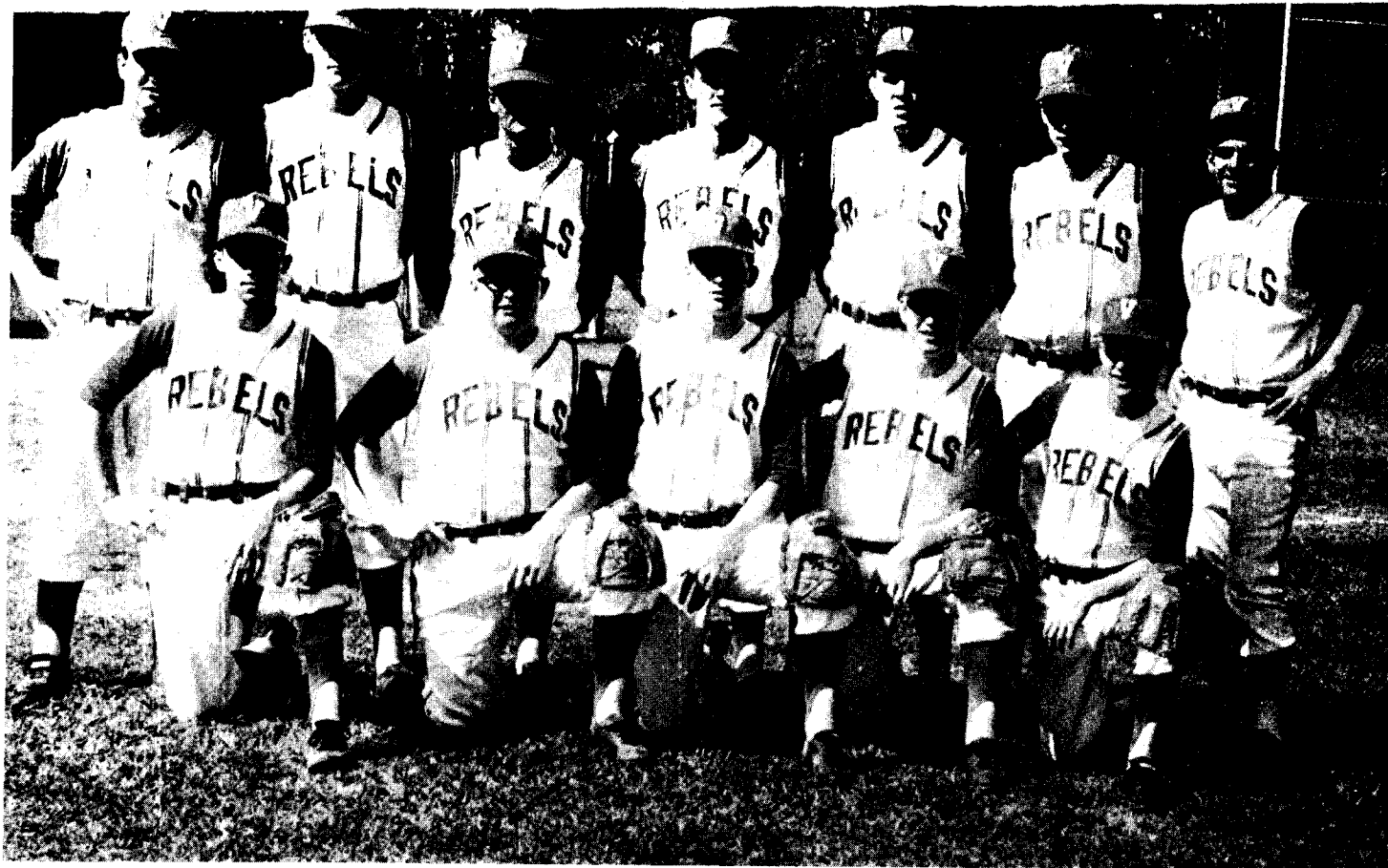
	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Dennis Fike, rf	67	12	22	14	.328	1	0	1	1
Buddy Bush, 2b	75	10	20	12	.270	4	2	1	2
Lindy Evans, c	71	8	18	6	.255	1	1	0	1
Tommy Johnson, ss	70	12	17	5	.243	1	3	1	2
Mike Perry, p-1b	66	7	16	5	.243	3	1	0	1
Bobby Speck, cf	76	19	18	3	.238	0	2	1	13
Jack Raley, 3b	57	3	12	1	.212	1	1	0	2
Robert Creel, lf	62	3	11	6	.178	2	0	0	2
Ray Peters, p	37	3	6	4	.162	0	1	0	0
Herman Hudson, p	20	1	2	1	.100	0	0	0	1
TOTALS	641	83	149	61	.232	15	11	4	26

(Bud Bridges, of 9-2, .222; Jimmy Pritchett, ss 11-2, .182; Bill Hearn, 3b 17-3, .176; Jim Whiteside, of 2-0, .000; Madison Culler, p 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Mike Perry	10	69	57	16	6	30	62	5-2	0.78
Ray Peters	7	51.1	34	17	9	18	25	3-4	1.58
Herman Hudson	7	55	48	23	12	15	23	2-4	1.96
Madison Culler	2	4.2	6	4	2	3	2	0-0	3.85
TOTALS	20	180	145	60	29	66	112	10-10	1.45

VSC	4,	Florida Presbyterian ...	2
VSC	13,	Florida Presbyterian ...	1
(L) VSC	2,	Florida Southern .....	10
(L) VSC	1,	Florida Southern .....	8
VSC	6,	Stetson .....	2
VSC	12,	Stetson .....	0
(L) VSC	2,	Erskine .....	4
(L) VSC	0,	Erskine .....	1
VSC	5,	Mercer .....	1
VSC	8,	Piedmont .....	0
VSC	12,	Piedmont .....	4
VSC	1,	Shorter .....	0
(L) VSC	0,	Shorter .....	8
VSC	2,	Mercer .....	0
(L) VSC	5,	Berry .....	6
(L) VSC	0,	Berry .....	2
(L) VSC	1,	West Georgia .....	2
(L) VSC	2,	West Georgia .....	5
(L) VSC	1,	Oglethorpe .....	2
VSC	6,	Oglethorpe .....	2

NOTE: Florida Presbyterian is now Eckerd.



*BOTTOM ROW:* Bud Bridges, Robert Creel, Herman Hudson, Lindy Evans, and Bobby Speck. *TOP ROW:* Buddy Bush, Dennis Fike, Jim Whiteside, Jack Raley, Ray Peters, Tommy Johnson and Coach Grant. These made up the 1964 team.



Herman Hudson and Coach Grant



'65

## 1965 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

1965 was the championship year that Coach Grant had waited for, for so long. Everything was there; power hitting (even though the team average hovered near .250) with 54 extra-base-hits; air-tight fielding (fifth best percentage in the nation); and, superb pitching (2.53 team ERA); all of which added to an 18-11 record.

Veteran hurlers, Mike Perry (7-2, 2.10 ERA), and Ray Peters (4-5, 3.05 ERA) were augmented by freshman, flame-thrower Ron Fortner (6-4, 2.24 ERA), and together struck-out 210 in 242-innings. Old adversaries Florida Southern and West Georgia were beaten, as the Rebs played their best schedule, and won their most games ever.

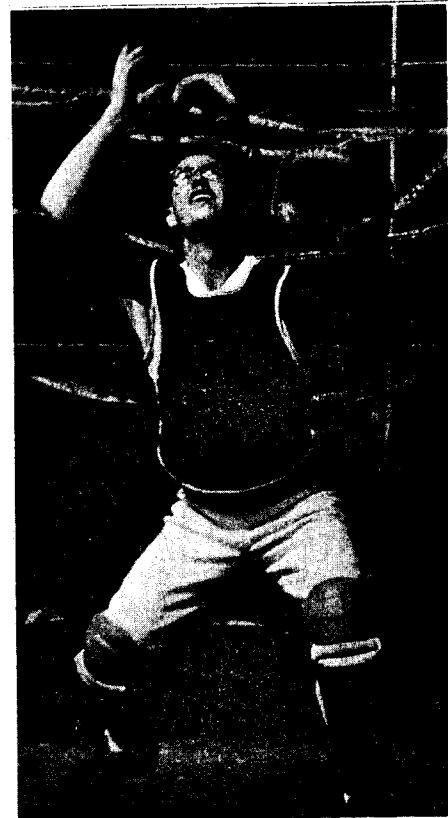
Shortstop Tommy Johnson, in limited playing time, hit .375, with Peters at .333, and thirdsacker Lindy Evans at .310. The Rebel outfield of Ben Bates (.255), Bob Lamphier (.247), Dennis Fike (.191), and Robert Creel (.154) didn't hit for average, but made the big defensive play when needed.

VSC was only 5-5 after ten games, but had recorded split-series with toughies Florida Southern, Stetson, and David Lipscomb, dropping two to nationally-ranked Carson-Newman, but bopping Berry twice. The Rebs rolled to an 8-2 Georgia Conference mark, tying for the crown with West Georgia. VSC beat the Braves 1-0 in a play-off, and entered their first ever NAIA District tournament (see tournament resume).

Even though the Rebels lost two straight to Georgia Southern in the tourney, this was the best year, to that point, in the school's history. Perry, for the second straight season, received local NAIA honors, and along with Angelo DeVivo (.222) finished distinguished 4-year careers.



Dennis Fike and Lindy Evans return this season along with others in hopes of taking the region title.





VALDOSTA STATE  
1965 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 18 - lost 11

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Tommy Johnson, ss	48	15	18	9	.375	5	1	1	0
Ray Peters, p	30	5	10	7	.333	2	1	0	0
Lindy Evans, 3b	100	17	31	15	.310	2	1	0	0
Mike Perry, p-1b	71	13	19	10	.268	2	1	1	4
Ben Bates, c	98	17	25	16	.255	6	0	3	6
Bob Lamphier, cf	93	15	23	11	.247	4	2	1	11
Jack Raley, 2b	90	17	22	13	.244	4	3	1	0
Angelo DeVivo, 1b	45	9	10	10	.222	1	0	1	0
Dennis Fike, lf	94	16	18	10	.191	2	0	2	3
Ron Fortner, p	28	8	5	5	.179	0	0	1	0
Ronnie Rowe, inf	49	5	8	4	.163	0	2	0	0
Robert Creel, rf	52	9	8	8	.154	2	0	0	1
TOTALS	912	159	222	131	.243	32	11	12	25

(Jim Grant, 1b 18-6, .333; Mike Terry, p 3-1, .333; Zack Wade, c 23-7, .304; Tommy Hutcherson, utl 22-5, .227; Bill Chapman, of 21-3, .143; Mark Holloway, of 7-1, .143; Jimmy Robinson, utl 9-1, .111; Bill Gable, 2b 11-1, .091)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Mike Perry	10	73	59	32	17	33	77	7-2	2.10
Ron Fortner	11	84.1	59	29	21	39	71	6-4	2.24
Ray Peters	10	70.2	67	36	24	23	54	4-5	3.05
TOTALS	29	242	195	104	68	103	210	18-11	2.53

(Jack Raley 0-0, 0.00; Mike Terry 1-0, 3.95)

(L) VSC 5, Florida Southern .....	6
VSC 4, Florida Southern .....	3
(L) VSC 2, Stetson .....	9
VSC 10, Stetson .....	7
VSC 4, David Lipscomb .....	1
(L) VSC 0, David Lipscomb .....	2
VSC 3, Berry .....	1
VSC 5, Berry .....	1
(L) VSC 1, Carson-Newman .....	11
(L) VSC 2, Carson-Newman .....	3
VSC 1, Erskine .....	0
VSC 1, Erskine .....	0
VSC 9, Florida Presbyterian ...	3
(L) VSC 3, Florida Presbyterian ...	4
VSC 14, Oglethorpe .....	5
VSC 4, Pembroke State .....	3
(L) VSC 0, Pembroke State .....	2
VSC 6, Shorter .....	1
VSC 13, Shorter .....	0
VSC 14, Georgia State .....	3

(L) VSC 5, Oglethorpe .....	6
VSC 13, Oglethorpe .....	10
VSC 11, West Georgia .....	2
(L) VSC 1, West Georgia .....	5
VSC 13, Piedmont .....	3
VSC 8, Piedmont .....	2

GEORGIA CONFERENCE PLAY-OFF

Macon, Ga.

VSC 1, West Georgia .....	0
---------------------------	---

NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP

Statesboro, Ga.

(L) VSC 2, Georgia Southern ...	5
(L) VSC 4, Georgia Southern ...	6

NOTE: Florida Presbyterian is now Eckerd.



*FRONT ROW:* Robert Creel, Jim Grant, Tommy Hutcherson, Lindy Evans, Ron Fortner. *SECOND ROW:* Dennis Fike, Jack Raley, Bob Lamphier, Bill Gable, Ben Bates, Tommy Johnson.

*TOP ROW:* Herman Hudson, Zack Wade, Mike Perry, Ray Peters, Jimmy Robinson, Coach Grant.



## 1966 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

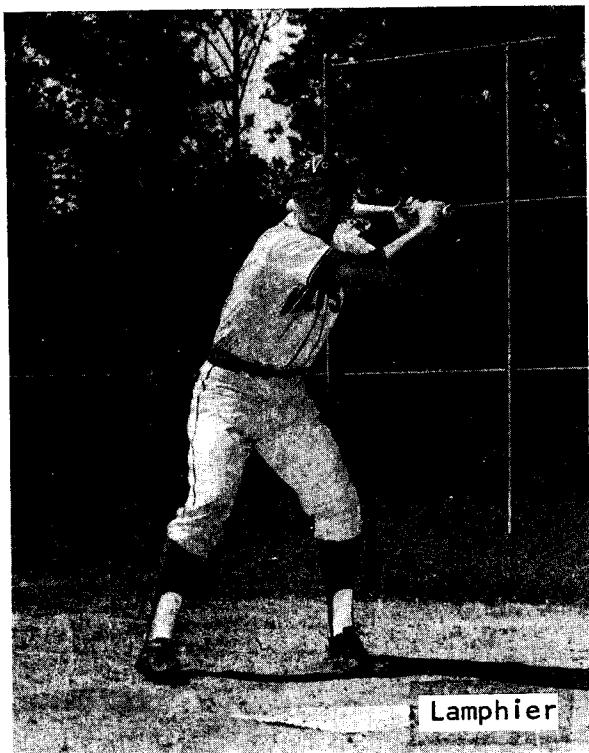
Oh! What a year it could have been. 15-9 certainly isn't bad, but a second consecutive Georgia Conference title was in the offing, and the Rebels simply blew it, dropping their last four games, including three in the conference.

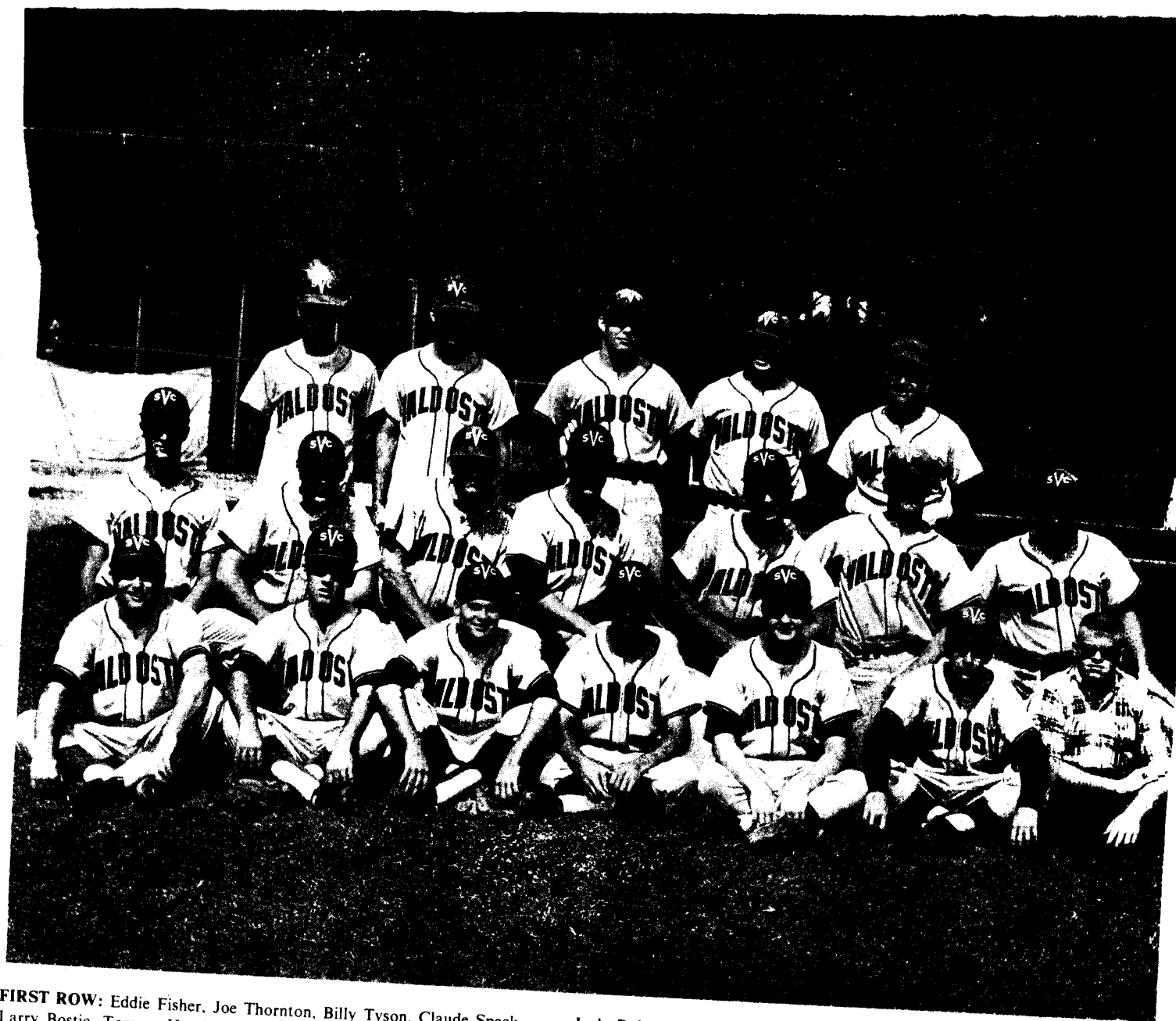
VSC beat some biggies this season, defeating Georgia Tech three times, The Citadel twice, and splitting a two-game-set with nationally ranked Florida Southern. But they really had problems in the GIAC, being upset by Berry 1-0, and Oglethorpe 3-2, besides being shut-out twice by hated West Georgia, 5-0 and 1-0. After the glories of '65, a 3-4 league mark was the result.

Hitting was the problem. The team sunk to a .237 average, while scoring only two-runs in their crucial, final three conference games. First-baseman Dennis Fike (.345), and catcher Zack Wade (.325) were the only regulars to hit over .235. Outfielder Tommy Hutcherson (.344) saw only limited duty.

Pitching, on the other hand, was great. Coach Grant had returnee Ron Fortner (4-3, 2.38 ERA) to lead three, top freshman recruits. Righthander Eddie Fisher (8-2, 0.85 ERA) led the nation in earned-run-average, while "Steady Eddie" Middleton (1-1, 1.06 ERA), and southpaw Danny Petrovich (2-3, 2.67 ERA) pitched like veterans.

Fisher, particularly drew praise, as the Federalsburg, Md., product maintained his composure through a record breaking mound season. "The Fish" shut-out Florida Southern and Mercer, and recorded other wins over Stetson, Georgia Tech, Oglethorpe, Erskine, The Citadel, and Berry. He lost to West Georgia 1-0, on an unearned run, and gave up only one earned-run in a 5-3 set-back to Jacksonville.





**FIRST ROW:** Eddie Fisher, Joe Thornton, Billy Tyson, Claude Speck, Larry Bostic, Tommy Hutcherson, Jimmy Womack; **SECOND ROW:** Danny Petrovich, Bill Gable, Ben Bates, Dennis Fike, Ron Fortner,

Jack Raley, Charles Massey; **THIRD ROW:** Tommy Johnson, Bob Lampier, Eddie Middleton, Zack Wade, Coach Billy Grant.



VALDOSTA STATE  
1966 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 15 -- lost 9

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Dennis Fike, 1b	87	16	30	15	.345	3	6	1	0
Tommy Hutcherson, of	32	3	11	3	.344	0	0	0	3
Zack Wade, c	80	15	26	16	.325	4	2	1	0
Eddie Fisher, p	31	6	10	4	.323	1	0	0	0
Ben Bates, cf	77	12	18	10	.234	0	0	1	1
Tommy Johnson, ss	79	13	18	10	.228	1	0	1	2
Jack Raley, 2b	81	8	17	13	.210	5	0	0	0
Joe Thornton, of	20	1	4	2	.200	0	0	0	0
Claude Speck, 3b	77	17	14	3	.182	3	0	0	16
Bob Lamphier, lf	67	4	12	6	.179	1	1	1	2
Ron Fortner, p	25	3	3	1	.120	2	0	0	0
TOTALS	723	105	171	86	.237	20	10	5	24

(Jim Grant, 1b 13-4, .308; Bobby Ritch, of 10-2, .200; Paul Vick, p 10-1, .100; Eddie Middleton, p 15-1, .067; Danny Petrovich, p 10-0, .000; Bill Gable, 2b 6-0, .000; Larry Bostic, utl 2-0, .000; Billy Tyson, p 1-0, .000)

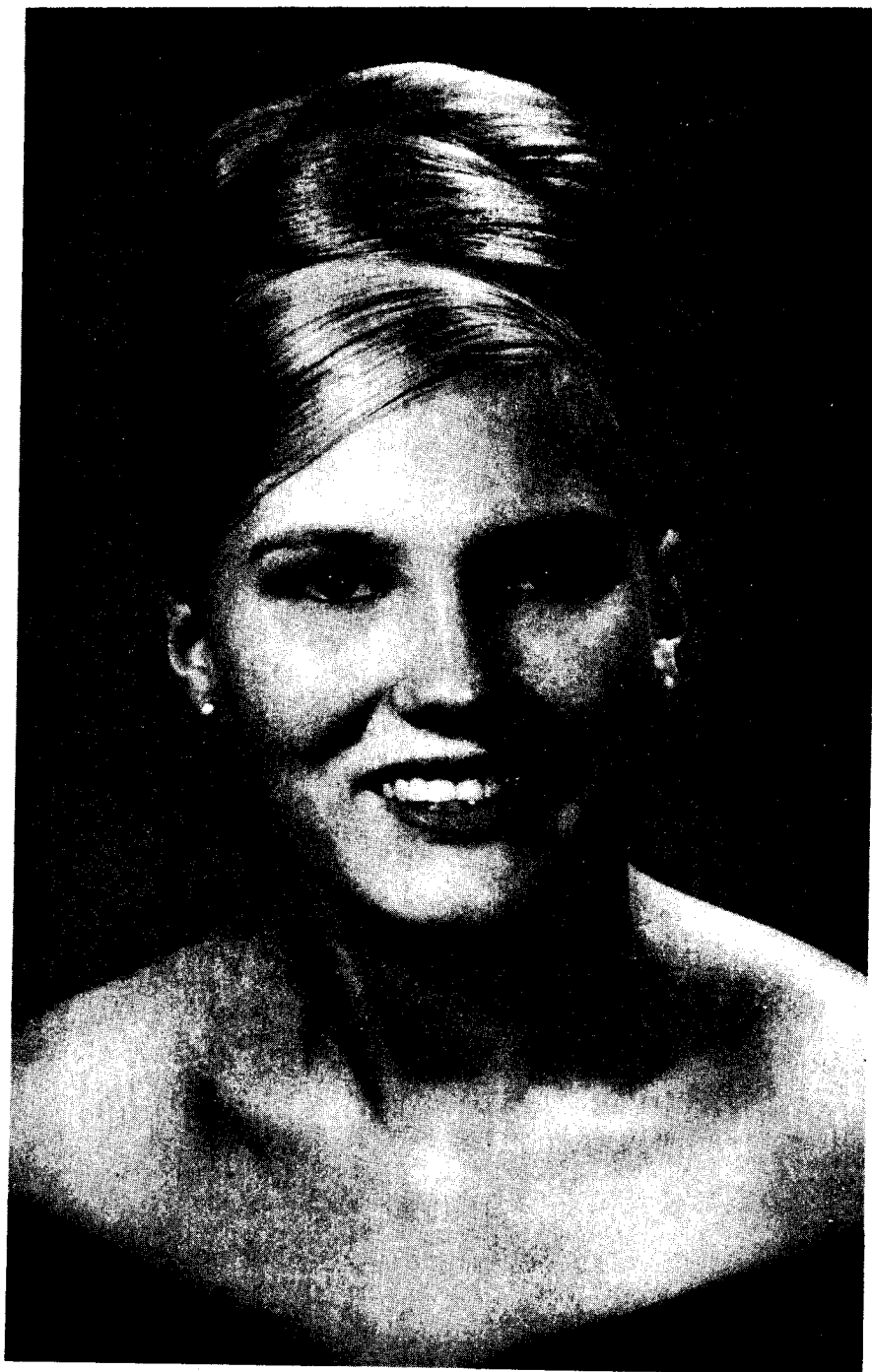
	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Eddie Fisher	10	74	40	15	7	28	41	8-2	0.85
Eddie Middleton	3	17	6	3	2	6	8	1-1	1.06
Ron Fortner	10	68	29	28	18	31	55	4-3	2.38
Danny Petrovich	6	27	21	15	8	17	23	2-3	2.67
TOTALS	24	194	104	69	38	86	137	15-9	1.76

(Paul Vick 0-0, 2.57; Billy Tyson 0-0, 9.00)

(L) VSC 6, Florida Southern	8
VSC 1, Florida Southern	0
VSC 5, Stetson	4
VSC 6, Georgia Tech	1
VSC 1, DePauw	0
VSC 4, Georgia Tech	2
VSC 4, Georgia Tech	2
VSC 10, Berry	5
VSC 7, Oglethorpe	5
VSC 13, Oglethorpe	1
(L) VSC 1, Mercer	2
VSC 8, Florida Presbyterian	4

VSC 5, Erskine	1
(L) VSC 0, Erskine	6
VSC 5, The Citadel	3
VSC 8, The Citadel	1
(L) VSC 0, Berry	1
VSC 5, Berry	0
(L) VSC 3, Jacksonville	9
VSC 8, Mercer	0
(L) VSC 2, Oglethorpe	3
(L) VSC 0, West Georgia	5
(L) VSC 0, West Georgia	1
(L) VSC 3, Jacksonville	5

NOTE: Florida Presbyterian is now Eckerd.



'67



## 1967 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

The writing was on the wall in 1967, when sophomore, pitching sensation, Eddie Fisher developed arm problems and went 1-3, on the year. The Rebels ended 14-16, with a 4-5 Georgia Conference mark, and saw a fine beginning end in failure.

Most disconcerting of all was VSC's embarrassing record against Armstrong State and Georgia Southwestern. Both these schools had just been made senior colleges (from junior college status) for the 1966-1967 year, and the Rebs dropped four of six games versus these teams, including a 13-2 pasting from ASC's Pirates.

Without Fisher, the burden fell-upon Ron Fortner (4-5, 2.12 ERA), Eddie Middleton (4-2, 3.26 ERA), and Danny Petrovich (3-2, 2.55 ERA), but an enlarged schedule and inconsistent relief work hurt the team performance. Of course, hitting was the major problem, a burden that seemed to plague the Rebs year-after-year.

The team hit .250, but with NO power. Claude Speck (.349) was the team leader in the offensive department, while also stealing a school record 31-bases. Ben Bates (.345) and catcher Zack Wade (.306) were the only other consistent hitters. Behind Fortner, Petrovich, and Middleton, VSC won 7 of their first 10, including biggies over David Lipscomb (twice), St. Louis (twice), and Georgia Tech, but faded fast, and recorded their first debit year since 1963.

Pitching kept the Rebs afloat, but pitchers are a strange breed. Coach Bill Grant seemed to always develop the good pitcher (even though hitting was always a minus), and used unusual methods to keep them on the straight and narrow. During the 1967 season, "Big Eddie" Middleton was throwing a fine game, with the one exception that the down-in-the-line-up hitters (6-7-8-9), were seeing change-ups, and slow curves, rather than his main forte-- the fast ball.

Coach Grant told Eddie two different times, "throw the hard one." Against the 120-pound, number-9 hitter (who had drilled a single, on a slow-curve, the first time up), Ed began with a slow-change (ball-1). "Lean-back and throw it," Grant yelled. The next pitch was another change, which was drilled foul, into the left-field corner. Coach Grant bolted to the mound, and told Middleton, in no uncertain terms, "throw nothing but fast balls to this goof."

Eddie's next pitch was a slow curve, which was hit like a bullet between second and short, for a single. Coach Grant sprinted to the mound, and grabbed the ball held in Middleton's outstretched hand (he knew that he was gone), but instead of calling for a relief pitcher, Grant (twice) placed his foot squarely between Ed's anterior cheeks, as the big, sophomore attempted to make it safely to the dugout. Eddie had been literally kicked out of the game by his coach. Part of Middleton's problems, the remainder of his career, rested on the fact that he seldom used the change, and slow curve.

This was to be Coach Grant's last season as baseball coach, as his Athletic Director duties, and the call of golf coach (and golf) beckoned. His presence made VSC's athletic program, and of course, to this day he continues to lead the state's best program.



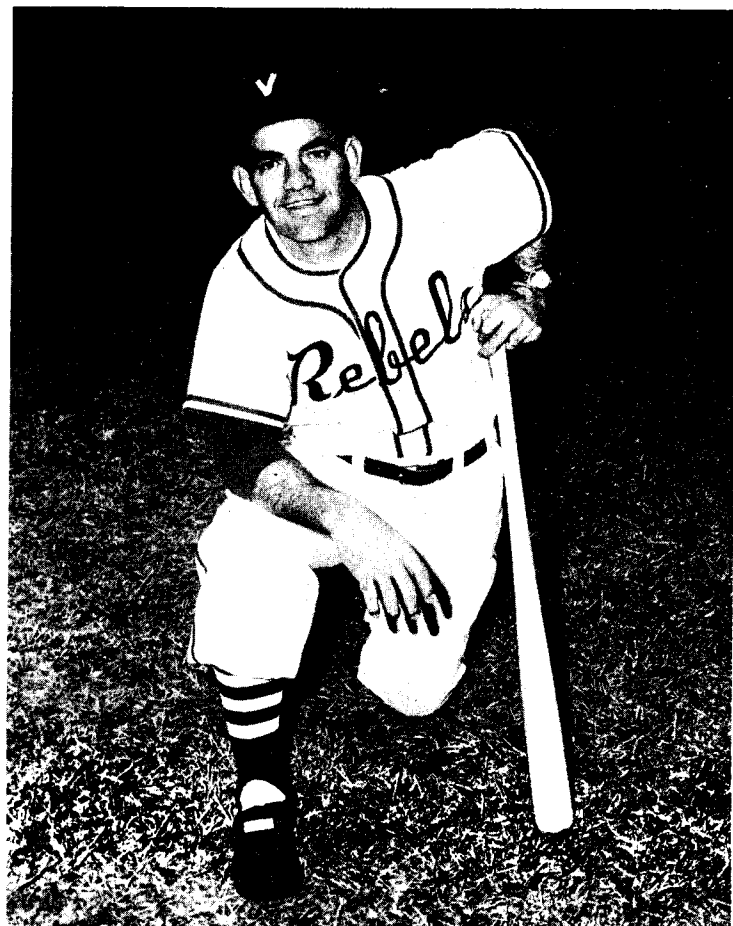


*Grant With Gold: VSC Coach Is Excellent Athlete*

BASEBALL COACH, BILLY GRANT



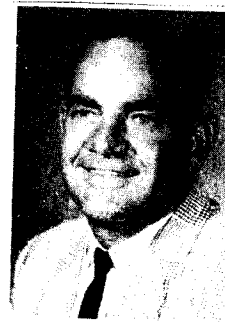
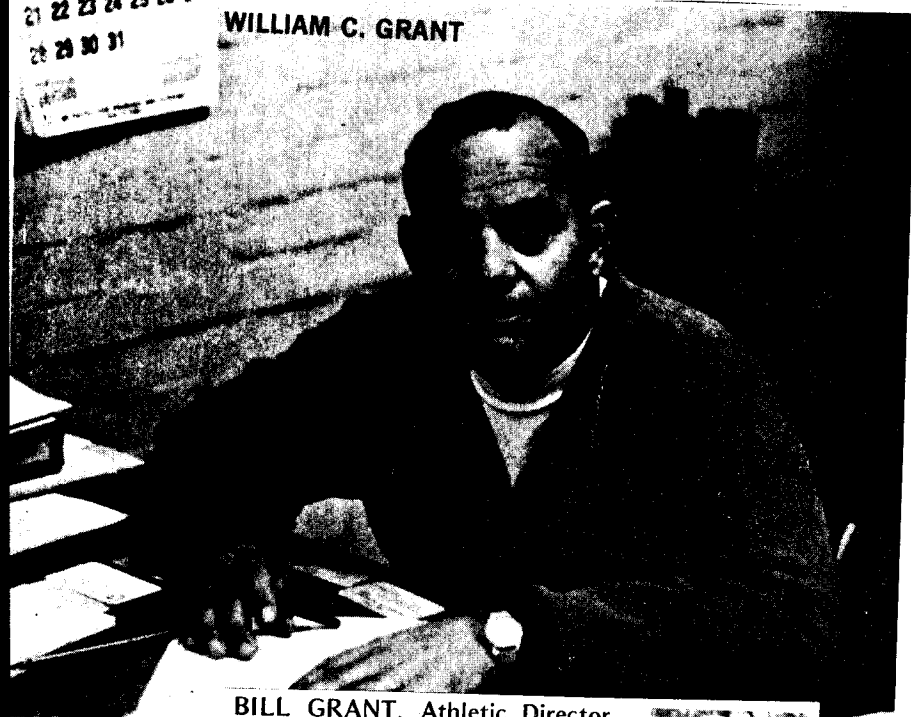
COACH GRANT



Baseball coach,  
Grant, with the new  
V.S.C. pitching ma-  
chine.



WILLIAM C. GRANT



**BILL GRANT**, Athletic Director Grant first came to Valdosta State in 1959 as assistant professor of physical education and head baseball coach. Also a native Valdostan, he was talented enough in high school to earn a football scholarship to the University of Georgia. He coached VSC's baseball team for eight seasons and directed them to the school's first conference championship in 1965. In 1968, he relinquished his head coaching duties to Thomas and became head of the physical education department. In 1970, he took over as athletic director. Grant received his BS degree in physical education from the University of Georgia and his MA degree from George Peabody College.



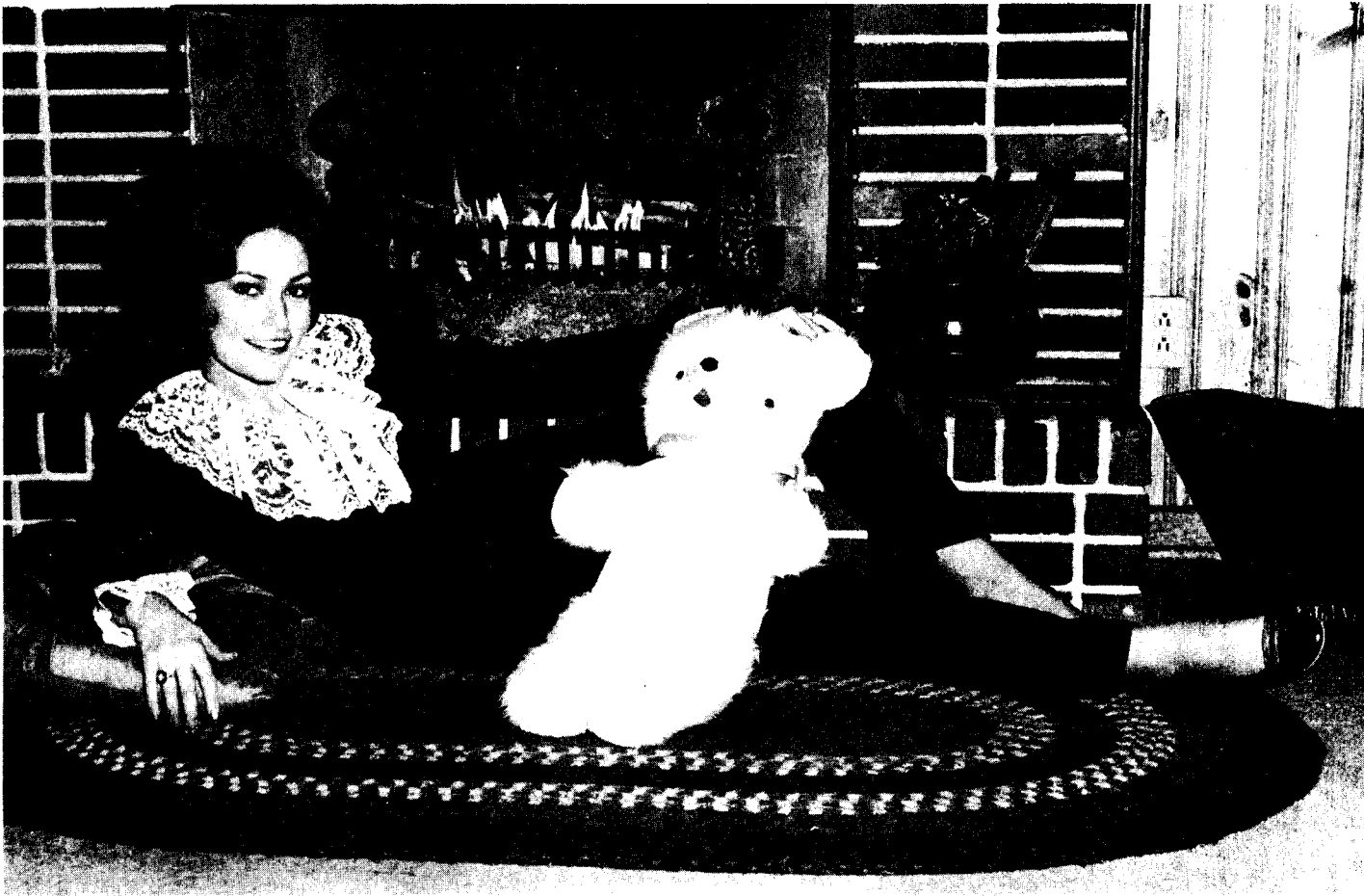
VALDOSTA STATE  
1967 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 14 - lost 16

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Claude Speck, cf	109	26	38	7	.349	4	0	0	31
Ben Bates, c-of	110	18	38	17	.345	3	2	1	5
Zack Wade, c	49	9	15	11	.306	3	0	1	0
Joe Thornton, 3b	36	5	10	1	.277	1	0	0	0
Dennis Fike, 1b	108	12	29	17	.269	4	3	0	1
Danny Petrovich, p	26	2	7	2	.269	0	0	1	1
Spence Kiser, lf	64	11	17	8	.266	0	0	0	7
Steve Crawford, rf	95	14	22	6	.232	4	3	0	2
Eddie Middleton, p	37	3	8	3	.216	0	0	0	0
Bobby Simpson, ss	106	9	20	15	.188	2	1	0	1
Bill Brown, 3b	59	5	11	3	.186	0	0	0	1
DeWayne Elder, 2b	84	11	15	9	.179	2	1	0	0
Ron Fortner, p	31	2	4	3	.129	1	1	1	0
TOTALS	968	131	242	106	.250	25	13	4	50

(Vernon Twitty, 1b 14-4, .286; Sonny Williams, p 5-1, .200; Eddie Fisher, p 11-2, .182; Duane White, p 7-1, .143; John Trimnell, of 2-0, .000; F.T. Griffin, utl 5-0, .000; R.S. DeLoach, 1b 10-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Eddie Fisher	6	33.1	29	20	6	10	24	1-3	1.62
Ron Fortner	10	76.1	56	30	18	37	59	4-5	2.12
Danny Petrovich	11	60	51	28	17	31	37	3-2	2.55
Sonny Williams	4	15.2	10	8	5	2	4	1-1	2.87
Eddie Middleton	8	58	55	35	21	28	30	4-2	3.26
Duane White	4	16.1	29	24	13	15	13	1-3	7.16
TOTALS	30	259.2	230	146	80	123	167	14-16	2.77

(L) VSC 2, Tennessee Tech ..... 3	(L) VSC 2, Erskine ..... 7
(L) VSC 8, Tennessee Tech ..... 13	(L) VSC 0, Georgia Southwestern .... 2
VSC 2, David Lipscomb ..... 0	(L) VSC 3, Armstrong State ..... 9
VSC 3, David Lipscomb ..... 1	VSC 6, Armstrong State ..... 1
VSC 4, St. Louis Univ. .... 1	VSC 4, Jacksonville ..... 1
VSC 2, St. Louis Univ. .... 1	(L) VSC 5, Jacksonville ..... 10
(L) VSC 2, Georgia Tech ..... 9	VSC 3, Berry ..... 2
VSC 9, Georgia Tech ..... 4	VSC 3, Berry ..... 2
VSC 12, Malone ..... 3	(L) VSC 5, Florida Southern ..... 6
VSC 12, Malone ..... 7	(L) VSC 1, Jacksonville ..... 10
(L) VSC 6, Belmont Abbey ..... 11	(L) VSC 4, Jacksonville ..... 5
(L) VSC 1, Belmont Abbey ..... 3	(L) VSC 2, West Georgia ..... 3
(L) VSC 2, Armstrong State .... 13	(L) VSC 2, West Georgia ..... 6
(L) VSC 3, Armstrong State .... 4	VSC 8, Georgia Southwestern .... 4
VSC 2, Erskine ..... 1	VSC 9, Oglethorpe ..... 3



'68

VALDOSTA STATE  
1968 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 15 -- lost 9

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Steve Crawford, rf	95	18	36	23	.379	12	4	1	15
Claude Speck, cf	102	27	36	3	.353	7	1	0	27
Larry Meredith, 3b	94	21	33	20	.351	10	0	1	9
DeWayne Elder, c	66	10	18	8	.273	4	0	0	8
Spence Kiser, of	41	7	10	4	.244	0	0	0	0
Jack Toole, 1b	84	9	19	15	.226	6	0	1	8
Larry Hysler, 2b	71	7	16	7	.225	5	0	0	6
Bobby Simpson, ss	81	8	18	11	.222	2	2	1	3
Joe Thornton, lf	35	6	7	1	.200	1	0	0	3
Danny Petrovich, p	20	2	2	1	.100	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	802	133	224	108	.279	52	8	4	85

(R.S. DeLoach, 1b 1-1, 1.000; Sparky Wright, c 11-7, .636; Richard Vann, p 6-3, .500; Harry Jones, 1b 17-6, .353; Jimmy Devane, c 4-1, .250; Eddie Middleton, p 4-1, .250; Tommy Brown, p 9-2, .222; Bobby Sloan, 1b 17-3, .176; Duane White, p 7-1, .143; Ron Fortner, p 17-2, .118; Eddie Fisher, p 18-2, .111; Hansel Faulkner, ss 2-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Danny Petrovich	9	62	50	20	9	18	50	5-1	1.31
Eddie Fisher	9	68	63	32	18	21	63	4-3	2.38
Duane White	6	21	23	11	7	9	23	1-2	3.00
Ron Fortner	8	38.1	33	17	13	8	33	3-1	3.05
Richard Vann	6	30.2	22	18	13	13	18	1-2	3.82
TOTALS	24	231.1	194	101	63	73	191	15-9	2.45

(Tommy Brown 1-0, 1.93; Eddie Middleton 0-0, 2.70)

VSC 7, David Lipscomb .....	6	VSC 11, Armstrong State .....	1
(L) VSC 2, David Lipscomb .....	5	VSC 5, Armstrong State .....	3
VSC 13, Lake Forest .....	8	(L) VSC 2, Oglethorpe .....	4
VSC 3, DePauw .....	2	(L) VSC 4, Berry .....	9
VSC 4, DePauw .....	2	VSC 2, Berry .....	0
VSC 6, Armstrong State .....	0	VSC 9, Jacksonville .....	4
VSC 10, *Burlington (Ia.) A's ...	2	VSC 8, Jacksonville .....	6
VSC 5, *Leesburg (Fla.) A's ....	1	(L) VSC 0, West Georgia .....	5
VSC 7, Georgia Southwestern ....	1	(L) VSC 1, West Georgia .....	2
(L) VSC 5, Erskine .....	8	(L) VSC 1, Georgia Southwestern ....	5
VSC 3, Erskine .....	2	(L) VSC 5, Jacksonville .....	9
VSC 13, High Point .....	11	(L) VSC 2, Jacksonville .....	5

NOTE: under then existing rules, of both the NAIA and NCAA, games against \*professional teams were counted. Coach Thomas received official notification from the NAIA National Office to this effect.

## 1968 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

Two weeks before the opener of the the 1968 season, head coach Bill Grant, handed the team over to his newly hired assistant, Tommy Thomas. Thomas was no stranger to VSC baseball, having been the top catcher in the school's history (1959-1962), while leading the team in hitting his final three seasons.

What the Rebel baseball team lost in Coach Grant was a fun-loving, yet stearn, taskmaster, whose players knew that thin-line between being on the good and/or bad side of their coach. What they got in Coach Thomas was one of the finest baseball minds around, who had an affection for long-practicing and detail; but, whose "good-guy" nature saw the best in people, seldom their faults.

What Thomas inherited was a group of experienced hell-raisers, who celebrated win, or lose, and whose behaviors had been dictated by the mood of their former coach. Thomas would have some problems in regard to various decisions because the flamboyant Grant had used a strong approach, while Coach "T" would sometimes waver.

The Rebels of 1968 were strong in hitting (a record .279 team average), pitching (2.45 team ERA), and fielding (.960). Veterans Danny Petrovich (5-1, 1.31 ERA), Eddie Fisher (4-3, 2.38 ERA), and Ron Fortner (3-1, 3.05 ERA), steadied an otherwise green mound staff, while outfielders Steve Crawford (.379) and Claude Speck (.353), and third-baseman Larry Meredith (.351) provided the hitting.

Speck (27), and Crawford (15) combined for 42 stolen bases, as the team amassed a record 85 thefts. All of these statistics, however, added to only a 15-9 record, and a 4-5 Georgia Conference mark, as the Rebs faded in the stretch, dropping their last five games, three of which were in the league.

David Lipscomb was battled in a 17-inning season opener (which took two days to complete), before VSC won 7-6 behind Petrovich's seven-inning relief job, and game winning RBI. The Rebels rolled to a 15-4 log, as Petrovich shut-out Armstrong State and Berry, and the team won games over two professional clubs. Only upset losses to loop rivals Oglethorpe (4-2), and Berry (9-4) marred an exciting start.

On April 27, after two big wins over Jacksonville four days earlier, VSC rolled into Carrollton to battle West Georgia for the conference lead. Coach Thomas described the day as "Black Saturday," as the home-team won 5-0, and 2-1 decisions. Petrovich lost the opener, while Fisher (a last minute choice over Fortner) lost the heart-breaking, 10-inning, nite-cap, as the Rebs garnered only 10-hits in the doubleheader.

Fortner did not bother to show for the last three games, as Georgia South-western and Jacksonville (twice) solidified the team's decline. Even with the late season debacle, Petrovich was close to being named All-American, as he nabbed NAIA honorable-mention honors.

# Rebels Rebound With 2-0 Victory

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

ROME — Valdosta State College's Rebels got two runs in the top of the ninth inning to notch a 2-0 victory over the Berry College Vikings in a baseball game here Saturday.

With the win, the Rebels bounced back from a 9-4 defeat at the hands of the Vikings here Friday. Both games were Georgia Intercollegiate Conference affairs, and the Rebels are 4-1 in conference play and 13-4 for the season.

Danny Petrovich went the distance on the mound for the Rebels and held the Vikings

to four scattered hits as he notched his fifth win against no defeats.

The Rebels got their runs in the ninth inning when left-fielder Steve Crawford walked and catcher Dewayne Elder doubled to score him. Then shortstop Bobby Simpson hit a triple which scored Elder for the

Rebels' second run of the inning.

They are presently tied for the league lead with the West Georgia College Braves. West Georgia is 3-1 in conference play while the Rebels are 4-1.

Coach Tommy Thomas' Rebel nine is slated to return to action at home this afternoon against Jacksonville University.

## Petrovich Wins VSC's 4th Win

VALDOSTA — Danny Petrovich got his fourth win against no losses Tuesday as Valdosta State whipped Georgia Southwestern, 7-1.

Petrovich struck out 11, walked none and allowed three hits to help the Rebels to their ninth win against two losses. Claude Speck hit two singles and Spence Kaiser contributed a double for Valdosta.

Ga. Southwestern 000 000 001—1 3 3  
Valdosta 420 100 000—7 3 3  
Hall and Gundeman; Petrovich and Elder.

(16) The Valdosta Daily Times, Wed., April 10, 1956

# Baseball Rebels Clip Hurricanes

By SAMMY GLASSMAN  
Times Sports Editor

Valdosta State College's baseball Rebels used a fast start at the plate and a strong-all-the-way pitching performance by Danny Petrovich to score a 7-1 victory over the Georgia Southwestern College Hurricanes here Tuesday.

Coach Tommy Thomas' Rebels racked up four runs in the first inning and were never in danger of losing the advantage after that as Petrovich handcuffed the visitors from Americus with three scattered singles.

With the triumph the Rebels boosted their regular season record to 5-1 and increased their Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference mark to 2-0. Southwestern now owns a 2-11 chart.

To produce those four runs in the opening frame, the Rebels mixed doubles by Steve Crawford and Jack Toole with a single by Spence Kaiser and a pair of walks. VSC went on to collect a total of nine hits in the game.

Petrovich, a junior left-hander was sharp as he racked up his



DAN PETROVICH  
Gains Third Win

third hill victory of the season without a loss. He whiffed 11 and didn't issue a walk.

For eight frames he didn't allow a Hurricane runner to get past first. Petrovich's bid for a shutout was blocked when Southwestern tallied an unearned run in the ninth inning. The

Hurricanes' lone marker came on the combination of a single, two VSC errors and a sacrifice fly.

While the Rebels made a pair of miscues in the final frame, they were flawless in the field during the first eight innings.

Next action for the Rebels will come Friday when they are slated to open a two-game stand here against Erskine (S. C.) College.

Southwestern	ab	r	h	rbi
Guest, 2b-3b	4	1	1	0
Ross, ss	4	0	0	0
Lanier, rf	3	0	1	1
Gundeman, lf	4	0	0	0
Pearlman, cf	3	0	0	0
Witt, 3b	1	0	0	0
Spence, 2b	2	0	0	0
G. English, 1b	3	0	1	0
D. English, cf	3	0	0	0
Hall, p	3	0	0	0

TOTALS	30	0	3	1
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi
Speck, cf	4	2	0	0
Meredith, 3b	5	1	2	1
Elder, c	4	1	1	0
Toole, 1b	3	1	2	1
Kiser, lf	4	1	1	3
Hysler, 2b	4	0	0	0
Crawford, rf	2	0	1	1
Faulkner, ss	2	0	0	0
Simpson, ss	2	0	0	0
Jones, rf	1	0	0	0
Petrovich, p	3	1	1	0
Thornton	0	0	0	0

TOTALS 34 7 9 6  
Southwestern 000 000 001—1-3-3  
Valdosta State 420 100 000—7-9-2  
Errors — Pearlman; Witt; Ross; Speck.  
Meredith  
Left on base — VSC 6, GSC 3  
Two-base hits — Toole, Crawford  
Stolen bases — Speck, Kiser, Toole 2,  
Simpson, Meredith 2  
Sacrifices — Lanier (fly)  
Pitchers  
Hall (L) 5 0 7 5 4 3  
Petrovich (w) 9 3 3 0 0 3  
Passed balls — Gundeman

Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi
Speck, cf	4	0	0	0
Meredith, 3b	4	0	2	0
Elder, c	4	1	2	0
Crawford, rf	3	0	0	0
Sloan, 1b	3	1	0	0
Simpson, ss	4	0	1	1
Hysler, 2b	4	0	1	0
Thornton, rf	3	0	1	0
Petrovich, p	2	0	0	0

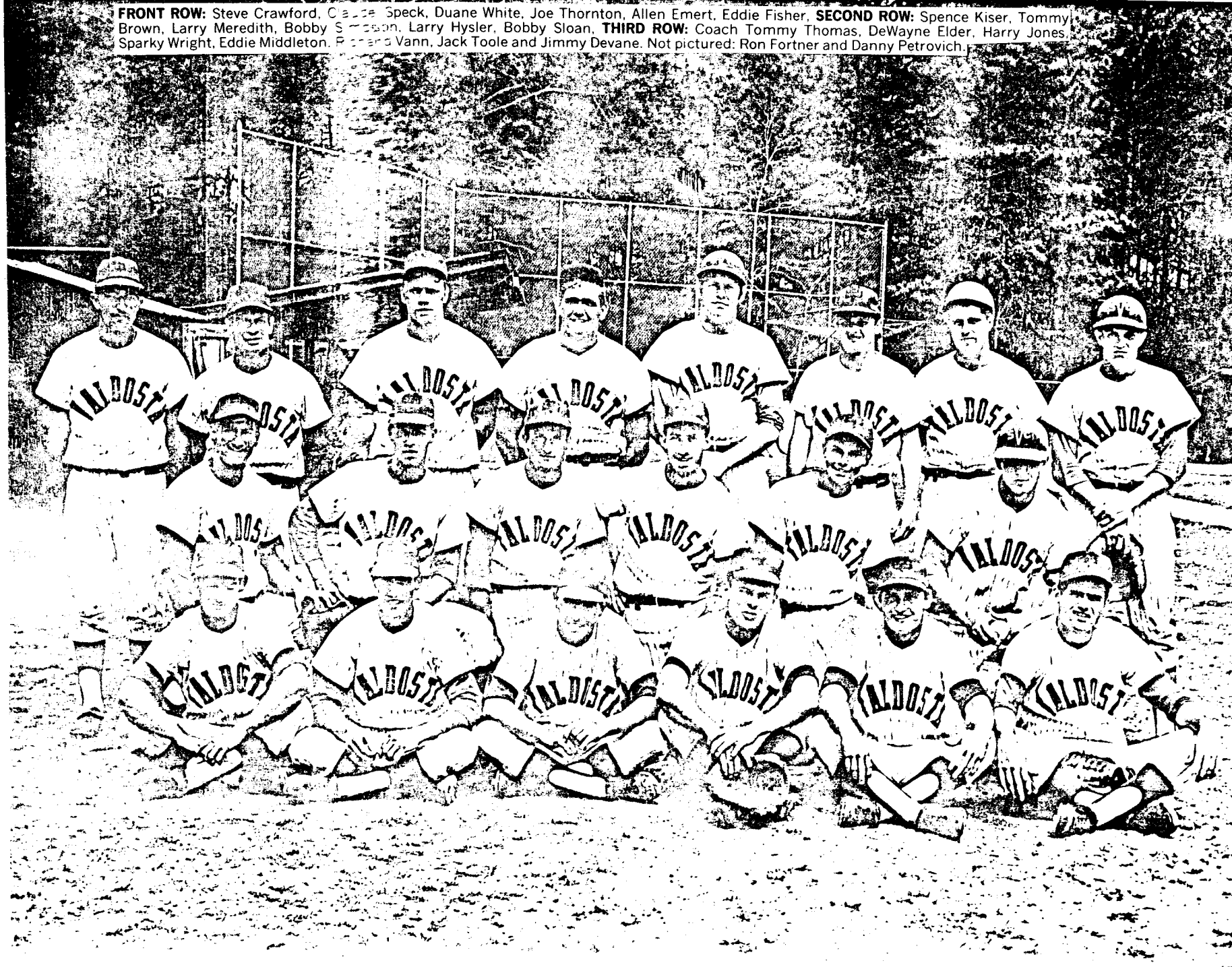
TOTALS		31	2	7	1
Valdosta State	_____	000	000	002—2-7-1	
Berry	_____	000	000	000—0-4-2	

Errors — Meredith; Bestick, Powell.  
Double Plays — Simpson to Hysler to Sloan, Goble to Foss.  
Left On Base — VSC 5, Berry 8.  
Two - Base Hits — Elder, Roy.  
Three - Base Hits — Simpson, Roy.  
Stolen Bases — Bowen, Elder.  
Sacrifices — Petrovich (bunt)  
Crawford (bunt) Baggett (bunt).

Pitchers	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Petrovich	9	4	0	0	4	6
Davis	9	7	2	2	1	5



**FRONT ROW:** Steve Crawford, Claude Speck, Duane White, Joe Thornton, Allen Emert, Eddie Fisher. **SECOND ROW:** Spence Kiser, Tommy Brown, Larry Meredith, Bobby Simpson, Larry Hysler, Bobby Sloan. **THIRD ROW:** Coach Tommy Thomas, DeWayne Elder, Harry Jones, Sparky Wright, Eddie Middleton, Richard Vann, Jack Toole and Jimmy Devane. Not pictured: Ron Fortner and Danny Petrovich.





# Toole's Home Run Wins For Rebels

BY TIMES STAFF WRITER

A two-run homer by first baseman Jack Toole after two outs in the bottom of the ninth inning gave the Valdosta State College Rebels an 8-6 baseball victory over the Jacksonville (Fla.) University Dolphins.

With the triumph coach Tommy Thomas' Rebs swept a two-game series with the Dolphins. Both VSC and Jacksonville now own identical 15-4 records.

Toole's game-winning blast in the ninth came after a see-saw duel in which the Rebs took a five-run lead in the third, then found themselves trailing 6-5 after six innings.

In the eighth inning the Rebs pushed across one run to tie it up at 6-6. An error, singles by Spence Kiser and Bobby Simpson, and a walk produced that tally.

Then came the bottom of the ninth. Larry Meredith had singled, but there were two out when Toole took his turn at the plate. He ended it with a blast over the left field barrier.

Freshman lefthander Richard Vann gained the hill victory after four scoreless innings of relief work. The win leveled his record off at 1-1.

Jacksonville's big gun was Rich Beanhart, who powered a pair of homers while the Dolphins were rallying during the middle innings.

Toole's game-winning circuit blow came off Jax' reluctant relief hurler Lenny Carey. Bob Mehlich was the starter and worked eight innings, then was ejected from the game after a dispute with the umpires over the calling of balls and strikes. Carey got the call in the ninth, offered up the wrong pitch to Toole and took the loss.



—Times Staff Photo

## JACK TOOLE Clouts Homer

The game was the last regularly scheduled home contest for the Rebels this season. They

still have five road games to play, including a pair against West Georgia at Carrollton on Saturday.

	ab	r	h	rbt
Jacksonville	5	0	0	0
Kapp, 2b	5	2	2	2
Bernhart, cf	5	1	1	0
Bell, ss	5	1	1	0
Menendez, 3b	3	1	1	0
Byrnes, rf	5	0	0	0
Sutton, 1b	3	1	1	2
McCall, lf	1	0	0	0
Schelegel, c	1	0	1	0
Mehlich, p	2	0	1	2
Sanders, c	2	0	2	0
Gann, lf	2	1	0	0
Carey, p	0	0	0	0

TOTALS	34	6	9	6
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbt
Speck, cf	4	1	0	0
Meredith, 3b	5	2	1	0
Crawford, rf	5	1	2	2
Toole, 1b	5	1	1	2
Elder, c	3	2	1	1
Kiser, lf	3	0	2	1
Simpson, ss	4	0	3	0
Hysler, 2b	2	1	0	1
Fortner, p	1	0	0	0
Middleton, p	0	0	0	0
Vann, p	2	0	0	0

TOTALS	34	8	10	7
Jacksonville	000	312	000	4-9-2
Valdosta State	005	000	012	8-10-1
Errors — Sanders, Schelegel, Toole.				
Left On Base — VSC 6, JV 7.				
Two-Base Hits — Menendez, Sanders, Crawford, Elder.				
Home Runs — Toole, Bernhart 2.				
Stolen Bases — Mehlich, Meredith.				
Sacrifices — Fortner (bunt).				

Pitchers	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Mehlich	8	8	6	4	3	6
Carey (L)	2	3	2	2	0	1
Fortner	5	7	4	4	2	5
Middleton	0	0	2	2	2	0
Vann (W)	4	2	0	0	2	1
Hit By Pitcher, By Middleton (Sanders).						
Passed Balls — Elder.						

Jacksonville	ab	r	h	rbt
Kapp, 2b	3	1	0	0
Bernhart, cf	3	1	2	2
Bell, ss	4	0	1	0
Menendez, 3b	3	1	0	0
Byrnes, rf	4	0	1	0
Sutton, 1b	4	0	1	0
McCall, lf	3	0	0	0
Schelegel, c	4	1	1	1
Hart, p	1	0	0	0
Carey, p	1	0	0	0
Vanderpelt	1	0	0	0
Gand	1	0	0	0

TOTALS	33	4	6	4
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbt
Speck, cf	4	2	2	0
Meredith, 3b	5	0	1	0
Crawford, lf-rf	4	3	2	1
Toole, 1b	4	2	3	0
Elder, c	4	1	3	2
Jones, rf	3	1	0	1
Thornhill, lf	0	0	0	0
Simpson, ss	4	0	1	2
Hysler, 2b	3	0	0	0
Fisher, p	3	0	0	0
Sloan	0	0	0	0

TOTALS		34	9	12	6		
Jacksonville	_____	001	001	200	4-4-6		
Valdosta State	_____	400	300	000	9-12-1		
Errors — Menendez, Kapp 2, Sutton, Hart, Schlegel, Toole.							
Double plays — Menendez to Kapp to Sutton.							
Left on base — VSC 7, JV 5.							
Two-base hits — Toole 2.							
Home runs — Schlegel, Bernhart.							
Stolen bases — Bernhart, Speck 2, Kapp.							
Sacrifices — Fisher (bunt).							
Pitchers		ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Hart (L)	_____	3	13	8	9	4	5
Carey	_____	4	4	4	0	0	3
Fisher (w)	_____	9	6	4	3	1	7
Wild pitches — Hart, Fisher 2.							
Hit by pitcher, by Hart (Toole), Fisher (McCall, Kapp).							
Passed balls — Schlegel.							

# Valdosta State Clips Dolphins

By SAMMY GLASSMAN

## Times Sports Editor

Valdosta State College's baseball Rebels jumped off to an early six-run lead and went from there to a 9-4 victory over the Jacksonville (Fla.) University Dolphins here Monday.

Coach Tommy Thomas' Rebs got started with a four-run outburst in the initial frame and then added two more markers in the second. As it turned out that was more than enough runs to assure VSC the victory.

The win boosted the Rebs' record to 14-4. The Dolphins now

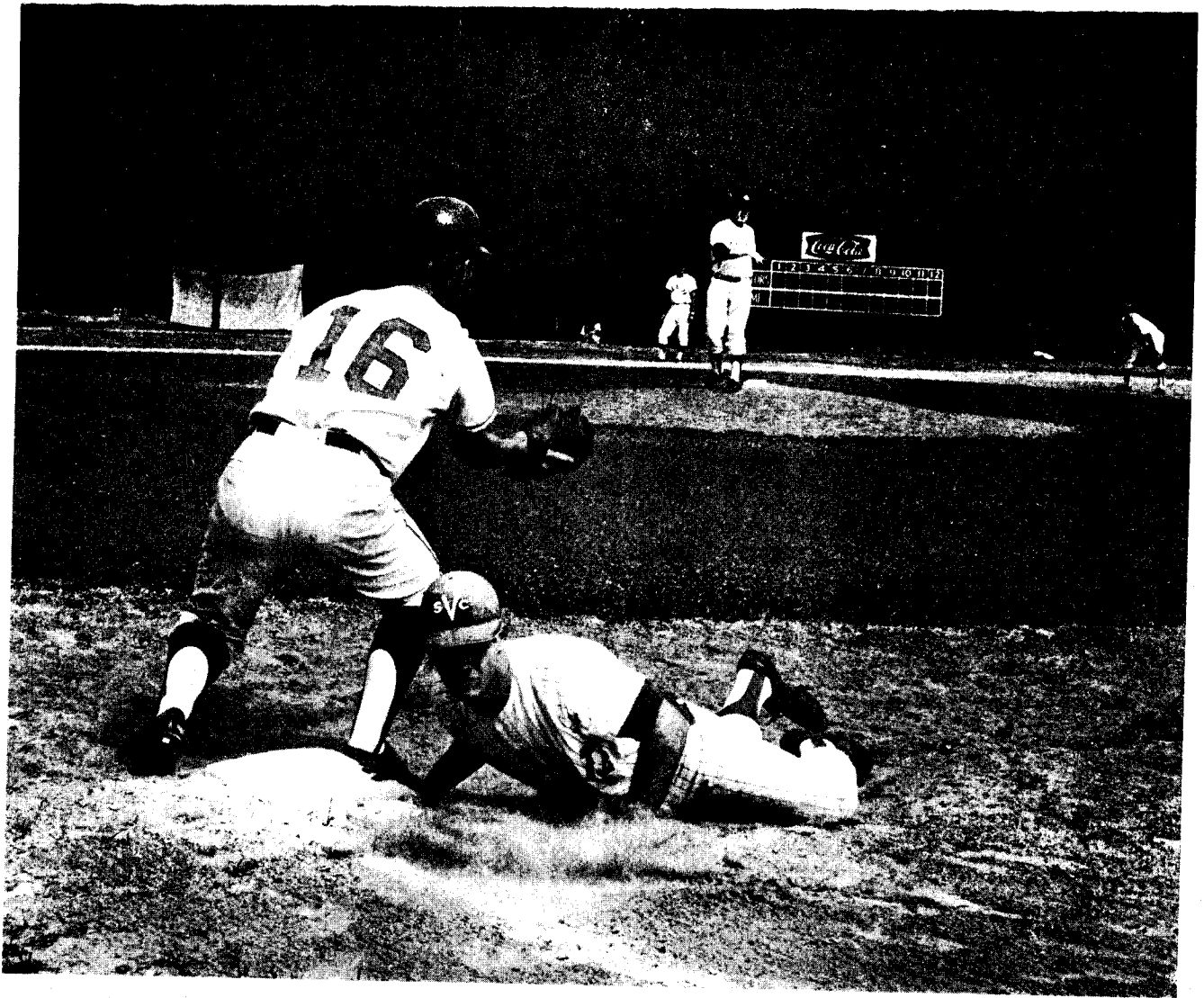
own a 15-4 chart. VSC and Jacksonville were to wind up their two-game series with a contest here this afternoon.

In yesterday's duel, Valdosta State nicked a pair of Dolphin hurlers for a dozen hits. They hit four singles, by Steve Crawford, Jack Toole, Dewayne Elder and Bobby Simpson, during their uprising in the first inning. Simpson's rap drove in two runs.

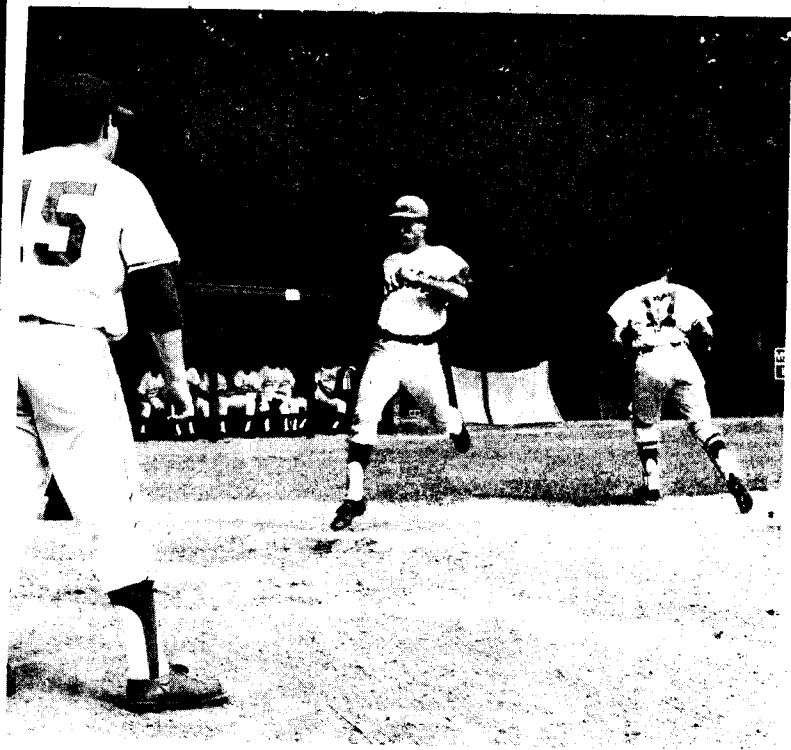
Righthander Ed Fisher went the distance on the hill for VSC, allowed just six hits, walked only one and struck out seven for a good pitching per-

formance which brought him his fourth victory against one loss.

While Fisher was stingy with the hits he gave up, the Dolphins powered two of his offerings for home runs. Jack Schlegel hit a solo homer in the third and Rich Bernhart blasted one over the fence in center in the seventh, with a teammate aboard.



REBELS blast Jacksonville 9-4, and 8-6





'69

1969 RESUME  
VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

Coach Tommy Thomas' second edition was one of the finest clubs in the school's history, bolstered mainly by the hitting of first-sacker Craig Courtney (.394) and shortstop Jack Toole (.303), and the pitching of returnees Eddie Fisher (11-0, 1.29 ERA), and Danny Petrovich (9-3, 1.98 ERA).

The Rebels went 27-10, which included the college's second-ever Georgia Conference championship (9-1 in the league), and first ever NAIA District-25 title. In their first NAIA Area-5 appearance, VSC had the misfortune to have the first game forfeited to eventual national champion William Carey (see tournament resume), and then lost to a fine Carson-Newman crew.

Blasting to a 13-2 start (including a 4-0 mark on their opening Florida trip), the team saw Courtney have an unbelievable year. The big, East Gary, Ind., native set school records in almost all offensive categories (his batting average mark still stands), and carried the team in game after game. The Rebs hit only .260, but accounted for 88 extra-base-hits, including 20 circuit-clouts.

Both Petrovich and Fisher were very effective, but received help from only relievers Rusty Simpson (2-2, 1.93 ERA), and Eddie Middleton (2-0, 3.60 ERA), as a third starter could not be found. Even though he was behind 5-4 when the William Carey game was ended, Fisher had a fantastic year. The Federalsburg, Md., senior, was in the nation's top-3 in both earned-run-average, and most victories, and finished his career with a 24-8 record.

Petrovich's career mark was 19-9, and the big, lefthander was equally effective, forming, with Fisher, one of the nation's best 1-2 pitching punches. Had the situation in the Area tournament been different, the Rebels may have proven the claim that, "the 1969 team was VSC's best ever."



Fisher, Middleton, Purdy, Simpson, Petrovich

VALDOSTA STATE  
1969 Baseball

FINAL STATISTICS  
won 27 - lost 10

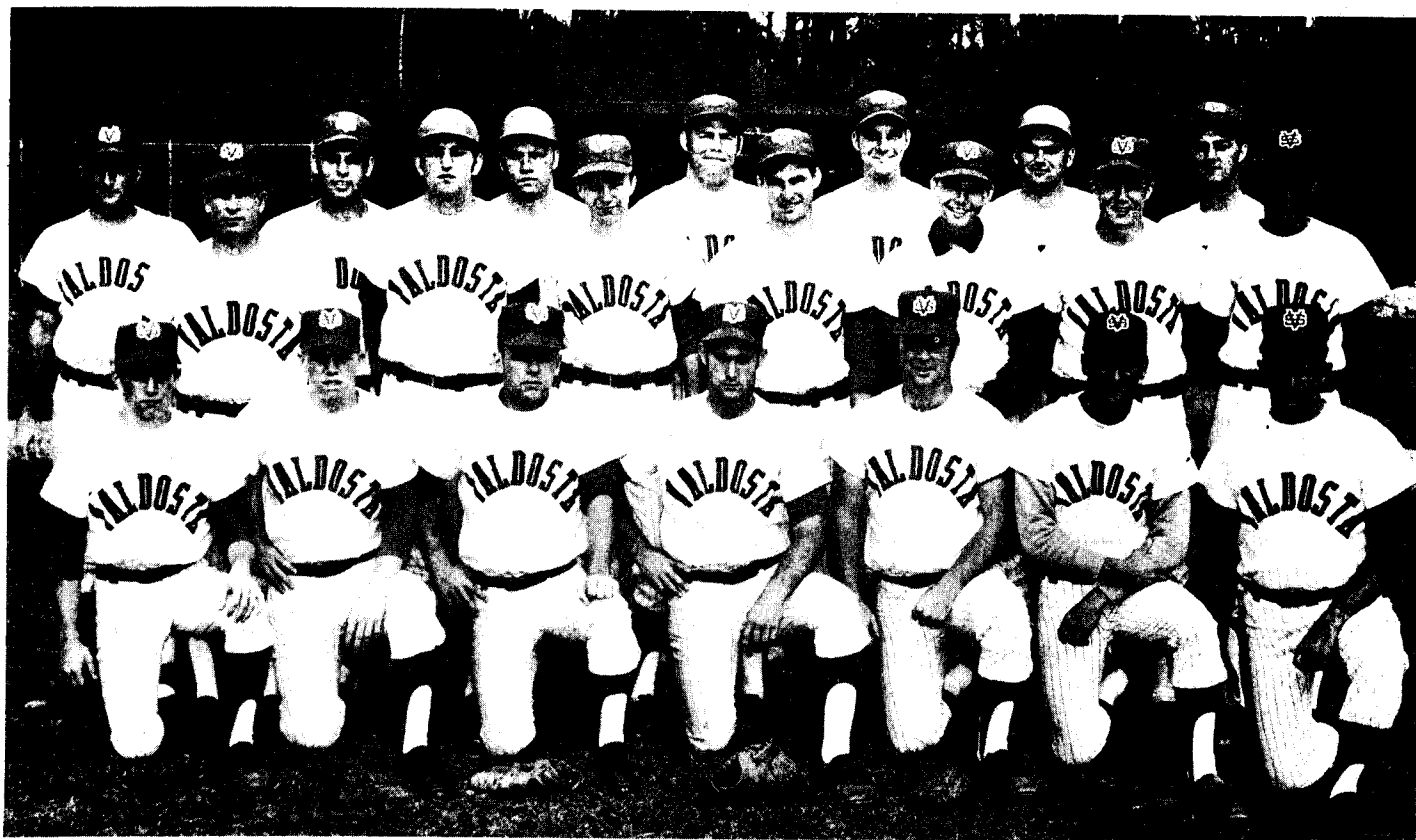
	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Craig Courtney, 1b	132	35	52	37	.394	13	6	6	4
Jack Toole, ss	112	15	34	24	.303	10	0	2	0
Spence Kiser, cf	91	27	27	11	.297	3	2	1	7
Steve Crawford, rf	112	34	32	22	.285	5	0	3	29
Danny Petrovich, p	47	2	13	9	.277	0	0	2	0
Larry Meredith, 3b	126	30	34	18	.269	8	3	1	8
Bill Baggett, lf	123	20	33	14	.268	3	0	4	0
Larry Hysler, 2b	105	8	23	14	.208	5	0	1	6
Harry Jones, inf	28	4	5	1	.178	0	0	0	1
Joe Thornton, of	56	22	9	1	.161	3	1	0	12
Eddie Fisher, p	37	0	5	1	.135	1	0	0	0
Steve Rominger, c	108	5	14	7	.129	2	0	0	0
TOTALS	1159	207	301	171	.260	56	12	20	70

(Rusty Simpson, p 16-9, .563; Jimmy Hall, inf 12-4, .333; Jimmy Devane, c 9-2, .222; Eddie Middleton, p 10-2, .200; Phil Metzger, utl 5-1, .200; Larry Wiley, ss 7-1, .143; Leroy Purdy, p 11-1, .091; Richard Vann, p 9-0, .000; Robby Williams, 3b 3-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Eddie Fisher	14	97.2	57	20	14	24	101	11-0	1.29
Rusty Simpson	7	14	16	8	3	4	10	2-2	1.93
Danny Petrovich	13	113.2	90	32	25	30	88	9-3	1.98
Richard Vann	4	29.1	29	21	9	12	13	1-2	2.69
Leroy Purdy	8	38	38	17	12	13	31	2-2	2.84
Eddie Middleton	4	20	19	11	8	6	10	2-0	3.60
TOTALS	36	312.2	249	109	71	89	253	27-9	2.04

VSC 9, St. Leo .....	4	VSC 1, Berry .....	0
VSC 3, South Florida .....	1	VSC 6, Berry .....	0
VSC 11, St. Leo .....	10	VSC 6, Georgia Southwestern ....	2
VSC 10, South Florida .....	7	(L) VSC 6, Georgia Southern .....	7
VSC 4, SIU-Edwardsville ...	0	VSC 4, West Georgia .....	2
(L) VSC 1, SIU-Edwardsville ...	2	(L) VSC 2, West Georgia .....	3
VSC 6, Georgetown .....	1	VSC 3, Georgia Southwestern ....	2
VSC 5, High Point .....	4	VSC 13, Piedmont .....	1
(L) VSC 2, High Point .....	3	VSC 5, Georgia Southern .....	4
VSC 7, Armstrong State ....	1	VSC 11, Piedmont .....	1
VSC 3, Armstrong State ....	1		
VSC 8, DePauw .....	3	NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP	
VSC 7, DePauw .....	3	Valdosta, Ga.	
VSC 7, Washington (Mo.) ...	2	VSC 10, Florida A&M .....	8
VSC 12, Erskine .....	2	VSC 5, Mercer .....	2
(L) VSC 4, Erskine .....	6		
VSC 12, Furman .....	5	NAIA AREA FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP	
(L) VSC 5, Furman .....	7	Knoxville, Tenn.	
(L) VSC 0, Jacksonville .....	6	(L) VSC 0, *William Carey .....	9
VSC 6, Jacksonville .....	0	VSC 3, Ouachita Baptist .....	0
VSC 5, Armstrong State ....	0	(L) VSC 2, Carson-Newman .....	4
(L) VSC 2, Armstrong State ....	3		

NOTE: VSC forfeited to \*William Carey.



*STANDING:* Larry Meredith, Dwayne Elder, Steve Rominger, Craig Courtney, Harry Jones, Jim Hall, Eddie Myddleton, Larry Wiley, Leroy Purdy, Larry Hysler, Eddie Fisher, Jimmy Devane, Danny Petro-

vitch, Rusty Simson. *KNEELING:* Phil Metzger, Robbie Williams, Joe Thornton, Steve Crawford, Bill Baggett, Spence Kiser, Coach Thomas.



# Eagles, William Carey Triumph

By ALEX SIMPSON  
Journal Sports Writer

Strong pitching by Carson-Newman's Tommy Jones who allowed only four hits and struck out 12 enabled the high-flying Eagles to edge the usually hard-hitting Ouachita Baptist University Tigers 4-2 in the Area 5 National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics playoffs which got under way Thursday at Bill Meyer Stadium.

In the tournament opener plate umpire Shorty Hatfield stopped the game in the eighth inning with Valdosta State at bat and no outs and awarded William Carey College a 9-4 forfeit victory. William Carey was ahead 5-4 at the time.

Ouachita became the first casualty of the tournament when it dropped a 3-0 decision to Valdosta State in losers bracket action Friday night.

Friday's games will pit Carson-Newman against William Carey College in the winners bracket finals at 1 p.m., the loser of the 1 o'clock games against Valdosta State at 4 in the losers bracket finals and the winners of the 1 and 4 p.m. games at 7 for the title.

Should the losers bracket finalist win the 7 o'clock contest the two teams will play another game at 3:30 p.m. Saturday.

Walks to Earl Ogburn, Bill Stover and Mike Shinn gave Carson-Newman its first scoring chance in the second inning. And The Eagles took advantage of it as Paul Bostic singled to score Ogburn and Jones hit a long sacrifice fly to center to score Stover.

The Eagles got two more runs in the fourth as Bostic and Jones singled. Rick Privette, a former Fulton standout, came through with a ringing single to score Bostic and Tom Hickman followed with a sacrifice fly to left which scored Jones.

Jones breezed through four hitless innings before giving up a single to Larry Barker in the fifth when a fielder's choice and two walks loaded the bases. Jones then struck out Ted Viala to end the threat.

The Tigers racked up two runs in the seventh inning as Barker opened with a single. Jim Boyette singled with Barker going to second. J. C. Morrow then hit another one-bagger to score Barker. Mike Ledbetter grounded out John Crowder to Mike Shinn with Boyette scoring on the play.

Jones ended the game in a blaze of glory by striking out the side—Barker, Boyette and Morrow—in the ninth and was given a standing ovation as he left the field by the predominately Carson-Newman crowd on hand.

Dale Wilson and Jim Arnold had solo blasts for William

Carey in the opener. Wilson had two hits as did Clyde Beerman in leading the hitting. Mike Harris had a double.

Valdosta had led 4-3 going into the seventh but William Carey rallied for two runs and went ahead 5-4.

Bickering developed between Hatfield and the Valdosta State over Hatfield's calling of balls and strikes. When the condition continued to worsen Hatfield ordered the game forfeited to William Carey.

Valdosta State jumped to a 1-0 lead in the first inning of the night game when Spence Kiser

VALDOSTA STATE					WILLIAM CAREY				
ab r h bi					ab r h				
Kiser cf	1	3	1	0	Broome ss	4	0	1	1
Merdith 3b	4	0	3	1	Eades 2b	4	0	1	1
Baggett lf	4	0	1	1	Kouns p	3	0	0	0
Courtney 1b	3	0	0	0	Wilson 3b	4	1	2	1
Crowder rf	2	0	1	0	Arnold cf	3	1	1	1
Toole ss	2	0	0	0	Smith 1b	3	0	0	0
Hysler 2b	2	0	1	0	Beerman lf	3	0	2	0
Rominger c	2	0	0	0	Harris rf	3	1	1	0
Fisher p	2	1	1	0	Stevenson c	2	2	1	1

Totals 22 4 8 2 Totals 30 5 9 4  
(Game forfeited to William Carey in 8th by umpire Shorty Hatfield with Valdosta batting and no outs.)

VALDOSTA STATE 101 020 00x-4  
WILLIAM CAREY 010 110 20x-5  
E—Eades, Arnold, Smith, Courtney, Hysler, Kiser. LOB—Valdosta State 4, William Carey 4. 3B—Harris. HR—Wilson, Arnold. SB—Rominger, Horton, Kiser, Broome.

IP H R ER BB SO  
Fisher 7 9 5 3 1 5  
Kouns 7 8 4 2 5 5  
HBP—By Kouns (Rominger). WP—Fisher 2. PB—Rominger, Stevenson. T—2:25.

OUACHITA					VALDOSTA STATE				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Ledbetter,cf	3	0	0	0	Kiser,lf	3	1	1	1
Viala,2b	3	0	0	0	Merdith,3b	4	0	1	1
Patillo,ss	4	0	2	0	Crawford,rf	3	0	0	0
Briley,1b	4	0	1	0	Courty,1b	3	0	1	0
Tygart,3b	4	0	1	0	Toole,ss	4	0	1	0
Barker,rf	3	0	1	0	Hysler,2b	2	1	0	0
Boyette,lf	4	0	0	0	Thornth,cf	2	1	1	0
Hargadine,c	4	0	0	0	Romig,r,c	2	0	1	0
Sledge,p	0	0	0	0	Petrov,p	4	0	1	0
Martindale,p	3	0	0	0					
Cope,ph	1	0	0	0					

Totals 33 0 4 0 Totals 31 3 7 2  
OUACHITA 000 000 000-0  
VALDOSTA STATE 110 001 00x-3  
E—Hysler, Rominger, Kiser. DP—Ouachita 1, Valdosta State 3. LOB—Ouachita 5, Valdosta State 8. 2B—Toole. 3B—Merdith. SB—Hysler, Patillo.

IP H R ER BB SO  
Sledge (L, 5-5) 1 1/3 2 2 2 5 0  
Martindale 7 3/4 5 1 0 3 4  
Petrovich (W, 9-3) 8 6 0 0 3 9  
WP—Martindale. PB—Hargadine. T—2:08.

singled and Larry Meredith followed with a booming triple.

Four walks by Roger Sledge in the Second inning gave Valdosta State another run and Sledge gave way to Everett Martindale who went the rest of the way for the Tigers.

A walk, singles by Steve Rominger and Dan Petrovich and an error produced the third Valdosta State tally in the sixth inning.

Sledge's losing effort left him with a 5-5 record.

Roger Patillo was the only

Ouachita player to collect two hits.

CARSON-NEWMAN					OUACHITA				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Privette ss	5	0	1	1	Ledbetter cf	3	0	0	0
Hickman rf	4	0	0	0	Viala 2b	3	0	0	0
Crowder 2b	5	0	0	0	Patillo ss	3	0	0	0
Ogburn 3b	4	1	1	0	Briley 1b	4	0	0	0
Stover cf	3	1	1	0	Tygart 3b	4	0	0	0
McFarland lf	4	0	1	0	Barker rf	4	1	2	0
Shinn 1b	3	0	0	0	Boyette lf	4	1	0	0
Bostic c	4	1	2	1	Morrow c	3	0	1	0
Jones p	3	1	2	1	Cheatwood p	3	0	0	1
Totals 35 4 8 3					Totals 31 24 1				
Carson-Newman					0 28 200 000-4				
Ouachita					0 05 0 10 200-2				
E-Shinn, Patillo, Briley, LOB-Carson-Newman 8, Ouachita 3. SF-Jones.									
Jones (W, 7-1)					9 4 2 4 3 1				
Cheatwood (L, 9-3)					9 8 4 2 3 3				
T-2:00.									

Totals 35 4 8 3 Totals 31 2 4 1  
Carson-Newman 0 2 0 2 0 0 0-4  
Ouachita 0 0 0 0 1 0 2 0-2  
E—Shinn, Patillo, Briley. LOB—Carson-Newman 8, Ouachita 3. SF—Jones.  
IP H R ER BB SO  
Jones (W, 7-1) 9 4 2 2 3 12  
Cheatwood (L, 9-3) 9 8 4 4 3 12  
T—2:00.



TRAFFIC JAM—A traffic jam forms as Carson-Newman's Mike Shinn (just visible behind Ouachita third baseman Mike Tygart wearing No. 13) goes safely into third base at Bill Meyer Stadium Thursday following Tommy Jones' sacrifice fly.

—Staff photo by Doug Price



JANUARY



Liz Lester

FEBRUARY



Cathy Buff

MARCH



Janice Clenney

APRIL



Gail Hilliard

MAY



Gail Bobbitt

JUNE



Janice Blue

JULY



Sue Davis

AUGUST



Lorraine Hall

SEPTEMBER



Maurisa Harden

OCTOBER



Judy Hunt

NOVEMBER



Linda Reddick

DECEMBER



Grayson Travis



## 1970 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

1970 was one of those years where the team looked so-so on paper, and turned out so-so. A 25-16 record (11-1 in the Georgia Conference) belies the fact that VSC's victories came against weaker clubs, while the known teams edged the Rebels.

Seniors Spence Kiser (.313), Steve Crawford (.301), and Bill Baggett (.293) led the hitters, with sophomore catcher Steve Rominger (.289), and shortstop Bobby Tripp (.292) giving some help. Team fielding was erratic (.945), while the pitching (2.22 ERA for the team) was generally good, with freshman Steve Sorgius (7-3, 1.26 ERA), and sophomores Rusty Simpson (8-3, 2.35 ERA), and Leroy Purdy (5-6, 2.46 ERA) carrying the bulk of the load. The staff threw seven shut-outs, gave up one-run in 10-games, and two-runs in four others.

The team hit .275, and had 90 extra-base-hits, with the majority of these coming from the bats of the above-mentioned hitters, along with Larry Hysler (.271), and Harry "Moose" Jones (.241). The Rebels were at the point where they completely dominated the Georgia Conference (even though they split with West Georgia) and NAIA District-25, but were unable to compete very successfully with most of the highly regarded non-conference foes that Coach Thomas scheduled.

VSC got a bad start, going 1-2 on their Florida swing, before returning home and dropping four games (two each) to Miami (0.), and Pembroke State. The Rebs also lost twice each to rivals Erskine, Jacksonville, and Georgia Southern throughout the year; but did drop independent Mercer in two single frays.

In the NAIA tourney at Tallahassee, Valdosta State beat Columbus (for the third time), and won 2 of 3 from home-town Florida A&M (see tournament resume for details). Unexpectedly the hitting in the NAIA Area-5 came alive, but the pitching gave way, as the Rebels lost to straight (to Ouachita Baptist and Livingston).



VALDOSTA STATE  
1970 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 25 - lost 16

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Spence Kiser, cf	144	30	45	12	.313	5	5	0	10
Steve Crawford, rf	143	28	43	19	.301	7	1	0	18
Bill Baggett, lf	125	23	37	18	.293	5	2	3	4
Bobby Tripp, ss	144	20	42	16	.292	8	3	0	11
Steve Rominger, c	142	13	41	20	.289	6	1	0	0
Larry Hysler, 2b	133	20	36	14	.271	5	2	2	7
Jimmy Hall, 3b	24	12	6	6	.250	0	0	0	4
Leroy Purdy, p	24	1	6	3	.250	1	0	0	0
Rusty Simpson, 3b-p	147	18	36	18	.245	8	0	0	0
Harry Jones, 1b	133	16	32	13	.241	3	2	2	1
Greg Lee, lf-p	58	6	12	10	.207	1	1	0	0
Steve Sorgius, p	31	0	6	1	.194	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	1317	206	362	153	.275	54	19	7	58

(Richard Vann, p 2-1, .500; Al Golden, of 16-6, .375; Terry Fields, ss 11-4, .364; Andy Hassell, p 3-1, .333; Jimmy Devane, c 14-4, .286; Chip Hall, p 4-1, .250; Paul Montgomery, 3b 20-3, .150)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Steve Sorguis	12	85.2	54	26	12	48	74	7-3	1.26
Rusty Simpson	14	84.1	68	26	22	22	51	8-3	2.35
Leroy Purdy	14	84.1	76	36	23	21	67	5-6	2.46
Greg Lee	12	66.1	53	28	21	33	41	3-2	2.85
TOTALS	41	352.1	280	138	88	148	247	25-16	2.22

(Steve Crawford 1-0, 0.00; Richard Vann 0-0, 0.00; Gordy Gruhl 0-0, 0.00; Chip Hall 1-0, 2.57; Andy Hassell 0-2, 2.76; Paul Montgomery 0-0, 26.87)

(L) VSC 5, Tampa .....	6	VSC 2, Georgia Southwestern ...	0
(L) VSC 2, St. Leo .....	5	VSC 2, Mercer .....	1
VSC 10, St. Leo .....	6	VSC 5, Georgia Southwestern ...	3
(L) VSC 0, Miami (0.) .....	2	VSC 4, Columbus .....	3
(L) VSC 6, Miami (0.) .....	10	VSC 13, Piedmont .....	3
(L) VSC 1, Pembroke State .....	5	VSC 7, Mercer .....	3
(L) VSC 4, Pembroke State .....	5	(L) VSC 1, Georgia Southern .....	4
VSC 5, Western Carolina .....	1	VSC 2, Columbus .....	1
VSC 6, Marian .....	2	(L) VSC 0, West Georgia .....	1
VSC 4, Marian .....	3	VSC 4, West Georgia .....	1
(L) VSC 3, Jacksonville .....	4	VSC 4, Piedmont .....	1
VSC 3, Marian .....	0		
(L) VSC 5, Erskine .....	6	NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP	
(L) VSC 0, Erskine .....	1	Tallahassee, Fla.	
VSC 16, Armstrong State .....	0	VSC 7, Columbus .....	2
VSC 13, Armstrong State .....	0	VSC 3, Florida A&M .....	2
(L) VSC 1, Jacksonville .....	4	(L) VSC 0, Florida A&M .....	20
VSC 7, Shorter .....	0	VSC 10, Florida A&M .....	1
VSC 5, Shorter .....	0		
VSC 11, Armstrong State .....	1	NAIA AREA FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP	
VSC 13, Armstrong State .....	6	Knoxville, Tenn.	
(L) VSC 3, Georgia Southern .....	5	(L) VSC 8, Ouachita Baptist .....	11
VSC 2, Berry .....	1	(L) VSC 5, Livingston .....	11
VSC 2, Berry .....	0		



STANDING: Coach Thomas, Jimmy DeVane, Chip Hall, Steve Rominger, Leroy Montgomery, Spence Kiser, Bill Baggett, Bobby Tripp, Andy Hassell, Jimmy Purdy, Steve Crawford, Harry Jones, Greg Lee, Steve Sorgius, Larry Hysler, Terry Hall, Gordy Gruhl. KNEELING: Rusty Simpson, Richard Vann, Paul Fields, Coach Bobo Short.

# Rebels' Purdy, Sorgius Both Pitch No-Hitters

By SAMMY GLASSMAN  
Times Sports Editor

Valdosta State College hurlers Leroy Purdy and Steve Sorgius pitched back - to - back no-hitters and came within an eyelash of making it a pair of perfect performances as the baseball Rebels swept a twin - bill with conference foe Shorter College here Monday.

In the pair of games, both of which were cut to seven-innings by mutual agreement, coach Tommy Thomas' Rebs chalked up 7-0 and 5-0 victories over the Hawks, a Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference opponent from Rome, Ga.

On a day which certainly has no equal in past VSC baseball history, freshman Sorgius and sophomore Purdy, a pair of left-handers, faced only 43 batsman, just one above the absolute minimum for the 14 innings which the doubleheader lasted.

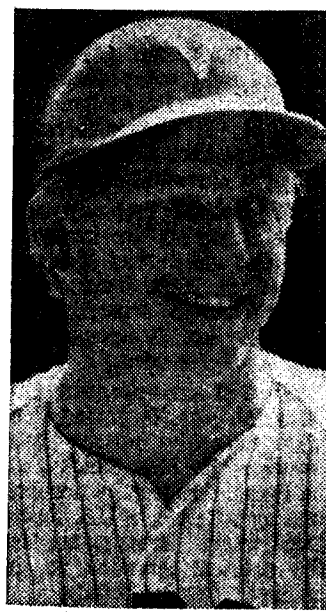
Shorter's lone base runner of the day was Jim Wade, who reached first on VSC's only error of the afternoon after one was out in the sixth frame of the opening contest.

Up until then Sorgius had cut down 16 straight Shorter batsmen and after Wade "lived" on the error he put down the next five men he faced in order, just missing a perfect game. The freshman whiffed six as he claimed a victory which boosted his record to 3-2.

Purdy came on in the second game to mow down 21 straight Shorter batsmen for a perfect no-hitter. The sophomore struck out 11 as he chalked up his second win against four losses, some of which were the heart-



**LEROY PURDY**  
Perfect Day



**STEVE SORGIUS**  
He Sizzled

breaking variety.

The moundsmen were backed by a defense that made just one harmless error in 14 innings and an attack which produced a total of 22 hits, 12 in the first game and second in the contests.

When it was over the Rebels had boosted their overall record to 9-10 and upped their GIAC mark to 3-0. The pair of losses left the Hawks with an 0-7 record in all games and an 0-3 conference chart.

VSC was to meet loop foe Armstrong State College at Savannah in a double-header today, with only the first tilt counting in the GIAC standings. The Rebs are to host non-conference opponent Georgia Southern College from Statesboro in a game set for 3 p. m.

here Wednesday.

"I've never seen anything quite like it," Thomas said after the Rebs had polished off the Hawks twice in such amazing style. "What can I say. I'm proud of every one of our players who contributed to this outstanding accomplishment."

On the offensive side in the first game, VSC's dozen hits included a triple by Spence Kiser and a double by Bill Baggett. Baggett also had a single to his credit and Rusty Simpson, Steve Crawford and Steve Rominger each rapped out a pair of one-baggers. VSC scored their seven runs in the first three innings and coasted in from there.

In the second game Kiser, with a double and a single, and Baggett, with two singles, pac-

ed VSC's 10-hit attack. Held scoreless for four frames, the Rebs tallied three times in the fifth and twice more in the sixth, while Purdy was going the perfect route on the mound.



## Rebel Tally

### FIRST GAME

Shorter	ab	r	h	bi
Harvey, 2b	3	0	0	0
Wiggs, 3b	3	0	0	0
Stephenson, c	3	0	0	0
Throgmorton, ss	3	0	0	0
DeFor, p	2	0	0	0
Calomene, cf	2	0	0	0
Springer, lf	20	0	0	0
Vade, rf	2	0	0	0
Curtis, 1b	2	0	0	0
Totals	22	0	0	0
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	bi
Kiser, cf	3	1	1	1
Golden, cf	1	0	0	0
Simpson, 3b	4	1	2	1
Crawford, rf	4	1	2	0
Baggett, lf	3	1	2	1
Rominger, c	3	0	2	1
Jones, 1b	2	1	1	0
Tripp, ss	3	1	1	0
Fields, ss	0	0	0	0
Hysler, 2b	3	0	0	0
Hall, 2b	0	1	0	0
Sorgius, p	3	0	1	0
Totals	29	7	12	4

Shorter	000	000	0-0-0
Valdosta State	313	000	x-7-12-1
E - Jones.			
LOB - Shorter 1, VSC 6.			
EB - Baggett.			
CB - Kiser.			
EF - Jones.			

	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Sorgius (W)	7	0	0	0	0	6
DeFor (L)	6	12	7	5	1	0

### SECOND GAME

Shorter	ab	r	h	bi
Harvey, 2b	3	0	0	0
Wiggs, 3b	3	0	0	0
Stephens, lf	3	0	0	0
Throgmorton, p	1	0	0	0
Leaton, lf	1	0	0	0
DeFor, c	2	0	0	0
Ware, ss	2	0	0	0
Calomene, cf	2	0	0	0
Springer, lf	2	0	0	0
Curtis, 1b	2	0	0	0
Totals	21	0	0	0
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	bi
Kiser, cf	4	2	2	1
Simpson, 3b	4	0	1	1
Crawford, cf	2	1	1	1
Baggett, lf	3	1	2	1
Rominger, c	3	0	1	0
Jones, 1b	3	0	1	0
Tripp, ss	3	0	0	0
Hysler, 2b	3	1	2	0
Purdy, p	3	0	1	0
Hall	0	0	0	0
Totals	27	5	10	4

Shorter	000	000	0-0-0
Valdosta State	000	032	x-5-10-0
E - Stephens, Ware 2.			
LOB - VSC 7, Shorter 0			
SB - Jones, Crawford, Hall Hysler			
	ip	h	r
Purdy (W)	7	0	0
Throgmorton	2	2	0
Curtis (L)	4	7	5



'71

## 1971 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

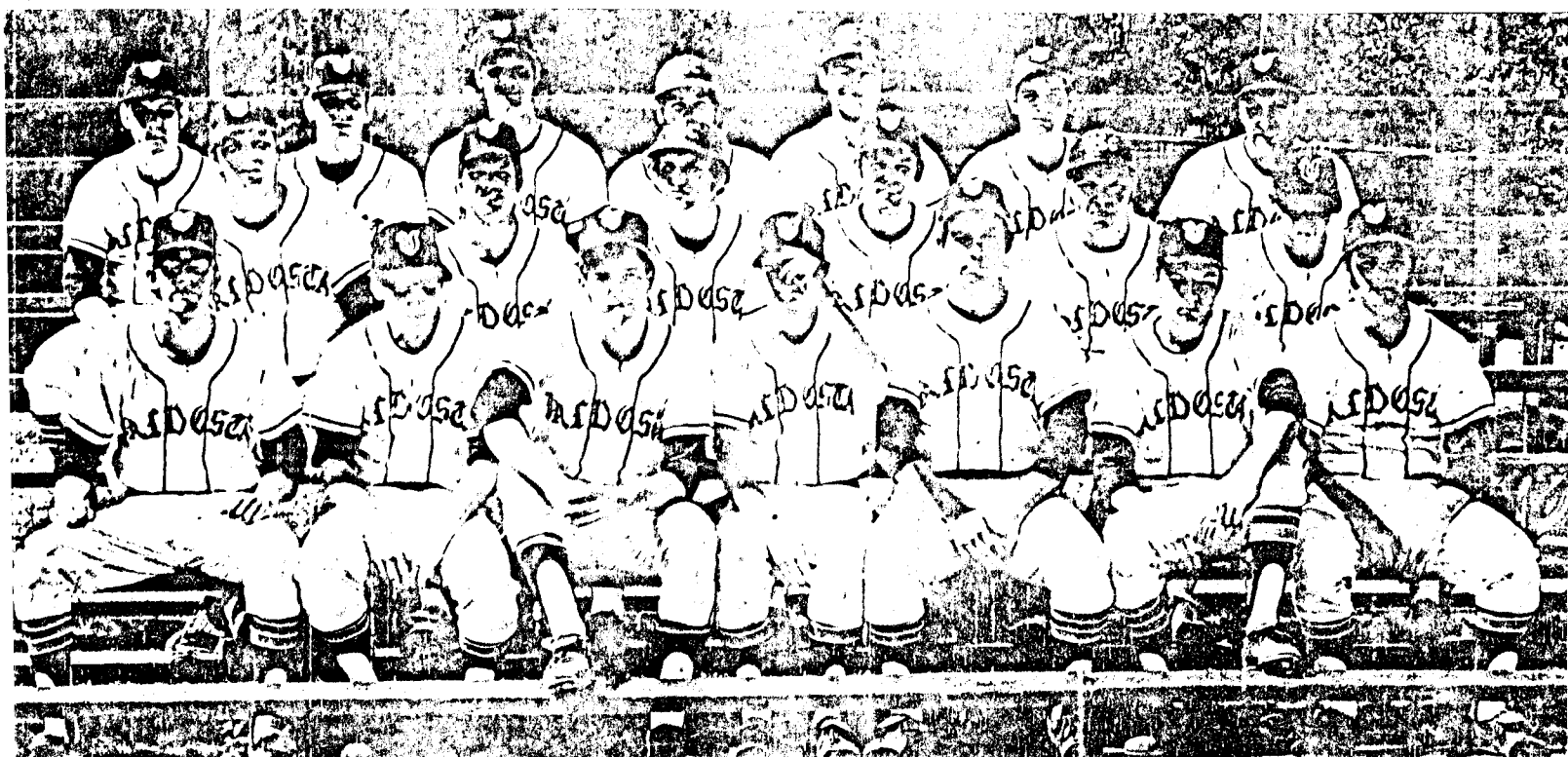
Valdosta State won their third consecutive Georgia Conference championship in 1971, going 8-2 in the loop, but slipping to an overall 24-18 log. The Rebels attacked their most ambitious schedule ever, and suddenly were 1-6, after losing to Florida State (who finished second in the NCAA's), dropping four games on their Southern swing, and coming home to losses to Ohioans, Cincinnati and Bowling Green.

VSC came back strong, beating Pembroke State twice, defeating Mercer, and splitting with nationally ranked Rollins. Locally, persistent Armstrong State split a double-header, while old nemesis West Georgia also maneuvered a stand-off. Columbus, only in its second year as a 4-year school, tagged itself the District favorite by blasting the Rebs twice, 11-8 and 7-3. Home games were won over both Georgia Southern and Jacksonville, while both the Eagles and Dolphins reciprocated on the road.

The NAIA District-25 tournament was a classic (see tournament section), as the Rebels eliminated both Columbus (in their park), and conference rival Shorter. Again, however, the Area play-offs proved to be a hurdle, as VSC lost close ones to David Lipscomb (4-1), and the State College of Arkansas (2-1).

Team statistics were not impressive, with a .253 average, and a 3.11 ERA. Sophomore second-sacker Bobby Tripp (.319) led the hitters, with only Moose Jones (.306), Craig Courtney (.279, after a year's lay-off), and frosh Gene Felts (.275) providing any punch. Leroy Purdy (6-4, 1.48 ERA), Rusty Simpson (6-4, 2.46 ERA), and JC transfer Ronald Bennett (6-2, 2.64 ERA) pitched very steady, but had problems in some of the big games.

Ron Nasworthy (3-5, 6.50 ERA) threw bee-bee's, but had control problems, while frosh Dar Chadwick (2-1, 0.75 ERA), won the season's biggest game in dropping Shorter, 2-1, in the District finale. Although the season ended on a losing note, a veteran team would return for the 1972 campaign, including a top-notch infield.



VALDOSTA STATE  
1971 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 24 - lost 18

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Bobby Tripp, 2b	135	31	43	16	.319	5	0	0	8
Harry Jones, 1b	157	23	48	28	.306	8	1	6	11
Craig Courtney, rf	147	21	41	20	.279	8	3	1	8
Gene Felts, cf	167	28	46	12	.275	4	2	2	14
Ronald Bennett, p	37	6	10	9	.270	3	0	1	0
Steve Rominger, c	140	15	37	22	.264	6	0	1	0
Rusty Simpson, 3b-p	111	14	26	9	.234	2	0	1	2
Terry Fields, ss	122	18	27	17	.221	5	0	2	11
Al Golden, lf	82	6	17	6	.207	1	2	0	2
Jimmy Hall, 3b	49	5	7	6	.143	0	0	0	3
Greg Lee, lf-p	51	4	5	3	.098	0	0	0	2
TOTALS	1295	187	327	163	.253	42	9	16	70

(Dan Chadwick, p 10-5, .500; Ron Nasworthy, p 16-5, .313; Leroy Purdy, p 29-5, .172; Bill Huxford, utl 29-5, .172; Dudley Spruill, inf 6-0, .000; Andy Hassell, p 2-0, .000; Bob Lingenfelter, p 2-0, .000; Collier Black, p 1-0, .000; Richard Vann, p 1-0, .000; Mark Kilmer, of 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Danny Chadwick	5	24	16	6	2	8	20	2-1	0.75
Leroy Purdy	13	85.1	75	25	14	35	53	6-4	1.48
Rusty Simpson	14	95	94	33	26	20	70	6-4	2.46
Ronald Bennett	12	68.1	61	32	20	14	61	6-2	2.64
Ron Nasworthy	10	44.1	37	39	32	50	43	3-5	6.50
TOTALS	42	344.2	314	171	119	158	264	24-18	3.11

(Bob Lingenfelter 0-0, 0.00; Andy Hassell 0-0, 3.25; Greg Lee 0-2, 6.78; Collier Black 1-0, 7.88)

(L) VSC 1, Florida State .....	13	(L) VSC 2, West Georgia .....	4
VSC 4, Kentucky .....	1	VSC 10, Georgia Southwestern ...	0
(L) VSC 2, St. Leo .....	3	VSC 7, Piedmont .....	0
(L) VSC 4, St. Leo .....	9	(L) VSC 2, Georgia Southern .....	3
(L) VSC 0, South Florida .....	8	(L) VSC 8, Columbus .....	11
(L) VSC 1, South Florida .....	11	(L) VSC 3, Columbus .....	7
(L) VSC 2, Bowling Green State ....	3	VSC 8, Piedmont .....	2
(L) VSC 2, Cincinnati .....	5	VSC 5, Piedmont .....	3
VSC 1, DePauw .....	0	VSC 2, Jacksonville .....	0
VSC 9, DePauw .....	0	VSC 3, Georgia Southern .....	2
VSC 4, Erskine .....	0	(L) VSC 3, Jacksonville .....	5
VSC 5, Erskine .....	0		
(L) VSC 2, Armstrong State .....	5	NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP	
VSC 8, Armstrong State .....	1	Columbus, Ga.	
VSC 5, Pembroke State .....	1	VSC 10, Columbus .....	9
VSC 5, Pembroke State .....	3	(L) VSC 6, Shorter .....	10
VSC 10, Rollins .....	2	VSC 5, Columbus .....	3
(L) VSC 0, Rollins .....	8	VSC 10, Shorter .....	2
VSC 4, Mercer .....	1	VSC 2, Shorter .....	1
(L) VSC 3, Florida State .....	17		
VSC 6, Berry .....	5	NAIA AREA FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP	
VSC 8, Berry .....	4	Knoxville, Tenn.	
VSC 10, Georgia Southwestern ...	2	(L) VSC 1, David Lipscomb .....	4
VSC 4, West Georgia .....	2	(L) VSC 1, Central Arkansas .....	2

# Rebels Capture District Crown



photo by Jerry Bentley

The Valdosta State College Rebels, down by one game in the District 25 double elimination tournament, came back and shot down the Shorter Hawks, 10-2 and 2-1. The pair of triumphs enabled the Rebels to capture the District 25 baseball championship for the third consecutive year. Valdosta, which had never played Shorter during the regular season, had to be content as co-champions of the Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference along with the Hawks, since both possessed identical records.

As district champs, Valdosta State has earned the right to play in the Area 5 playoffs which got underway yesterday. The Area 5 competition is also a double elimination tournament. The other three teams involved in the tourney are: David Lipscomb College (38-12),

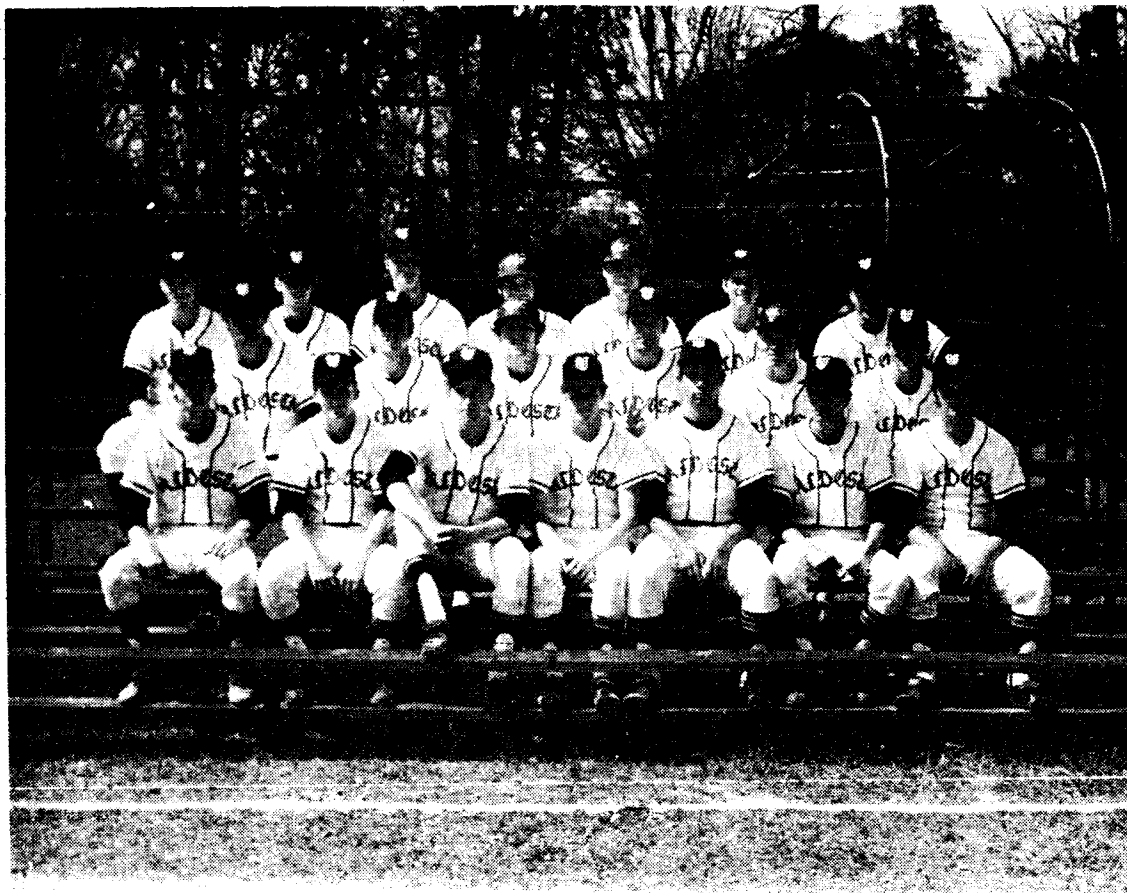


photo by Jerry Bentley

Members of the team are : (from left to right). Top Row - Bill Huxford, Alan Golden, Leroy Purdy, Greg Lee, Gene Felts, Bobby Tripp, Bob Lingenfelter. Middle Row - Ron Nasworthy, Terry Fields, Craig Courtney, Steve Rominger, Harry Jones, Rusty Simpson. Bottom Row - Mark Kilmer, Dudley Spruill, Collier Black, Andy Hassell, Ronald Bennett, Jimmy Hall, Danny Chadwick.

Nashville Tennessee; Livingston State College (34-6), Livingston, Alabama; State College of Arkansas (16-10), State College, Arkansas; All games are being

played at Del Meyer Stadium in Knoxville, Tennessee. The Rebels played yesterday against David Lipscomb.

Head Coach Tommy Thomas

had this to say after VSC clinched the district title, "Our players reached down and gave that something extra when they had to. I was very, very proud of

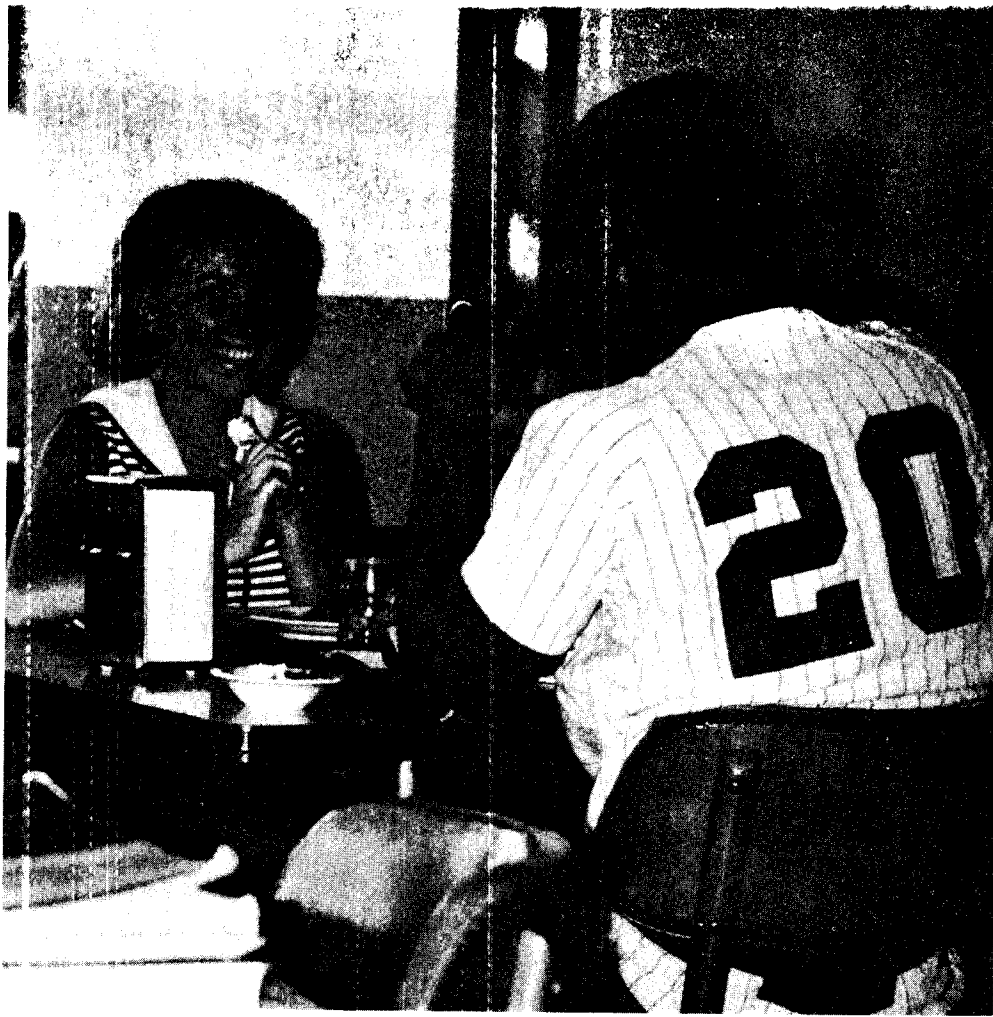
them all the way. It was a tough battle, one that we had to fight up hill. But they came through in great style. We got a fine team effort."

The first game of the Friday twin bill was highlighted by explosive bats and sound pitching. Rusty Simpson started and was relieved after six innings by Leroy Purdy and Ronald Bennett. Gene Felts, freshman centerfielder, blasted a towering grand slam homer in the fourth inning, a frame that produced a total of eight runs for the Rebels.

In the second encounter, the flame throwing performance of freshman pitcher Danny Chadwick enabled VSC to clinch the championship. Shorter scored first with one run in the third inning. Valdosta State tied it up at 1-1 with a score in the fourth. Bobby Tripp walked, moved to second on Craig Courtney's sacrifice bunt and scored on a single by Jones. The scoring was over for Shorter, but not for the spirited Rebels. In the fifth, Alan Golden hammered a triple and then scored on a sacrifice by Terry Fields. It may not have been evident at the time, but with this marker, the District 25 championship was history.

This reporter would like to express sincere congratulations to head coach Tommy Thomas and the entire team of the Valdosta State Rampaging Rebels.





'72



## 1972 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE REBELS

The 1972 season began rather slow, with the Rebels 3-4 after seven games, and 5-5 after ten. But then Gene Felts took over. The big, Lakeland, Ga., centerfielder led the Rebels to 13 straight wins, including a 14-2 rout of Florida State, a 9-5 win over Georgia Southern, and twin 4-2 nods against West Georgia.

Felts (.368) hit 13-homers on the year, and led the team in every offensive category, including 50-RBI's, and 28 extra-base-hits. He received adequate support from Bobby Tripp (.327), Craig Courtney (.325), Eddie Cowart (.322), and Frank Sumner (.315), and also got five round-trippers from catcher Steve Rominger.

Pitching wise, the team had a 2.88 ERA (compared to a record .292 team batting average), and were led by senior hurlers Ronald Bennett (8-4, 2.14 ERA), Rusty Simpson (7-2, 2.45 ERA), and Leroy Purdy (6-4, 3.09 ERA). Relief was a big problem, although Marty LeFiles went 1-0 (0.53 ERA) in 17-innings pitched.

The Rebels easily won the Georgia Conference again (the fourth consecutive year), with a 7-1 record, including two pressure-packed wins over rival Shorter. For the first time in the school's history, and against a tough schedule, VSC became a legitimate small-college power, by achieving a 28-15 record, including the NAIA District title, and runner-up in the Area. Shoddy fielding cost the Rebs their best-ever chance to go to the Nationals, although Area champion David Lipscomb (an 8-3 victor over VSC) did finish second in the nation.

Coach Tommy Thomas did a great coaching job, and his players responded well, in many crucial situations. Thomas grabbed both Conference, and District Coach-of-the-Year honors (for the third time), while Felts became the first, first-team All-American in the school's history (in any sport). Gene had the type of super year (against good opponents) that very few players ever experience, and the NAIA recognized this in making its award.



Courtney

VALDOSTA STATE  
1972 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 28 - lost 15

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Gene Felts, cf	168	54	61	50	.363	9	6	13	19
Bobby Tripp, 2b	162	43	53	22	.327	5	2	0	4
Craig Courtney, 1b	151	30	49	37	.325	10	3	1	6
Eddie Cowart, lf	115	19	37	17	.322	5	0	0	7
Frank Sumner, rf	168	33	53	11	.315	4	1	0	6
Ronald Bennett, p	40	11	11	8	.275	3	0	1	0
John Bradley, 3b	56	9	15	7	.268	1	1	0	3
Terry Fields, ss	126	14	32	14	.254	3	3	2	4
Rusty Simpson, 3b-p	99	15	24	20	.242	2	3	1	1
Steve Rominger, c	138	19	32	21	.232	8	0	5	3
TOTALS	1426	287	417	246	.292	59	22	26	65

(Leroy Purdy, p 34-12, .353; Steve Jones, utl 29-10, .345; Jerry Dennis, 1b 15-4, .267; Bob White, 3b 19-5, .263; Ronnie Pitcock, of 32-8, .250; Steve Whitley, 2b 4-1, .250; Dudley Spruill, 3b 13-3, .231; Al Golden, of 22-4, .182; Mike Archer, p 7-1, .143; Marty LeFiles, p 9-1, .111; Andy Hassell, p 11-1, .091; Danny Chadwick, p 8-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Ronald Bennett	14	96.2	93	36	23	18	71	8-4	2.14
Rusty Simpson	10	77	69	28	21	7	50	7-2	2.45
Leroy Purdy	13	93	71	38	32	37	69	6-4	3.09
Andy Hassell	10	39.1	35	23	14	26	25	3-2	3.21
Danny Chadwick	8	30	45	24	20	7	20	3-3	6.00
TOTALS	45	366	336	159	117	102	245	28-15	2.88

(Marty LeFiles 1-0, 0.53; Mike Archer 0-0, 4.15)



VALDOSTA STATE  
1972 Baseball  
FINAL SCORES  
won 28 - lost 15

VSC	3,	Eastern Kentucky	2
*VSC	4,	Eastern Kentucky	4
VSC	7,	Rollins	5
(L) VSC	7,	Rollins	10
VSC	5,	SIU-Edwardsville	4
*VSC	5,	SIU-Edwardsville	5
(L) VSC	3,	Georgia	6
(L) VSC	4,	Bowling Green State	5
(L) VSC	1,	Bowling Green State	5
VSC	6,	Ersine	4
VSC	3,	Ersine	0
(L) VSC	2,	Morris Harvey	4
VSC	5,	Morris Harvey	1
VSC	8,	Georgia State	7
VSC	8,	Georgia State	0
VSC	14,	Florida State	2
VSC	9,	Illinois Benedictine	2
VSC	14,	Illinois Benedictine	1
VSC	9,	Georgia Southern	5
VSC	4,	Shorter	3
VSC	5,	Shorter	1
VSC	18,	Georgia Southwestern	0
VSC	9,	Mercer	4
VSC	4,	West Georgia	2
VSC	4,	West Georgia	2

(L) VSC	5,	Georgia Southwestern	6
(L) VSC	5,	Mercer	11
VSC	5,	Columbus	4
(L) VSC	1,	Columbus	3
VSC	13,	Piedmont	0
(L) VSC	6,	Piedmont	7
(L) VSC	2,	Georgia Southern	7
(L) VSC	2,	Columbus	4
VSC	4,	Columbus	2
VSC	21,	Piedmont	2
VSC	9,	Piedmont	0
(L) VSC	2,	Florida State	3

NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP  
Valdosta, Ga.

VSC	10,	Berry	1
VSC	4,	Shorter	1
(L) VSC	3,	Columbus	5
VSC	6,	Columbus	2

NAIA AREA FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP  
Knoxville, Tenn.

(L) VSC	4,	Birmingham Southern	7
VSC	13,	Ouachita Baptist	0
VSC	8,	Birmingham Southern	2
(L) VSC	3,	David Lipscomb	8

NOTE: \*denotes tie game.





# Valdosta St. NAIA Area 5

Fireballing righthander Sam Bowen struck out 17 batters Saturday night as Valdosta State defeated Birmingham Southern, 10-8, for the NAIA Area 5 baseball championship at Bill Meade stadium.

Bowen checked out on five batters, outdueling pitcher Rick Zepaniec. Bowen walked only one batter during his seventh inning victory.

Bowen, Brunswick, Ga., junior

The victory was Bowen's third this season to go two losses. Losing pitcher Rick Zepaniec dropped to 5-1 with the loss.

Chadwick Gets Third Win, Becomes National Champion

42 62 43 15

Price Of Win  
Bowen's wild pitch in the eighth inning helped the Blazers to a 10-8 victory over Birmingham Southern.

Valdosta St. (41-12) qualified for the National NAIA tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. Birmingham Southern finished the campaign with a 41-8 worksheet.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

## VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Summer, c	410
Tripp, 2b	410
Felts, if	410
Bowen, cf	410
White, p	410
Arnett, 1b	410

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

Terry Fields the national opener for the Blazers in the first round of the tournament. Bowen pitched a gem in the first round, striking out 17 batters.

Valdosta St. (41-12) qualified for the National NAIA tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. Birmingham Southern finished the campaign with a 41-8 worksheet.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

## VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Summer, c	410
Tripp, 2b	410
Felts, if	410
Bowen, cf	410
White, p	410
Arnett, 1b	410

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

Valdosta State (41-12) qualified for the National NAIA tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. Birmingham Southern finished the campaign with a 41-8 worksheet.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

## VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Summer, c	410
Tripp, 2b	410
Felts, if	410
Bowen, cf	410
White, p	410
Arnett, 1b	410

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

Valdosta State (41-12) qualified for the National NAIA tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. Birmingham Southern finished the campaign with a 41-8 worksheet.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

## VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Summer, c	410
Tripp, 2b	410
Felts, if	410
Bowen, cf	410
White, p	410
Arnett, 1b	410

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

Valdosta State (41-12) qualified for the National NAIA tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. Birmingham Southern finished the campaign with a 41-8 worksheet.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

## VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Summer, c	410
Tripp, 2b	410
Felts, if	410
Bowen, cf	410
White, p	410
Arnett, 1b	410

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
4	4	4	4	4	4
2	2	2	2	2	2
2	2	2	2	2	2
4	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	4	4	4	4

# Valdosta State's Dream Of NAIA Title Is Over

PHOENIX, Ariz. (AP)—United States International University and Eastern Connecticut battle Tuesday for the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics baseball title.

USIU whipped Wisconsin State at Oshkosh, 8-5, Monday

Valdosta State (Ga.), entered the tournament with a 41-8 record, has won 13 of its 14 starts. The Blazers' pitcher Tommy Thomas listed more than six pitchers, four of whom won seven victories. Ophomore Marty LeFels, 10-0, junior Danny Chadwick, 7-1, senior Pat Arnett, 7-2, and senior Lee Daney, 7-5, were the Blazers' solid staff.

Valdosta State (Ga.), entered the tournament with a 41-8 record, has won 13 of its 14 starts. The Blazers' pitcher Tommy Thomas listed more than six pitchers, four of whom won seven victories. Ophomore Marty LeFels, 10-0, junior Danny Chadwick, 7-1, senior Pat Arnett, 7-2, and senior Lee Daney, 7-5, were the Blazers' solid staff.

## 1973 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Coach Thomas faced a rebuilding year in 1973, having lost many front-line players, including the 1969 freshman crew that had carried the Rebels to four consecutive Georgia Conference championships, four consecutive NAIA District titles, and four consecutive NAIA Area appearances.

Besides losing some top-talent, VSC became an independent for the first time since 1957, dropping from the GIAC to join the newly formed South Atlantic Conference, which would begin operation in 1974. Also, the team would campaign under a new nickname, as the school became the Blazers (dropping the Rebel tag), to pacify a few black students on the Valdosta State campus. Although the nickname change would cause no problems, Thomas knew that without the incentive of a conference chase, and with the addition of a host of rookies, it might be a long year; so what did he do-- he initially scheduled 54 regular season games (by far a school record), which sounded absurd under the circumstances.

But "T.T." knew what he was doing. He justified the extended season by recruiting some top talent, that would provide VSC with their best record in history (43-14), including a third place (tie) finish in the school's first ever visit to the NAIA World Series. The Blazers sped to VSC's best ever start (at times 8-0, 13-1, and 18-2), which included wins over Kentucky, and Bowling Green, and a two-game sweep of Georgia. In their first 20-outings, only Florida State (3-2), and Lewis (1-0, with All-American Tom Brennan besting Sam Bowen in a classic match-up) could beat Valdosta State. VSC then dropped 8 of 18, in a mid-season slump, but rebounded to win 12-straight, including the team's fifth consecutive NAIA District title.

The Blazers went into the NAIA Area feeling confident with their 38-10 record, and three game District sweep, although defending champion David Lipscomb (40-8), and Birmingham Southern (38-6) stood in their way. After sweeping past the State College of Arkansas 11-0, Jerome Register (.305) etched his name forever in the VSC memory book, with a clutch throw and hit (see the tournament section for greater detail), to top Lipscomb 1-0.

Bowen pitched the second game of the finals, after a 10-8 loss to Southern, a superb 2-0, 17 strike-out, win over the Alabamians to send the team skyward to the long dreamed of NAIA World Series, in Phoenix, Ariz. Two catastrophies, some bad luck, and a ridiculous call, or two, ended VSC's Sun Valley stay prematurely (with a 2-2 National's record), but it was a great year, and one which saw many honors passed to both Coach Thomas, and individual members of the team.

The Blazers had some luck (which every successful club needs) during the year, but for the most-part it was talent that made the season. Gene Felts (.368) again led the hitters (although his home run production fell to four), and he was named first-team NAIA All-American for the second consecutive year. Centerfielder Bowen (who was barely steered away from Georgia Southern, out of Brunswick JC) was voted the team's MVP, although he hit only .266, but with 23 extra-base-hits, and 7 homers. Sam also was 3-2 (1.10 ERA) on the hill, including a one-hitter against Malone in the Nationals.

Register didn't claim an outfield berth until ten games into the season, but the strong, speedy, Valdosta native was Mr. Clutch in most situations. With Bowen, and Felts, he helped form on of the nation's best outfielders. Although Jerome was a surprize, the biggest shocker of all was Steve "Goofy" Jones (.300) at first. Goofy did the job all year, and hit .500 in the Nationals (a position record that



still stands). Frank Sumner (.274) provided leadership behind the plate, while the keystone combo of Terry Fields (.223), and Bobby Tripp (.277) was more than adequate. Tripp got off to a terrible start, but recovered in time to receive honorable mention All-American honors.

Part of the reason Bowen received his MVP honors was because of the pitchers votes, who unanimously saluted his major league defense. But even with the team's great outfield, the pitching was much more than expected. Coach Thomas picked up journeyman, right-hander Pat Arnett (8-4, 1.99 ERA), and the veteran transfer (North Florida JC, and Stetson) responded, pitching the majority of the "big" games. Nicknamed "The Old Man," Arnett had long since ruined his arm (by foolhardedly throwing semi-pro, double, and triple-headers) by over pitching. However, he survived with a variety of pitches, including a smooth, oily "spitter," which he used to perfection. Arnett was one of the few college pitchers who needed an oil change every few days, and rumor has it, that he carried a concealed dip stick. He was also the master of the quick pitch.

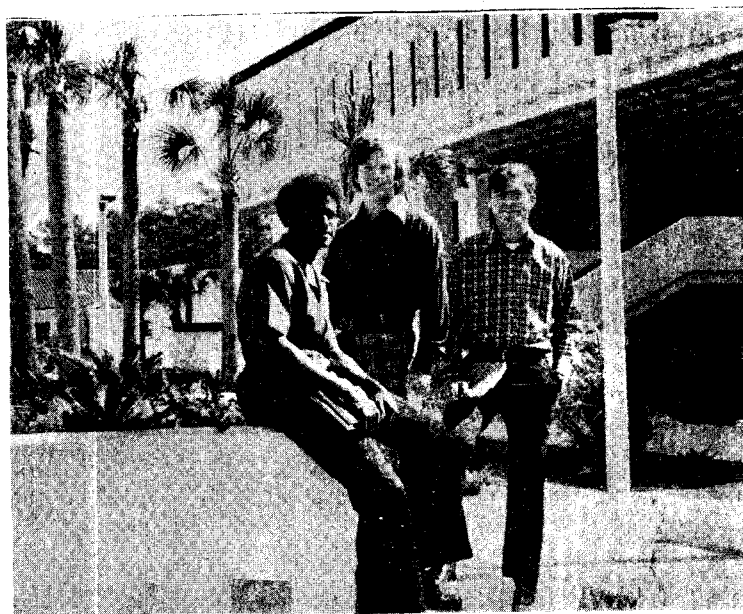
Augmenting Pat, was freshman Lee Daney (8-6, 2.12 ERA), an Air Force veteran, who threw hard, and was 5-0, at one time during the year. Daney, however, was unable to get along with the majority of the team, and was also plagued with a beautiful wife, who drew looks, smirks, and routine, male conversation from the Blazers. These facts, along with Arnett being awarded the Best Pitcher award (on a team vote), made Lee decide to not accompany the team to Phoenix, and possibly lost VSC a national title.

Relief ace Marty LeFiles (8-0, 2.36 ERA), did not start a game, but pitched brilliantly all year, including a 10.2-inning stint in the District, and a big win over Grand Canyon in Phoenix. Senior Andy Hassell (7-1, 1.54 ERA), and junior Dan Chadwick (6-0, 1.94 ERA) pitched against some weaker opponents, but still added immeasurably to the team's success. Delane Dacus (0-1, 1.78 ERA), and Rick Bowers (3-0, 1.57 ERA) also pitched well, mainly in relief. Bowers, however, broke curfew in Phoenix (it's always a woman), and was lost to the team in the Nationals.

You always remember your first, and 1973 was Valdosta State's first World Series. Although the hitting was only fair (.272), the pitching was the best in years (1.88 ERA), and that, combined with great spirit, and determination made the Blazers first year, truly one to remember.



Spruill, Starling, Daney, Branam



Register, Bowen, Felts



VALDOSTA STATE  
1973 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 43 - lost 14

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Gene Felts, lf	212	41	78	29	.368	11	6	4	20
Jerome Register, rf	141	28	43	34	.305	5	3	1	10
Steve Jones, 1b	210	32	63	22	.300	5	2	0	7
Bobby Tripp, 2b	191	32	53	22	.277	6	1	0	6
Dudley Spruill, 3b	47	9	13	5	.277	1	0	0	1
Frank Sumner, c	215	35	59	21	.274	8	1	1	8
Sam Bowen, cf	184	43	49	36	.266	11	5	7	14
Bob White, 3b	74	12	19	10	.257	3	0	0	3
Pat Arnett, p-dh	71	9	18	11	.254	2	1	1	4
Al Golden, dh	84	8	19	6	.226	1	1	0	0
Terry Fields, ss	179	23	40	20	.223	1	2	2	4
John Bradley, 3b	85	11	18	10	.212	2	0	0	2
Darrell Branam, c	60	8	9	5	.150	3	0	0	3
TOTALS	1815	304	494	242	.272	60	22	17	87

(Andy Hassell, p 3-1, .333; Marty LeFiles, p 7-2, .286; Lark Hahn, utl 7-2, .286; Marty Bishop, 3b 7-2, .286; Vince Musashe, 2b 8-2, .250; Ralph Starling, of 18-3, .167; Niles Murray, of 6-1, .167; Cecil Barber, of 4-0, .000; Danny Chadwick, p 2-0, .000; Delane Dacus, p 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Sam Bowen	7	41	24	11	5	20	58	3-2	1.10
Andy Hassell	13	64.1	58	25	11	25	48	7-1	1.54
Rick Bowers	9	34.1	28	8	6	21	18	3-0	1.57
Delane Dacus	8	25.1	27	15	5	17	20	0-1	1.78
Danny Chadwick	9	55.2	44	18	12	19	48	6-0	1.94
Pat Arnett	17	117.2	94	40	26	52	98	8-4	1.99
Lee Daney	14	89	59	26	21	47	65	8-6	2.12
Marty LeFiles	14	53.1	48	21	14	14	25	8-0	2.36
TOTALS	58	480.2	382	164	100	215	380	43-14	1.87



TRIPP



REGISTER

VALDOSTA STATE  
1973 Baseball  
FINAL SCORES  
won 43 - lost 14

VSC 13, Morris Harvey .....	3
VSC 1, Morris Harvey .....	0
VSC 4, Georgia .....	2
VSC 3, Georgia .....	2
VSC 5, Morris Harvey .....	2
VSC 2, Morris Harvey .....	1
VSC 6, Kentucky .....	2
*VSC 1, Kentucky .....	1
VSC 9, Bowling Green State ....	5
(L) VSC 1, Bowling Green State ....	2
VSC 10, DePauw .....	5
VSC 6, DePauw .....	5
VSC 8, DePauw .....	0
VSC 3, Southern Tech .....	0
VSC 9, Southern Tech .....	0
(L) VSC 2, Florida State .....	3
VSC 7, Erskine .....	1
VSC 7, Washington & Lee .....	0
VSC 2, Washington & Lee .....	1
VSC 3, Lewis .....	2
VSC 8, Lewis .....	6
(L) VSC 0, Lewis .....	1
(L) VSC 3, Ashland .....	5
VSC 3, Ashland .....	2
(L) VSC 3, Armstrong State .....	4
VSC 7, Armstrong State .....	3
(L) VSC 8, Florida State .....	9
VSC 15, Oglethorpe .....	0
(L) VSC 1, St. Leo .....	2
VSC 5, St. Leo .....	4
VSC 7, Purdue-Calumet .....	2
VSC 17, Purdue-Calumet .....	3
VSC 11, Georgia Southwestern ...	8
VSC 5, Mercer .....	4

(L) VSC 0, Mercer-Atlanta .....	3
VSC 8, Mercer-Atlanta .....	5
(L) VSC 0, Georgia Southern .....	12
(L) VSC 5, Georgia Southern .....	8
VSC 6, Georgia Southwestern ..	0
(L) VSC 0, Columbus .....	2
VSC 3, Columbus .....	2
VSC 3, Mercer .....	2
VSC 2, Columbus .....	1
VSC 6, Columbus .....	1
VSC 8, USF-St. Petersburg ....	1
VSC 2, USF-St. Petersburg ....	0
VSC 6, USF-St. Petersburg ....	5

NAIA DISTRICT 25 CHAMPIONSHIP  
Valdosta, Ga.

VSC 12, West Georgia .....	2
VSC 5, Shorter .....	2
VSC 4, Columbus .....	3

NAIA AREA FIVE CHAMPIONSHIP  
Knoxville, Tenn.

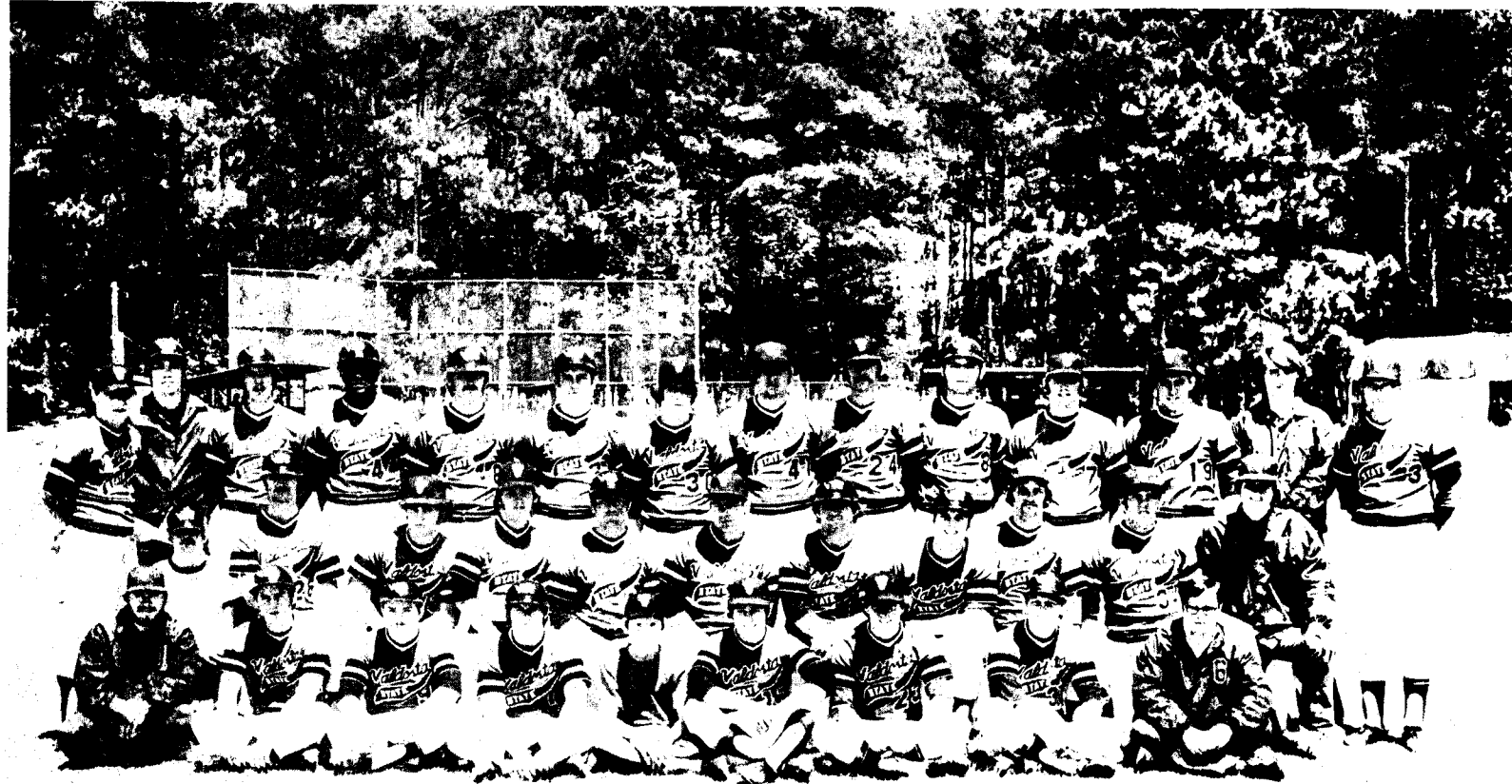
VSC 11, Central Arkansas .....	0
VSC 1, David Lipscomb .....	0
(L) VSC 8, Birmingham Southern ...	10
VSC 2, Birmingham Southern ...	0

NAIA WORLD SERIES  
Phoenix, Ariz.

(L) VSC 3, Phillips .....	4
VSC 2, Malone .....	0
VSC 10, Grand Canyon .....	8
(L) VSC 2, Eastern Connecticut ...	3

NOTE: \*denotes tie game. Central Arkansas was formerly, State College of Arkansas.

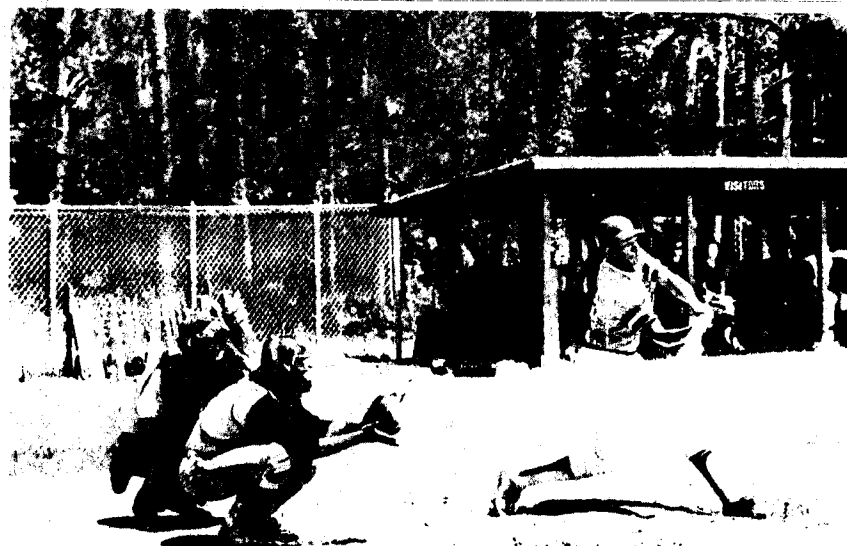




*1st row:* Larry Renew, Manager; Bobby Tripp; Pete Reeves; Bob White; Bart Bullock, bat boy; Vince Musashe; Andy Hassell; John Bradley; Bill Postell, public announcer.

*2nd row:* Sam McConnell, trainer; Lark Hahn; Marty Bishop; Dudley Spruill; Sam Bowen; Pat Arnett; Darrel Branam; Terry Fields; Dan Chadwick; Cecil Barber; Bentz Kirby, Manager.

*3rd row:* Dave Waple, Coach; Jeff Greenhalgh; Steve Jones; Jerome Register; Rick Bowers; Frank Sumner; Niles Murray; Delane Dacus; Marty Lefiles; Gene Felts; Alan Golden; Lee Daney; Thomas Drazdowski; Tommy Thomas, Coach.



March 16

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	001	020	-	3	2 5
Valdosta State .....	102	003	52x	-	13	13 1

Damron, Buchberg (7) & Cappuccio; Arnett & Branam.  
(Felts 3x5, 2b-2b; Sumner 3x4; Branam 2x4, Register  
2x5, 3 rbi's) WP- Arnett (1-0), LP- Damron

March 17

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	000	0	-	0	1 1
Valdosta State .....	000	000	1	-	1	2 0

Perri, Klatzkin (5) & Cappuccio; Daney & Branam.  
WP- Daney (1-0), LP- Klatzkin

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Georgia .....	100	100	0	-	2	4 3
Valdosta State .....	000	040	x	-	4	4 1

Nevinger, Mitchell (5) & Peele; Bowen & Branam.  
WP- Bowen (1-0), LP- Nevinger

March 18

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Georgia .....	011	000	0	-	2	7 1
Valdosta State .....	020	000	1	-	3	5 1

Braswell & O'Conner; Hassell & Branam.  
(Bradley 2 rbi's) WP- Hassell (1-0), LP- Braswell

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	001	100	0	-	2	6 2
Valdosta State .....	200	030	x	-	5	8 2

Miller & Berlinsky; Dacus, LeFiles (4) & Sumner.  
(Bowen 2x3, 2b-HR, 4 rbi's; Fields 2x3) WP-  
LeFiles (1-0), LP- Miller

March 19

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	001	000	000	-	1	8 2
Valdosta State .....	000	011	00x	-	2	5 4

Francis & Cappuccio; Chadwick & Branam. (Felts  
2x4) WP- Chadwick (1-0), LP- Francis

March 20

With Valdosta State leading Oglethorpe 5-0, and one out in the fifth inning, a drizzle turned into a torrential down-pour, and the game was washed out. Blazer pitcher Pat Arnett lost the win.

March 21

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Kentucky .....	000	002	0	-	2	6 2
Valdosta State .....	000	132	x	-	6	9 3

Howard, France (6) & Koenen; Daney, Arnett (6)  
& Branam. (Jones 2x2; Tripp 2x3) WP- Daney (2-0),  
LP- Howard

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Kentucky .....	010	000	000	-	1	6 0
Valdosta State .....	000	000	100	-	1	5 1

Elliott & Foley; Bowers, LeFiles (3) & Sumner.  
(Felts 2x3; Bowen HR)

March 22

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Bowling Green State .....	005	000	0	-	5	8	3
Valdosta State .....	110	520	x	-	9	9	2

Fisher & Zuppardo; Hassell & Branam. (Register 2x3; Fields 2x3; Sumner 2x4; Felts HR, 3 rbi's)  
WP- Hassell (2-0), LP- Fisher

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Bowling Green State .....	100	010	0	-	2	6	0
Valdosta State .....	000	001	0	-	1	5	1

Young & Arbinger; Dacus & Branam. (Tripp 2x3)  
WP- Young, LP- Dacus (0-1)

March 23

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
DePauw .....	004	000	001	-	5	12	3
Valdosta State .....	410	012	02x	-	10	11	2

Buelow & Barry; Chadwick, Dacus (7) & Branam.  
(Sumner 3x5; Register 3x5; Felts 2x5, 2b)  
WP- Chadwick (2-0), LP- Buelow

March 24

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
DePauw .....	003	020	0	-	5	6	1
Valdosta State .....	103	110	x	-	6	6	5

Walker & Dunn; Arnett & Branam. (Bradley 2x3, 2b)  
WP- Arnett (2-0), LP- Walker

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
DePauw .....	000	000	0	-	0	4	2
Valdosta State .....	212	210	x	-	8	10	3

Schott, Beynon (4), Sheridan (6) & Barry; Bowers & Sumner. (Bowen 2x2, 2b-2b, 3 rbi's; Golden 2x3, 2b; Spruill 2x3) WP- Bowers (1-0), LP- Schott

March 27

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Southern Tech .....	000	000	0	-	0	4	1
Valdosta State .....	020	001	x	-	3	8	0

Prince & Newman; Daney & Branam. (Bowen 2x3, HR, 2 rbi's; Bradley 2x2; Felts HR) WP- Daney (3-0), LP- Prince

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Southern Tech .....	000	000	0	-	0	5	2
Valdosta State .....	001	161	x	-	9	12	2

Hill, Roland (5) & Newman; Hassell & Sumner.  
(Sumner 2x4, 2b, 2 rbi's; Tripp 2x3, 2 rbi's; Register 2x3; Golden 2x2; White 2x2) WP- Hassell (3-0), LP- Hill

March 28

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
Florida State .....	100	010	010	-	3	7	2
Valdosta State .....	000	001	010	-	2	5	2

Fernald, Horn (8) & Sherrill; Arnett & Sumner.  
(Felts 3x4) WP- Fernald, LP- Arnett (2-1)

March 31 - West Georgia (2) and April 3 - Erskine

These games were cancelled because of rain. 13 inches fell in a five day period, and according to Head Coach Tommy Thomas (who took a correspondence course in meteorology from Duck Barnes Tech) this was the most rain since he took over at VSC in 1968.

April 2

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Erskine .....	000	000	010	- 1	3	3
Valdosta State .....	040	000	03x	- 7	12	0

Hirst & Williams; Daney & Branam. (Sumner 3x5, 3b, 2 rbi's; Felts 2x4; Jones 3x4; Bradley 2x4; Fields 2 rbi's) WP- Daney (4-0), LP- Hirst

April 6

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Washington & Lee .....	000	000	000	- 0	4	2
Valdosta State .....	000	004	30x	- 7	9	0

Ferrantino, Gutshall (7) & Gutshall, Cromein (7); Arnett & Sumner. (Sumner 2x5; Felts 2x4; Bowen 2x4, HR, 3 rbi's; Bradley 2x4) WP- Arnett (3-1), LP- Ferrantino

April 7

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Washington & Lee .....	000	000	1	- 1	4	0
Valdosta State .....	000	200	0	- 2	6	3

Knauer & Cromein; Hassell & Branam. (Tripp 2x4, 2b; White 2b, 2 rbi's) WP- Hassell (4-0), LP- Knauer

April 10

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Lewis .....	011	000	000	- 2	5	2
Valdosta State .....	110	010	00x	- 3	7	1

Freberg & Wasik; Daney & Sumner. (Jones 2x3) WP- Daney (5-0), LP- Freberg

April 11

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Lewis .....	001	140	000	- 6	5	3
Valdosta State .....	022	300	01x	- 8	5	1

Markelz, Dybala (4) & Wasik; Arnett, LeFiles (5) & Branam, Sumner (6). (Jones 2x4; Arnett HR, 3 rbi's; LeFiles HR) WP- LeFiles (2-0), LP- Markelz

April 12

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Lewis .....	000	100	000	- 1	4	2
Valdosta State .....	000	000	000	- 0	2	0

Brennan & Wasik; Bowen & Branam. WP- Brennan, LP- Bowen (1-1)

April 13

	123	456	78	R	H	E
Ashland .....	200	000	00	- 2	8	0
Valdosta State .....	000	002	01	- 3	7	1

Kravec & Ickes; Bowers & Sumner. (Tripp 2x3; Golden 2 rbi's) WP- Bowers (2-0), LP- Kravec

123 456 7 R H E  
 Ashland ..... 003 002 0 - 5 7 1  
 Valdosta State ..... 000 010 2 - 3 8 1  
 May, Feirbaugh (6) & Ickes; Hassell, Chadwick  
 (6) & Sumner. (Sumner 3x4, 2b; Jones 2x4; Felts  
 2x3, 2b) WP- May, LP- Hassell (4-1)

April 14 @ Savannah, Ga.

123 456 7 R H E  
 Valdosta State ..... 001 200 0 - 3 5 0  
 Armstrong State ..... 000 220 x - 4 6 3  
 Daney & Branam; Manor & Sharpe. (Fields 2x3,  
 3b; Jones 2 rbi's) WP- Manor, LP- Daney (5-1)

123 456 7 R H E  
 Valdosta State ..... 201 002 2 - 7 15 1  
 Armstrong State ..... 002 100 0 - 3 7 1  
 Dacus, Arnett (4) & Sumner; Holland & Sharpe.  
 (Felts 3x5; Sumner 2x5, 2b; Jones 3x4; Golden 2x4)  
 WP- Arnett (4-1), LP- Holland

April 17 @ Tallahassee, Fla.

123 456 789 1011 R H E  
 Valdosta State ..... 000 001 034 0 0 - 8 10 3  
 Florida State ..... 120 000 005 0 1 - 9 16 2  
 Arnett, LeFiles (8), Bowen (9), Daney (9), Hassell (11)  
 & Sumner; Farmer, O'Brien (8), Rice (9), Guemple (11) &  
 Lee, Sherrill (10). (Jones 3x6, 3b, 2 rbi's; Sumner 2x5;  
 Tripp 2x5, 2b, 3 rbi's) WP- Guemple, LP- Daney (5-2)

April 19 @ Atlanta, Ga.

1 23 456 7 R H E  
 Valdosta State ..... (12) 00 021 0 -15 9 0  
 Oglethorpe ..... 0 00 000 0 - 0 3 6  
 Chadwick & Branam; Dayton, Hershaber (1) & Barrett.  
 (Register 2x3, 2 rbi's; Spruill 2x3, 2 rbi's) Wp-  
 Chadwick (3-0), LP- Dayton

April 21

123 456 7 R H E  
 St. Leo ..... 100 000 1 - 2 4 2  
 Valdosta State ..... 000 010 0 - 1 4 1  
 Stewart & Sallinger; Daney & Sumner. (Golden  
 2x2) WP- Stewart, LP- Daney (5-3)

123 456 78 R H E  
 St. Leo ..... 000 020 20 - 4 10 2  
 Valdosta State ..... 010 011 11 - 5 9 1  
 Deltoro, Ricci (7) & Sallinger; Arnett, LeFiles  
 (8) & Sumner. (Felts 2x4, 3b; Tripp 2x4; Bowen HR)  
 WP- LeFiles (3-0), LP- Ricci

April 22

123 456 789 R H E  
 Purdue-Calumet ..... 200 000 000 - 2 4 1  
 Valdosta State ..... 101 203 00x - 7 12 4  
 Repko & Toth; Hassell & Branam. (Jones 2x4;  
 Felts 2x4, 3b, 2 rbi's; Sumner 3x4; Tripp 3x4, 2 rbi's)  
 WP- Hassell (5-1), LP- Repko

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Purdue-Calumet .....	101	000	1 - 3	8	6	
Valdosta State .....	143	261	x -17	14	2	

Ridgley, Vaznonis (5) & Smith; Bowers & Branam.  
 (Jones 2x3; Murray 2 rbi's; Fields HR, 3 rbi's;  
 Branam 2x4) WP- Bowers (3-0), LP- Ridgley

April 23 @ Americus, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	020	050	103 -11	17	7	
Ga. Southwestern .....	013	010	012 - 8	12	6	

Dacus, LeFiles (5) & Sumner; Jenkins, Brown (6)  
 & Lopney. (Jones 2x6, 3 rbi's; Felts 4x6, 2b, 3b,  
 2 rbi's; Sumner 2x6; Tripp 3x5; Bowen 3x5, 2b-2b;  
 Fields 2x4, 3b) WP- LeFiles (4-0), LP- Jenkins

April 24

	123	456	789	101112	131415	R	H	E
Mercer .....	003	000	100	0 0 0	0 0 0 - 4	8	4	
Valdosta State .....	020	000	110	0 0 0	0 0 1 - 5	13	5	

Sims & Dennis; Chadwick & Sumner. (Sumner 2x6; Tripp 2x6;  
 Golden 2x5; White 2x6; Register 2x6, 2b) WP- Chadwick (4-0),  
 LP- Sims

April 28

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Mercer-Atlanta .....	002	100	0 - 3	4	2	
Valdosta State .....	000	000	0 - 0	1	1	

Thomas & Moreland; Arnett & Sumner. WP- Thomas,  
 LP- Arnett (4-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Mercer-Atlanta .....	100	111	1 - 5	6	3	
Valdosta State .....	023	201	x - 8	9	3	

Hurst, Horne (3) & Moreland; Hassell, LeFiles  
 (6) & Sumner. (Felts 2x3; Tripp 4x4, 2b) WP-  
 Hassell (6-1), LP- Hurst

April 29 @ Statesboro, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	000	000 - 0	4	3	
Georgia Southern .....	014	105	10x -12	14	1	

Daney, LeFiles (3), Bowers (7), Dacus (8) & Sumner,  
 Branam (7); Griggs, Kruppa (7) & Tamargo. WP- Griggs,  
 LP- Daney (5-4)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	100	201	1 - 5	6	1	
Georgia Southern .....	201	410	x - 8	9	1	

Bowen, LeFiles (4), Dacus (5), Bowers (6) & Branam,  
 Sumner (5); Bigwood, Kruppa (7) & Tamargo. (Jones  
 2x4, 2b-2b; Felts 2x3; Bowen HR, 2 rbi's) WP-  
 Bigwood, LP- Bowen (1-2)



May 2

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
Ga. Southwestern .....	000	000	000	-	0	4	0
Valdosta State .....	012	021	00x	-	6	13	0

Bales & Looney; Chadwick & Sumner, Branam (8).  
(Tripp 2x3; Felts 2x4, 3b; Bowen 2b, 2 rbi's;  
Register 3x4) WP- Chadwick (5-0), LP- Bales

May 3

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Columbus .....	100	000	1	-	2	6	0
Valdosta State .....	000	000	0	-	0	4	1

Chadwick & Chaffer; Daney & Sumner. WP- Chadwick,  
LP- Daney (5-5)

	123	456	78	R	H	E	
Columbus .....	000	010	10	-	2	8	5
Valdosta State .....	002	000	01	-	3	6	3

Carroll & Chaffer; Arnett & Sumner. (Jones 2x4;  
Tripp 2 rbi's) WP- Arnett (5-2), LP- Carroll

May 5 @ Macon, Ga.

	123	456	789	1011	R	H	E		
Valdosta State .....	011	000	000	0	1	-	3	11	4
Mercer .....	000	000	020	0	0	-	2	8	2

Hassell, LeFiles (10) & Sumner; Payton & Dennis.  
(Bowen 2x4, 2b; White 2x4, 2 rbi's) WP- LeFiles (5-0),  
LP- Payton

May 10 @ Columbus, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Valdosta State .....	000	101	0	-	2	4	2
Columbus .....	000	001	0	-	1	4	3

Daney & Sumner; Chadwick & Chaffer; WP- Daney  
(6-5), LP- Chadwick

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Valdosta State .....	401	001	0	-	6	11	3
Columbus .....	010	000	0	-	1	5	3

Arnett & Sumner; Carroll, Mallory (3) & Chaffer.  
(Bowen 2x4; Arnett 2x3, 2 rbi's; Jones 2x3;  
Fields 2 rbi's) WP- Arnett (6-2), LP- Carroll

May 11

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
USF-St. Petersburg .....	000	001	000	-	1	6	1
Valdosta State .....	150	110	00x	-	8	11	2

Kolb, Pollock (3), Chalapowski (6) & Valenty;  
Hassell, Bowen (7) & Sumner, Branam (7). (Sumner  
2x4, 2 rbi's; Felts 2x3, 3b; Register 2x2, 2 rbi's)  
WP- Hassell (7-1), LP- Kolb

May 12

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
USF-St. Petersburg .....	000	000	0	-	0	2	3
Valdosta State .....	020	000	x	-	2	9	0

Schali & Valenty; Chadwick, Bowers (5) & Sumner.  
(White 2x2, 2b; Jones 2x3) WP- Chadwick (6-0),  
LP- Schali

# For Thomas, Baseball Isn't Everything

By MIKE CHASON

How could anybody dislike Tommy Thomas?

From fans, players and even opposing coaches, the message is always the same ... Thomas is just a hard guy not to get along with.

The nice-guy image of the 36-year-old Valdosta State College head baseball coach is so evident that his assistant considers it his only flaw.

"If there's anything wrong with Tommy, it's that he's too nice," VSC assistant coach Dave Waples said. "I've been around him for five years, and I haven't found a fault yet.

"He's just a charm to work with. If you can't work with him, you can't work with anybody."

Almost the exact opposite of the soft-spoken Thomas, Waples admits his sometimes off-color language and fiery temper may have had an adverse effect.

"I may have helped soil Tommy's character," Waples said. "I think he's changed a little over the years, and I think I've had an influence on that.

"He had never been thrown out of a game before I started working with him, and now he's been thrown out of three. What usually happened was that I would set the guy (umpire) up. Then Tommy would say one little thing and the guy blows up.

"And I loved every minute of it."

Thomas admits he has been criticized in the past for not defending his players enough during his 10-year stint as the VSC head coach.

"As I grew up, it was my characteristic of not really getting too hot with the umpires," Thomas said. "The person I got hottest at was myself. I still feel that way. Very few times can you say the result of a game depended on officiating."

Thomas' father, Fred, knows only too well how honest with the officials Tommy has always been.

"He's never been one to raise a lot of hell with the umpires," the elder Thomas, who has watched his son go through every phase of baseball from midget league to college in Valdosta, said.

## Newsmakers

### ... A Special Insight

"He puts honesty above anything else in his play. I've seen him miss second base and then go back and touch it when nobody else knew it. I'm just real proud of him."

Although players are usually a hard lot to satisfy as far as coaches go, most of those who have played under Thomas have only good things to say.

"I owe coach Thomas everything," former VSC outfielder Jerome Register said. "He really helped me a lot."

After a mediocre junior college career, Thomas took a chance on Register. The former Lowndes High School standout made the most of the opportunity and became a starting rightfielder, eventually drafted by the pros.

Thomas never had a chance at major league stardom, but did enjoy an outstanding high school career at Valdosta before moving into the VSC starting lineup.

An accident in his senior year at VHS almost ended his career prematurely.

"He was over in Waycross about the first game of the season," his father said, "and a pitch hit him right on the side of the head. It caused his brain to swell.

"For about three or four months there, he couldn't even talk. His ability to change thoughts into words or deeds was destroyed. As the brain decreased in size, he gradually began to come back.

"It gave me the biggest scare of my life."

But Thomas did survive the accident and played baseball under Gary Colson and Billy Grant at VSC. Grant, now the VSC athletic director, also coached Thomas in high school.

After graduation from VSC with a degree in business administration, Thomas abandoned the athletic field for the first time in his life to work for IBM in Tallahassee,

Fla.

"I didn't like the idea of my normally tanned complexion turning white from being in a windowless office in the middle of a building all the day," Thomas said. "So I quit after 10 months."

From the world of big business, Thomas turned to teaching everything from spelling to geography at Morven Junior High School. He got a taste of coaching in Morven and decided that was the direction he ought to set his life in.

Two years later, he had a degree in physical education from Georgia Southern and a coaching job at Wilkinson County (Irwinton).

His relationship with Grant brought him back to Valdosta for a job at VSC in the fall of 1967. Two weeks before baseball season started in the spring, he was named head coach, taking over for Grant.

"The idea was that I would serve as Bill's assistant for two years," Thomas said. "But he just had so much to do, he told me to go ahead and take the team."

Over 300 victories later, Thomas still has it. In fact, his club is playing in the NCAA Division II national tournament this weekend.

And somehow, he has accomplished it all without a wife at his side.

"I'm not against the sacred vow of matrimony or anything," Thomas said. "I still look forward to the day when I may have a wonderful person to live with the rest of my life."

"I guess the reason I haven't gotten married is just a matter of being occupied with all the things I have to do."

Thomas points to his family and his religion as the most important things in his life.

He still lives at home with his parents and teaches Sunday school at St. John The Evangelist Catholic Church.

"Baseball drives me nuts sometimes, but it's definitely not the most important thing in my life," Thomas said. "But I'm doing what I want to do, and what I like to do best."



— Times Staff Photo.

*Tommy Thomas: Lives Up To Image*



# Diamond Blazers

## Notch Four Wins

## SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Valdosta State College's Blazers racked up four victories during a busy weekend of baseball here.

On Saturday coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers, who now sport a 5 - 0 record, trimmed the Morris Harvey Golden Eagles, 1-0, and defeated the

Georgia Bulldogs, 4-2.

Then on Sunday VSC was a 3-2 victor over Georgia and 5-2 winner over Morris Harvey, while the Bulldogs from Athens trimmed the Eagles from Charleston, W. Va., 5-2.

All games were seven innings.

In three of their four victories the Blazers got route-going hill performances from Lee Daney, Sam Bowen and Andy Hassell. Reliever Marty LeFiles picked up the fourth win.

Saturday's opener saw VSC score its game-winning run against Morris Harvey in the bottom of the seventh. The Blazers loaded up the bases and Vince Musashe scored on squeeze plays which saw Bobby Tripp lay down a perfect bunt.

A four-run outburst in the fifth inning gave VSC its 4-2 win over Georgia on Saturday. During the big frame VSC mixed a double by Steve Jones and singles by Jerome Register and Tripp with two Georgia errors a wild pitch and a fielder's choice to account for the four markers.

On Sunday the winning run for VSC against Georgia came in the bottom of the second. The count was deadlocked at 2-2 and there were two outs when Hassell doubled. Frank Sumner followed with a single to bring Hassell home and give the Blazers a victory.

A three-run homer by Sam Bowen in the bottom of the fifth frame broke a 2-2 deadlock and led VSC to its 5-2 win over Morris Harvey.

The three teams were slated to play two more games here today.

### Box Scores

## SATURDAY

Georgia	ab	r	h	bi
Turner CF	2	1	0	0
Barker SS	3	0	0	0
Johnson RF	3	0	0	0
Griffith 1B	2	0	1	1
Carp LF	2	1	1	0
Herbs 3B	3	0	0	0
Thompson 2B	2	0	1	0
Poole C	3	0	0	0
Nevinger P	2	0	0	0
Mitchell P	0	0	0	0
Totals	24	2	4	1
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	bi
Sumner	3	1	0	0
Tripp 2B	3	0	1	1
Felts CF	3	0	0	1
Bowen P	3	0	0	0
Branam C	3	0	0	0
Jones 1B	3	1	1	0
Register LF	3	1	1	1
Bradley 3B	2	1	1	0
Fields SS	2	0	0	0
Starling RF	0	0	0	0
Totals	25	4	4	3

Georgia	100	100	0-2-4-3
Valdosta	000	040	x-4-4-0
E — Sumner, Herbs 2, Thompson.			
2B — Jones			
SB — Sumner, Bowen			

Valdosta	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Nevinger	4	1	3	5	4	1
Mitchell	1	2	3	0	0	0
Bowen (W)	7	3	2	1	5	11

Morris Harvey	ab	r	h	bi
Frank LF	2	0	0	0
Carlucci SS	3	0	0	0
Amburg 2B	2	0	1	0
Smoot 3B	2	0	0	0
Licklitter 2B	3	0	0	0
Cappusio C	3	0	0	0
Hall CF	2	0	0	0
Burchberg RF	2	0	0	0
Petri P	1	0	0	0

Valdosta	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Sumner RF	3	0	0	0	1	
Tripp 2B	3	0	0	1		
Felts LF	2	0	0	0		
Bowen LF	2	0	0	0		
Branam C	3	0	0	0		
Jones 1B	2	0	1	0		
White 3B	0	2	0	0		
Fields SS	3	0	1	0		
Golden DPH	1	0	0	0		
Daney P	0	0	0	0		
Musashe	0	1	0	0		
Spruill	0	0	0	0		
Totals	21	1	2	1		

Morris Harvey	000	000	0-0-1-1
Valdosta	000	000	1-1-2-0
E — Licklitter			
LOB — Morris Harvey 3, Valdosta 9.			
SB — Bowen, Felts.			

Petri	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Kirakun	4	1	0	0	3	0
Daney	3	1	1	0	2	0
	7	1	0	0	3	4

2B Bowens, Hassell	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Braswell (L)	6	2	3	5	3	4
Hassell (W)	7	7	2	1	3	3

Morris Harvey	ab	r	h	bi
Russo LF	2	1	0	0
Carlucci SS	4	0	2	0
Amburg 2B	4	0	2	1
Smoot 3B	4	1	0	0
Licklitter 3B	3	0	1	0
Hall RF	4	0	0	0
Chambers CF	2	0	0	0
Berlinsky C	2	0	1	0
Miller P	2	0	0	0
Ruffberg	0	0	0	0
Totals	27	2	4	1

	ab	r	h	b	i
Sumner	3	0	1	0	
Tripp 2B	2	1	0	0	
Felts LF	3	2	1	0	
Bowen CF	3	2	2	4	
Register RF	3	0	1	1	
White, 3B	2	0	1	0	
Jones 1B	3	0	0	0	
Fields SS	3	0	2	0	
Golden DPH	3	0	0	0	
Dacus P	0	0	0	0	
LeFiles P	0	0	0	0	
Starling RF	0	0	0	0	
Totals	25	5	8	5	
Morris Harvey	001	100	0-2-4-3		
Valdosta State	200	030	x-5-8-2		
E — Berlinsky 3, Jones, Dacus					
2B — Bowen					
HR — Bowen					

Morris Harvey	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Mittles (L)	6	8	5	2	3	2
Dacus	3	2	3	6	2	1
LeFiles (W)	3	1	3	0	0	2

## Valdosta Takes Two

VALDOSTA, Ga. — Lee Daney and Sam Bowen turned in a pair of mound sparklers Saturday as Valdosta State defeated Morris-Harvey, 1-0, and the University of Georgia, 4-2.

Winning run in the Harvey test came on an error, wild pitch, two walks and a suicide squeeze by Bobby Tripp which sent Bob White across the plate after two were out in the seventh.

In the nightcap, Bowen struck out 11 Bulldogs as VSC collected all of its runs in the fifth.

Finally the strain of throwing that round horsehide covered object got too much for Pat Arnett and Co. At the time of this writing, the Blazers had dropped five of their last 11 outings.

Lee Daney, who looked to be a potential superstar by notching five straight triumphs, has now picked up three consecutive losses. Danny Chadwick and Rick Bowers lead the staff with matching 3-0 records, but neither of these men have attained a role in the starting rotation.

For the regulars, Pat Arnett and Andy Hassell hold down identical 5-1 marks. Arnett's sole loss came at the hands of Florida State when the Seminoles edged the Blazers by a 3-2 margin. Marty Lefiles has looked great in relief and has picked up a 2-0 record for his efforts.

That fabulous Blazer hitting machine which I heard so much about before the season began is now starting to materialize.

Gene Felts, everybody's All American in 1972, is gunning for AA honors again this year by leading the team with a .352 mark. Although his average tops the team, one must remember that this 6-2 Lakeland, Ga. native went into last May last season batting .424!!!

Al Golden and Jerome Register are both swinging the wood at a .333 clip followed by Steve Jones at .324. Jones has been by far the most consistent Blazer batsman in recent games. Frank Sumner rounds out the list of regulars over the .300 mark with his .318 average.

Waples claims that the Blazer slump can be attributed to an erratic pitching staff and untimely hitting. I believe the pitchers are just settling down to normal. They were throwing a notch or two better than they really were at the beginning of the year. They are still doing a more than adequate job.

As for hitting, I agree with Waples. It has been extremely untimely. In fact, we have several space swingers. There is a lot of space between their bat and the ball.

With Columbus and Georgia Southern coming up, Thomas and Waples had better put a fire under the Blazers or VSC baseball will be a thing of the past all too soon.

Valdosta State	ab	r	h	bi
Jones, 1b	6	1	3	2
Felts, lf	6	0	1	0
Sumner, c	5	1	2	0
Bowen, c-p	4	1	1	0
Golden, rf	4	0	1	0
Tripp, 2b	5	3	2	3
Bradley, 3b	6	0	0	0
Fields, ss	4	1	0	0
Arnett, p	3	0	0	0
Lefiles, p	1	0	0	0
Register, lf	0	0	0	0
Daney, p	0	0	0	0
Hassell, p	0	0	0	0
Starling, rf	1	0	0	0

TOTALS 45 8 10 5

Florida State	ab	r	h	bi
Colzie, 3b	3	1	0	0
Rosa, 1b	4	0	1	0
Snyder, cf	6	1	2	1
Langford, lf	5	1	2	1
Lee, c	4	0	2	0
Williams	4	0	1	0
Brand, rf	6	1	3	2
Esvey, ss	4	1	1	0
Farmer, p	3	0	2	2
Carroll, lb	0	1	0	0
Galley	1	0	1	0
Sherril, c	0	1	0	0
Tebbius	0	1	0	0
Rice, p	0	0	0	0
O'Brien, p	2	1	1	1
Guemple, lf	0	0	0	0
Foxwell	0	0	0	0

TOTALS 44 9 16 7

VSC .....000 001 034 00-8-10-3  
FSU .....120 000 005 01-9-16-2  
E - Rosa, Farmer, Bradley, Arnett, Bowen.

DP - Jones (unassisted)  
LOB - FSU 11, VSC 11.  
2B - Langford, O'Brien, Tripp.  
3B - Farmer, Jones.  
SF - Arnett.

	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Arnett	7	9	3	2	4	4
Lefiles	1	3	3	4	4	1
Bowen	1	3	1	1	2	0
Daney (L, 5-2)	1	2	3	2	1	1
Hassell	0	1	0	0	0	0
Farmer	7	6	2	1	4	7
Rice	2	1	0	0	0	2
Rice	2	1	0	0	0	2
O'Brien	1	3	6	5	2	2
Guemple (W, 1-0)	1	0	0	0	0	0
BALK - Hassell.						

# Seminoles Nip Valdosta State

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — in the high-scoring, see-saw game into extra innings. There was a parade of pitchers as Florida State University's Seminoles edged Valdosta State College's Blazers, 9-8, in an 11-inning baseball duel here Tuesday.

With the win coach Jack Stallings' Seminoles boosted their record to 22-7. Coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers now have a 29-6-1 mark.

VSC used five hurlers in the game and Florida State called on four moundsmen for duty

The Seminoles rapped out 16 hits, four of them for extra bases. VSC accounted for 10 safeties, including a double by Bobby Tripp and a triple by Steve Jones.

Florida State owned an early three-run lead, but mid-way the ninth Valdosta State had moved out front 8-3. A five-run outburst by the Seminoles in the bottom of the ninth deadlocked the count at 8-8 and set the

Two frames later FSU scored to tip the scales in its favor.

The Blazers are to return to action on Thursday when they go to Atlanta for a contest with Oglethorpe University's Stormy Petrels.

# VSC Tops Lewis In Scoring Duel

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

Valdosta State College's baseball Blazers built up an early five-run lead then held on to trim Lewis (Ill.) College, 8-6 in a game here Wednesday. With the triumph coach Tom-

my Thomas' Blazers boosted their record to 18-2-1. Lewis VSC and the team from Illinois were to wind up a three-game series with a contest here this afternoon. The Blazers are

to host Ashland (Ohio) College in a twin-bill Friday (2 p.m.) and on Saturday they will go to Savannah for a doubleheader with Armstrong State College's Pirates.

In yesterday's contest there were just 10 hits in the game, five for VSC and five for Ashland. Among them, however, were three homers.

Valdosta State's starting pitcher Pat Arnett rapped one out with two teammates aboard in the fourth inning then relief hurler Marty LeFiles hit a solo homer in the eighth. Lewis' Al Wasik homered for the visitors.

LeFiles, who came on in relief of Arnett in the fifth frame, got credit for the win and now has a 2-0 hill record. Lewis starter Don Marketz took the loss. It was his first pitching decision of the season.

Lewis	ab	r	h	rbi
Manderino, 2b	3	1	0	0
Saccomanno, lf	3	1	1	0
Onysio, cf	3	1	0	0
Wasik, c	4	1	1	3
Crowley, 1b	5	1	1	1
Alessio, ss	3	0	0	0
Verban, dh	4	0	0	0
Shortley, 3b	3	0	1	1
Marketz, p	4	1	1	0
Dybala, p	0	0	0	0

TOTALS 32 6 5 5

Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi
Sumner, rf, c	3	1	0	0
Tripp, 2b	3	0	0	0
Felts, lf	3	1	0	0
Bowen, cf	3	1	1	0
Jones, 1b	4	1	2	0
Branam, c	2	1	0	0
Bradley, 3b	2	0	0	1
Fields, ss	2	1	0	0
Arnett, p	2	1	1	3
LeFiles, p	2	1	1	1
Starling, rf	0	0	0	0

TOTALS 26 8 5 5

Lewis 001 140 000-6-5-3

VSC 022 300 01x-8-5-1

E — Jones, Crowley, Alessio, Dybala.

DP — Bradley to Tripp to Jones, Alessio to Manderino to Crowley.

2B — Moriarty.

3B — Shortley.

HR — Arnett, LeFiles, Wasik.

SB — Manderino, Sumner.

SF — Bradley.

5

Marketz (L, 0-1) ip h r er bb so

Dybala 4 2 3 2 1 1 2

Arnett 4 1 3 4 6 6 4 5

LeFiles (W, 2-0) 4 2 3 1 0 0 3 3

HBP — By Arnett (Manderino).

WP — Marketz — (2).

The Valdosta Daily Times, Fri., Apr. 13, 1973 —15—

## Diamond Blazers Beaten By Lewis

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

A torrid pitching duel between Tom Brennan and Sam Bowen was the feature attraction as Lewis (Ill.) College nipped Valdosta State College's baseball Blazers 1-0 in a game here Thursday.

The loss was only third this season for coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers against 18 wins and a tie. Lewis now has a 2-3 chart.

Lewis' Brennan allowed just two hits, issued only one walk and struck out seven as he became the first pitcher to notch a shutout win against the Blazers' this season. Brennan now has a 2-0 mark.

VSC's Bowen was nicked for just four hits, all singles. He walked four and whiffed 11. The loss leveled his hill record off at 1-1.

Lewis' and the game's only run came in the fourth inning. Mike Manderino singled, advanced to third on another single by Joe Saccomanno and then scored on a passed ball.

The game's only extra base hit was a double by the Blazers' Frank Sumner.

VSC was to face Ashland (Ohio) College in a doubleheader here this afternoon. The Blazers are to make their first road trip of the season when they go to Savannah for a twin-bill with the Armstrong State College Pirates on Saturday.

Lewis	ab	r	h	rbi
Manderino, 2b	3	1	1	0
Saccomanno, lf	3	0	2	0
Onysio, cf	2	0	0	0
Wasik, c	4	0	0	0
Crowley, rf	4	0	0	0
Mariarty, 3b	4	0	0	0
Verban, dph	4	0	1	0
Conte, 1b	2	0	0	0
Alessio, ss	3	0	0	0
Brennan, p	0	0	0	0

Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi
Sumner, rf	4	0	1	0
Tripp, 2b	4	0	0	0
Felts, cf	4	0	0	0
Bowen, p	4	0	0	0
Jones, 1b	4	0	0	0
Golden, lf	3	0	1	0
Bradley, 3b	3	0	0	0
Branam, c	2	0	0	0
Fields, ss	3	0	0	0

TOTALS 31 0 2 0

Lewis 000 100 000-1-4-2

VSC 0 000 000 000-0-0-0

DP — Alessio, Wasik.

DP — Fields to Tripp to Jones.

LOB — Lewis — 6, VSC 5.

2b — Sumner.

SB — Onysio, Wasik, Saccomanno.

5

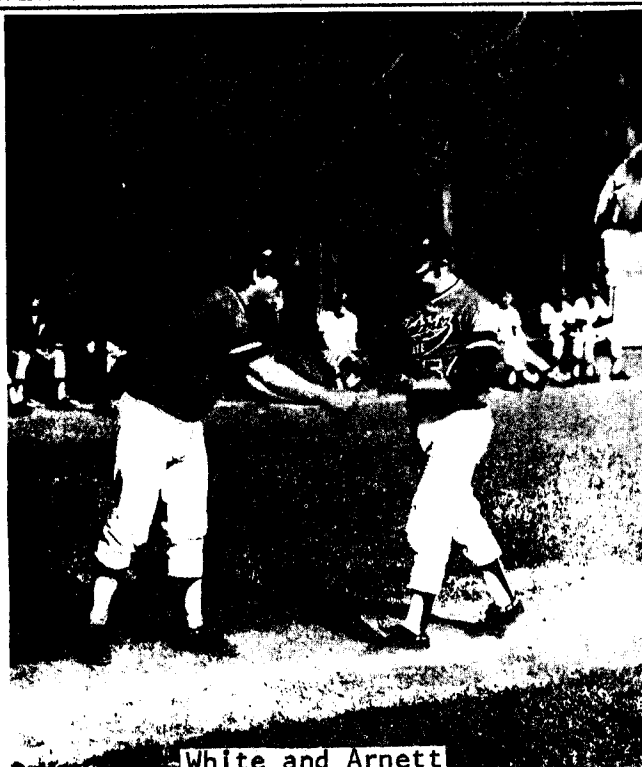
Brennan (W, 2-0) ip h r er bb so

Bowen (L, 1-1) 9 2 0 0 1 7

HBP — Manderino, by Bowen.

WP — Bowen.

PB — Branam 2.



White and Arnett

# Blazers Defeat Columbus Twice

SECOND GAME									
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi					
Sumner C	3	0	0	1					
Bradley 2B	4	0	1	0					
Felts LF	4	1	1	0					
Bowen CF	4	2	2	0					
Register RF	4	1	1	1					
Arnett P	3	1	2	2					
Jones 1B	3	1	2	0					
Fields SS	3	0	1	2					
Spruill 3B	3	0	1	0					
Totals	31	6	11	6					
Columbus	ab	r	h	rbi					
Perry CF	3	0	1	1					
Bell 3B	4	0	0	0					
Chaffar C	4	0	1	2					
Kleekamp RF	4	0	1	0					
Howard 1B	3	1	1	0					
Horne DPH	3	0	0	0					
Crawford 2B	3	0	1	0					
Ridenour SS	3	0	0	0					
Helmis LF	2	0	0	0					
Carroll P	0	0	0	0					
Mallory P	0	0	0	0					
Totals	29	1	5	1					
Valdosta State	401	001	0-6-11-3						
Columbus	010	000	01-5-3						
E — Bell, Howard, 2, Bradley, Jones									
DP — Ridenour to Howard									
LOB — VSC 5, Columbus 9									
2B — Register, Kleekamp									
SB — Bowen									
SF — Sumner									
	lp	h	r	er	hb	so			
Arnett (W, 7-3)	7	5	1	0	1	3			
Carroll (L, 2-3)	2	6	5	1	0	3			
Mallory	5	5	1	0	0	0			

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

Valdosta State College's baseball Blazers swept a doubleheader with Columbus College's Cougars at Columbus Thursday.

Coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers posted a 2-1 win in the first game and notched a 6-1 victory in the second contest. VSC now has a 32-11-1 record and the Cougars own a 25-14 mark.

While VSC is still awaiting official word, indications are that the Blazers will be selected as the at-large team to play in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)

District 25 playoffs next week.

There is also the possibility that VSC, which has won the District 25 crown the last four years, will host the playoffs.

In the opening game at Columbus yesterday VSC got one run in the fourth when Sam Bowen singled, stole second and then scored when Jerome Register singled.

What turned out to be VSC's winning run came in the sixth inning. Frank Sumner walked, advanced to second on a Columbus error. Bobby Tripp followed with a single and when the Cougars made a throwing error, Sumner scored.

In the first game Tripp, a standout at second base for VSC all season, suffered a broken finger. He did not see action in the second game.

The hill win in the opener went to Lee Daney, who allowed just four hits, walked three and struck out seven. Daney now has a 6-5 mark.

In the second game the Blazers racked up four run in the first inning and then stayed out front to the finish. VSC got those four tallies by combining singles by Bowen, Pat Arnett, Jerry Jones and Terry Fields with a pair of Columbus fielding miscues.

Arnett went the distance on the hill. He gave up just five hits, issued just one walk and struck out five. He now has a 7-3 pitching record.

Valdosta State was to face South Florida University-St. Petersburg Branch in a single game here today 3 p.m. and then meet the same team in a twin-bill here on Saturday (1 p.m.). Saturday's doubleheader will mark the close of regular season play for VSC.

FIRST GAME									
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi					
Sumner C	3	0	1	1					
Tripp 2B	3	0	1	1					
Felts LF	3	0	0	0					
Bowen CF	3	1	1	0					
Register RF	2	0	1	1					
Arnett DPH	3	0	0	0					
Jones 1B	3	0	0	0					
Fields SS	3	0	0	0					
Spruill 3B	2	0	0	0					
Daney P	0	0	0	0					
Bradley 2B	0	0	0	0					
Totals	23	2	4	2					
Columbus	ab	r	h	rbi					
Perry CF	3	0	1	0					
Bell 3B	4	0	1	0					
Chaffar C	4	0	0	0					
Kleekamp RF	3	1	0	0					
Chester DPH	3	0	0	0					
Crawford 2B	3	0	1	1					
Howard 1B	3	0	1	0					
Ridenour SS	1	0	0	0					
Helmis LF	3	0	0	0					
Chadwick P	0	0	0	0					
Totals	27	1	4	1					
Valdosta State	000	101	0	2-4-2					
Columbus	000	001	0-1-4-3						
E — Tripp, Jones, Kleekamp, Ridenour, Chadwick									
DP — Ridenour, Crawford, Howard									
LOB — VSC 2, Columbus 8									
SE — Felts, Bowen									
	IP	H	R	ER	BB				
Daney (W, 6-5)	7	4	1	0	3	7			
Chadwick (L, 7-2)	7	4	2	1	3	3			



# District Crown Is Up For Grabs

By SAMMY GLASSMAN

Four teams with impressive records will be in the field when the three-day battle for the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 25 baseball crown begins here Wednesday.

Host for the event will be coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers who own a 35-11-1 record and will come into the playoffs with a seven-game victory streak going. Valdosta State is top seeded and the Blazers are going after their fifth consecutive district crown, having won the title in 1969, 1970, 1971, and 1972.

Shorter College's Hawks from Rome, Ga., are second seeded. Coach Hamp Alexander's charges posted a 23-3-1 record in their march to the Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GIAC) championship.

Coach Charlie Ragsdale's Columbus College's Cougars are third seeded and they own a 25-14 mark. West Georgia College's Braves from Carrollton round out the field. Coach Archie White's charges are 17-7 after playing a tough schedule.

The playoffs are to be staged at the VSC diamond, which is located on the school's north campus. Wednesday's slate calls for Shorter to meet Columbus at 11 a.m. and for Valdosta State to go against West Georgia at 2 p.m. The losers of the first two games are to tangle at 5 p.m.

On Thursday a winner's bracket game is slated for 1 p.m. and a loser's bracket contest is on tap for 4 p.m. The



**TOMMY THOMAS**  
Blazers' Coach

finals are to be played Friday. Action that day is to start at 1 p.m. If another game is needed to settle the title issue it will follow at 4 p.m.

The District 25 champ will earn a berth in the NAIA Area 5 playoffs which are slated for May 24 - 26 at Knoxville, Tenn. The area champ in turn, will claim a spot in the NAIA national tourney which is to be played June 1-5 at Phoenix, Ariz.

West Georgia's leading pitcher is Butch Henshaw, who owns a 7-2 record. The Braves leading hitter is outfielder Tim Dedmon, who has a .405 batting mark.

Columbus' hill staff is led by Chuck Chadwick, who has a 7-2 record and a 1.53 earned run average. Bobby Howard, with a .406 average, and Butch Bell, with a .321 average, as the Cougars' leading hitters.

For Shorter junior lefthander Lamar Wright in the ace of ace on the Hawks' hill staff. This

season he has an 11-0 record and a 1.23 ERA. Counting six games he won at the close of the 1972 season, he has a 16-game victory streak going. In three seasons of collegiate competition he has a combined record of 29-2.

Another top mound performer for the GIAC champs is David Chester, who has a 6-3 record and a 1.26 ERA. The Hawks leading hitters include Vaughn Robins, .356; Ken Kizziah, .351 and Pete Summers, .300. Kizziah is the team's runs batted in leader with 24.

Batting averages for the Blazers, which do not include their last two regular season games, follow:

Gene Felts, .342; Jerome Register, .333; Frank Sumner, .297; Bobby Tripp, .296; Steve Jones, .294; Bob White, .278; Dudley Spruill, .278; Alan Golden, .254; Sam Bowen, .250; Pat Arnett, .250; John Bradley, .222; Ralph Starling, .214; Terry Fields, .205 and Darrell Branam, .145. As a team VSC has a .272 average.

Bowen is the RBI leader with 27, followed by Felts, 22; Register, 21; Tripp, 20; Sumner, 17, and Jones 14. Bowen has rapped six homers to lead in that department Felts is the leading base stealer with 15.

Won-loss record for VSC's pitching staff follow:

Marty LeFiles, 6-0; Danny Chadwick, 5-0; Rick Bowers, 4-0; Andy Hassell, 7-1; Pat Arnett, 6-2; Lee Daney, 6-3; Bowen, 1-2 and Delane Dacus, 0-1. The Blazers' combined earned run average is a sparkling 1.85.

Admission for the playoffs each day will be \$1 for adults and 50 cents for students above junior high age. Students of school which have teams in the tournament may gain admission by showing their identification cards. VSC season tickets won't be honored in accordance with district rules.



# MIKE CHASON

SPORTS EDITOR

## Baseball '73

It has finally ended!!! After scheduling the largest number of games in VSC history (49), the regular season portion of Blazer Baseball 1973 has come to a glorious close.

Along the way the Blazers set all kinds of records including most games played (46), most home games (37), most consecutive home games (24), most vocal assistant coach (Dave Waples), most errors in one inning ("Bird" Bradley 3), and the king of them all, most victories in one season (35). The latter is by far the most impressive of them all.

Although I have been accused all season of being "against" the baseball team, I did my best to portray Blazer Baseball as it really was. It really was a lot of time, effort, and work by the coaches, players, and the fans who sat through all 37 of those home games.

### Thomas Started It All Back In October

Coach Tommy Thomas started it all back in October with conditioning drills and a review of baseball fundamentals during his annual fall practice. When he could take precious time off from his rigorous schedule as Cross-Country coach Dave Waples fulfilled his duty as VSC's first full time assistant baseball coach.

In late January, the "real" thing began when the pitchers began loosening their arms up in the crisp winter weather. A few days later, the Blazers' resident All American, Gene Felts, and his teammates brought out their bats to start pounding the old horsehide.

On March 16, the '73 season opened with the first of the multitude of home games. Pat Arnett won that first game against Morris Harvey, and the Blazers proceeded to reel off eight straight victories before Bowling Green burst our heroes' balloon with a 2-1 win.

On March 28, the high and mighty Seminoles of Florida State University cruised into town still smarting from the pounding they received here last year. They got their revenge when they put a mark in Arnett's loss column with a 3-2 Seminole victory.

But the Blazer battleship sailed on to five more wins to set the VSC record at an unbelievable 18-2.

### SECOND GAME

Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbt
Sommer C	6	2	1	1
Tripp DH	4	2	2	0
Felts LF	5	3	3	2
Jones 1B	6	1	3	2
Bowen CF	3	1	2	1
Register RF	6	1	2	3
White 3B	2	0	1	0
Fields SS	5	1	1	2
Spruill 2B	3	1	1	0
Daney P	0	0	0	0
Starling RF	0	0	0	0
Totals	40	12	16	11
West Georgia	ab	r	h	rbt
Payne 2B	5	0	1	0
Lewis CF	4	0	2	0
Williams C	4	1	1	0
Wood LF	5	0	2	1
Hoffsticker 1B	4	0	0	0
Henshaw Rfp	3	1	1	1
Archer 3B	3	0	1	0
Worham SS	3	0	0	0
Camp DH	2	0	0	0
Tripp H	2	0	0	0
Brittian P	0	0	0	0
Brid P	0	0	0	0
Totals	35	2	8	2
Valdosta State	000	001	623-12-16-2	
West Georgia	100	001	000-2-8-6	
E - Fields, Jones, Hoffsticker, Williams 3, Lewis 2				
DP - Williams to Payne, Archer to Hoffsticker				
LOB - VSC 12, WGC - 11				
2B - Wood, Williams, Register				
HR - Henshaw, Felts, Fields				
SB - Payne, Henshaw, White, Wood				
S - Spruill				

	ip	h	er	bb	so
Daney (W, 7-5)	9	8	2	2	5
Brittian (L)	6	1	3	9	6
Henshaw	1	2	3	2	4
Bird	1	5	3	2	0
WP - Daney					
PB - Sommer					

### THIRD GAME

Columbus	ab	r	h	rbt
Perry CF	3	2	1	0
Bell 3B-p	4	1	1	0
Chatter C	5	0	0	0
Kleekamp RF-3B	4	2	2	0
Howard 1B	5	1	3	1
Horne DH	5	1	1	1
Lindiel RF	0	0	0	0
Crawford 2B	3	1	2	2
Ridenour SS	2	1	0	0
Helms 1F	4	0	1	1
Carroll P	0	0	0	0
Totals	35	9	11	5
West Georgia	ab	r	h	rbt
Payne 2B	4	2	2	1
Lewis CF	4	1	1	0
Williams C-3B	4	1	1	2
Wood 1F	3	1	1	1
Huffsticker 1B	5	0	1	1
Henshaw RF	4	0	1	0
Archer 3B	3	0	0	0
Lee C	1	1	1	0
Worham SS	4	0	0	0
Camp P	4	1	1	0
TOTALS	36	7	9	5
Columbus	100	412	001-9-11-3	
West Ga.	000	000	016-7-9-4	
E - Perry, Ridenour, Carroll, Williams, Wood, Archer, Worham				
DP - Huffsticker to Payne; Ridenour to Crawford to Howard; Bell to Crawford to Howard				
LOB - Cois, 5 West Ga., 8				
2B - Huffsticker Henshaw				
3B - Payne				
HR - Crawford				
S - Bell, Ridenour				

	ip	h	er	bb	so
Carroll (W, 3-1)	8	2	3	8	4
Bell	1	3	1	0	0
Camp (L, 4-3)	9	11	9	5	3
HRP - Lewis (Carroll)					
WP - Camp 3, Bell					



# Blazers Win District Title

BY SAMMY GLASSMAN

Valdosta State College's Blazers nipped Columbus College's Cougars, 4-3 in a 13-inning duel here Friday and with the triumph captured the National Association of Inter-collegiate Athletics (NAIA) District 25 baseball championship.

The district crown was the fifth in a row for coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers who will carry a 10-game winning streak and a 38-11-1 record with them when they go to Knoxville, Tenn., next week to take part in the NAIA Area 5 playoffs. The area winner will earn a berth in the National NAIA tourney which is slated June 1-5 at Phoenix, Ariz.

Valdosta State needed the minimum of three consecutive victories to emerge on top in the four-team, three-day, double-elimination battle for the district crown. Friday's clincher, however, was an overtime thriller.

Coach Charlie Ragadale's Cougars, who posted a 2-2 mark in the tourney here, has now gone to the sideline for the season with a 27-16 mark.

Before meeting and defeating Columbus in the finals, VSC trimmed the West Georgia College Braves from Carrollton, 12-2, and the Shorter College Hawks from Rome, Ga. 5-2.

In yesterday's bout with VSC the Cougars jumped off to an early three-run lead. They combined a triple by Verlin Perry with a Blazer error to score once in the first inning.



-Times Staff Photo

Valdosta State's Bobby Tripp Loses His Batting Helmet And He Takes A Big Stride Toward First Base



—Times Staff Photo

West Georgia's Lynn Hoffstickler Misses With His Tag And Blazers' Bob White Gets Back To First Safely

Columbus got two more runs in the fourth with a single by Perry the key blow in this uprising.

Valdosta State got two runs in the seventh by combining singles by Pat Arnett and Bobby Tripp with a Cougar error. The Blazers made it 3-3 with a single run in the eighth when, after two outs, Terry Fields, Arnett and Frank Sumner came through with consecutive singles.

The score remained deadlocked until the 13th when, after one out, Tripp reached first on a Columbus fielding miscue, advanced on a single by Gene Felts then scored the game-winning run on another Cougar

error.

For the day VSC collected 17 hits off three Columbus hurlers, including a double and four singles by Felts in seven trips to the plate.

Andy Hassell started on the hill for VSC, but he gave way to relief specialist Marty LeFiles in the third inning. LeFiles worked 10 and 2-3 innings and allowed just six hits over that long span as he racked up his seventh pitching victory without a loss.

Keith Carroll, who followed both starter Butch Dalton and reliever Chuck Chadwick on the mound took the loss and now has a 1-2 hill mark.

Columbus	ab	r	h	rbt
Perry CF	6	1	2	2
Bell 3B	6	0	1	0
Howard 1B	5	0	3	0
Kleekamp RF	3	0	0	0
Chaffet C	5	0	0	0
Crawford 2B	5	0	1	0
Ridenour SS	4	1	3	0

Horne DH	6	0	0	0
Helms LF	4	1	1	0
Lindief LF	1	0	0	0
Dallan P	0	0	0	0
Chadwick P	0	0	0	0
Carroll P	0	0	0	0

TOTALS	47	3	11	2
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbt
Sumner C	7	0	2	1
Tripp 2B	7	2	2	0
Felts LF	7	0	5	0
Bowen CF	4	0	0	0
Register RF	6	0	1	0
White 3B	5	0	2	0
Jones 1B	5	0	1	0
Fields SS	5	1	2	0
Arnett DH	6	1	2	0
Hassell P	0	0	0	0
LeFiles P	0	0	0	0

TOTALS	52	4	17	1
Columbus	100	200	000	000
VSC	000	000	210	000
Fields to Tripp to Jones, Ridenova to Howard, Crawford to Howard, Chaffet to Howard				
LOB—VSC 17, Columbus 11				
2B—Ridenour 2, Howard, Felts				
3B—Perry				
S—Kleekamp, Jones				

Dalton	ip	h	r	et	bb	so
Chadwick	4.2-3	11	2	1	2	2
Carroll (L)	3.1-3	3	1	0	2	3
Hassell	2.1-3	3	1	0	1	0
LeFiles (W 7-0)	2.1-3	5	1	0	0	1
PR—Sumner	10.2-3	6	2	1	3	1

# Blazers Sweep District 25

by Mike Chason

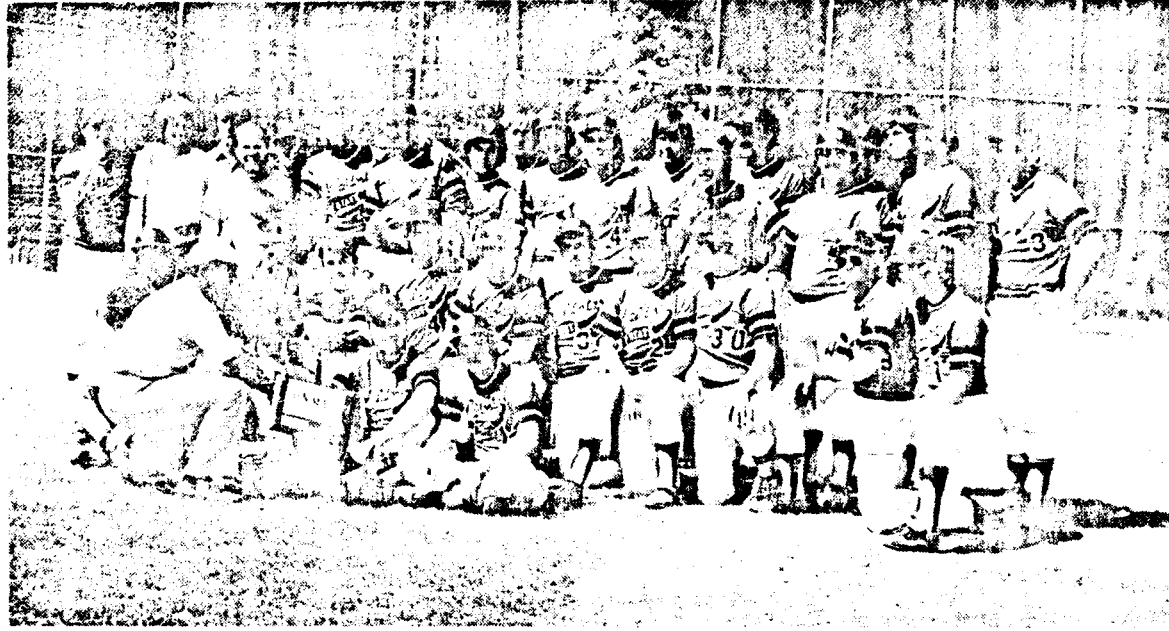
Valdosta State made it look easy last week when Coach Tommy Thomas' baseball Blazers swept the NAIA District 25 Tournament in three games.

In VSC's initial outing last Wednesday, Lee Daney throttled West Georgia for his seventh victory against five losses as Valdosta State exploded for a 12-2 win over the Braves from Carrollton.

After six innings, it appeared the Blazers were in for the battle of their lives as West Georgia led 2-1. In the seventh, Steve Jones knocked in the go-ahead run when he pounded out a single to score Frank Sumner and Bobby Tripp.

When the dust cleared at the end of the frame, the hometown crew led 7-2 and Tripp, Sam Bowen and Jerome Register had rapped out a safety apiece.

In the following inning. All American Gene Felts lofted a 350 blast over the left field fence with Tripp on base to add some insurance runs to the VSC total. Terry Fields added a solo round tripper to two more Blazer runs in the next inning to complete the scoring for the day.



After District 25 competition ends, VSC Blazers display winning crown.

Also on the first day, Shorter trimmed Columbus 2-1, and Columbus turned around to eliminate West Georgia from the tourney with a 9-7 victory over the cocky men from Carrollton.

The Hawks of Shorter College fell to the fiery VSC nine last Thursday when Pat Arnett limited the Hawks to seven scattered hits and Valdosta State had a 5-2 triumph and a berth in the District finals.

Arnett went the distance on the mound for the Blazers. He

boosted his hill record to 7-2 and lowered his earned run average to 2.09 for the year.

The Blazer defense, a trouble spot all season, turned in a sparkling performance by turning three double plays to wipe out Shorter rallies. VSC's "circus" infield of Bobby Tripp, Terry Fields, Bob White, and Steve Jones all had an outstanding day.

In the hitting department, Jerome Register demonstrated an ability to hit in the clutch

when he punched out two hits driving in a pair of runs. Sam Bowen, Terry Fields and "Mr. Reliable"—Gene Felts also picked up one hit apiece.

Lamar Wright, Shorter's pitching ace, hurled his second game in two days in the second half of the afternoon's twin bill, but the strain proved too much as Wright and the Hawks left Valdosta with a 6-0 defeat by Columbus on their record.

Wright had clicked off 17 straight wins including 12 this

season before Charlie Ragsdale's Cougars socked it to him.

With their win, Columbus set the stage for the championship battle last Friday. To win the title, the Cougar nine would have to take two from the homestanding heroes. Needless to say, the order proved to be too big to fill.

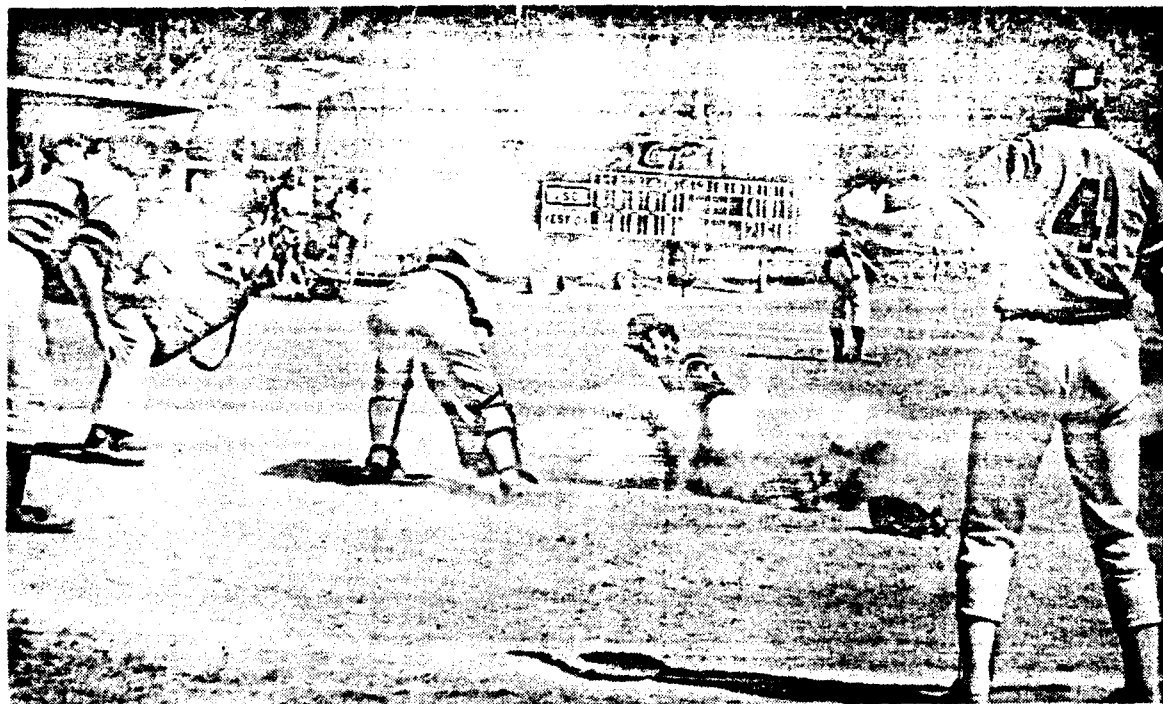
It took 13 innings, but when it was all over, Valdosta State had a 4-3 victory and its fifth straight District 25 crown.

Marty LeFiles lived up to his ace reliever billing when he came on in the third inning to snuff out a Cougar charge and finish the contest; giving up only six hits along the way. Andy Hassell was the starting pitcher, but LeFiles was credited with the win, raising his record to 7-0.

VSC's all star second sacker, Bobby Tripp, scored the winning run after he rounded the basepaths on a combination of two Columbus errors and a Gene Felts single.

Valdosta State racked up 17 hits in the game as compared to 11 for Columbus. Gene Felts proved why he was a first team All American when he pounded out five hits in seven trips to the plate.

*continued on page 10*



Jones slides home in a cloud of dust in VSC victory over West Georgia

## On To Knoxville. . .

*continued from page 1*

In fact, Felts dominated the offensive end of the Blazer machine during the entire tournament. He collected nine hits in 16 trips to the plate including two doubles and a home run.

Dave Waples, the voice of the Blazers, stated "I was never doubtful we'd win the tournament, but I was surprised that we took it in three games."

### **Battle Arkansas Nine Today**

The Blazer machine now rolls on to Knoxville, Tennessee where they will face State College of Arkansas today at 1p.m. The Arkansas nine won the District 17 playoff. In the second game, David Lipscomb College and Birmingham Southern will square off with the two losers battling it out at 7:00p.m.

Coach Thomas felt that his Blazers got the best end of the draw by playing State College of Arkansas. He said, "David Lipscomb came in second in the NAIA national tournament last year after they knocked us out of the Area Five tournament at Knoxville. We are awfully glad not to play them our first time out."

### **Thomas Is Confident**

Our opponent has a 16-8 record among the tough District 17 competition. As for our chances in Knoxville, Thomas said "I'm more confident of our title chances than I have been since 1969. We have a good draw and the pitching depth which is always so very important."

In past years, pitching has always been a problem for

Valdosta State, but this season the Blazers have five hurlers with an ERA of 2.25 or better. These men include Dan Chadwick, 6-0, Andy Hassell, 7-1, Lee Daney, 7-5, Pat Arnett, 7-2, and Marty LeFiles is 7-0 for the year.

### **Lakeland Native Leads Hitters**

As for hitting, Felts leads with a .358 average, followed by Bob White, .333, Jerome Register, .319, Steve Jones, .299, Bobby Tripp, .292, and Frank Sumner, .286.

If the Blazers should win in Knoxville, it will be on to Phoenix, Arizona for the NAIA national tournament on June 1-6. Both tournaments are elimination affairs.

**GO BLAZERS!!!!**

# Blazers Triumph In Area Opener

**SPECIAL TO THE TIMES**

**KNOXVILLE, Tenn. —** Valdosta State College's Blazers began action in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Area 5 baseball playoffs with an impressive 11-0 victory over the State College of Arkansas Bears here Wednesday.

In another opening round of the double-elimination event the David Lipscomb College Bisons from Nashville, Tenn., had a 5-3 lead over the Birmingham (Ala.) Southern College Panthers when a thunderstorm doused the players and the contest was suspended after one out in the seventh inning.

**The Bisons and Panthers were to finish their game this morning with a loser's bracket contest, which was rained out Wednesday, to follow.**

Also on tap at 4 p.m. today was a winner's bracket duel between VSC and victor of the David Lopscomb-Birmingham Southern contest. This was to be followed by another loser's bracket tilt.

Weather permitting, the finals are to be played Friday with action to begin at 4 p.m. If another game is necessary it will be played at 7 p.m.

Valdosta State, the NAIA District 25 champ, chalked up its 11th victory in a row and boosted its overall record to 39-11-1 with its triumph over the Bisons from Conroy, Ark. After the loss State College of Arkansas, the District 17 titleholder, was left with a 16-9 mark.

David Lipscomb, the Area 5 winner in both 1971 and 1972, came into the playoffs this time with a 34-8 record after copping the District 24 diadem. Birmingham Southern, the titlist from District 27, began

Against State College of Arkansas the Blazers racked up two runs in the second inning then went on from there to a one-sided triumph.

VSC raked three Bears pitchers for a total of 18 hits. Frank Sumner and Jerome Register blasted home runs. Sam Bowen rapped two triples and a double. Bobby Tripp and Steve Jones each accounted for triples.

Gene Felts, Bowen and Terry Fields all had three-for-five days at the plate.

Lee Daney, with relief help

from Rick Bowers in the final frame, was the pitching victor and he now has an 8-6 record. In the eight innings he worked, Daney blanked the Bears on three scattered hits.

The winner of the Area 5 title will earn a berth in the National NAIA tourney which is scheduled for June 1-5 at Phoenix, Ariz.

## In NAIA Play

# Valdosta State Storms Past Foe

Storms of two types have bombarded the NAIA Area 5 baseball playoffs.

First, Valdosta (Ga.) State used a whirlwind performance to devastate State College of Arkansas into the loser's bracket with a 17-hit, 11-0 triumph. Then a thunderstorm sent David Lipscomb of Nashville and Birmingham (Ala.) Southern for cover in the second game late yesterday at Bill Meyer Stadium.

Lipscomb was ahead, 5-3, with runners at first and third and one out when the second "storm" hit. Play was to resume in that game at 11:30 today with the situation as it was when action was suspended in the seventh inning.

Two games — the first involving State College of Arkansas and the loser of the 11:30 game, and the second pitting Valdosta against the Lipscomb-Southern winner. Another game may be played tonight.

**Valdosta State sent the entire batting order to the plate in a six-run fifth inning. Meanwhile, Lee Deery was limiting the Arkansas club to three hits.**

Centerfielder Sam Bowen drove in two runs and scored three as a result of his two triples and a double. Bobby Tripp and Steve Jones also tripled for the Georgians while catcher Frank Sumner belted a solo homer in the third.

VALDOSTA				ST. ARKANSAS			
ab		r h bi		ab		r h bi	
Sumner, c	5	2	1	Duhart, rf	4	0	1
Brenard, ph	1	0	0	Skyrme, lf	1	0	0
Tripp, 2b	5	1	1	Spann, lf	4	0	0
Felts, lf	5	1	3	Rickett, lb	4	0	2
Jones, lb	5	1	1	Beene, c	4	0	0
Bowen, cf	5	3	3	Rhca, 3b	2	0	0
Rogeshier, rf	2	2	2	Palmer, dh	3	0	0
Starling, rf	1	0	0	Haussein, 2b	3	0	0
White, 3b	4	0	1	Dallas, ss	3	0	0
Fields, ss	5	0	3	Ramey, p	0	0	0
Golden, dh	5	1	0	Thonge, p	0	0	0
Derry, p	0	0	0	Franks p	0	0	0
Bowers, p	0	0	0				
Totals 43 11 17 11				Totals 31 0 3 0			
VALDOSTA ST. 021 160 100-11				ST. ARKANSAS ST. 000 000 000-11			
E—Ramey, Tripp, Freids. DP—Valdosta							
St. 2. Arkansas State 1. 2B—Bowen, Duhart. 3B—Tripp, Jones, Bowen 2. HR—Sumner, Rogeshier. S — Rogeshier.							
				I P H R ER BB SO			
Deery (W) .....	8	3	0	0	0	0	4
Bowers .....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ramey (L) .....	2-1-3	3	3	3	0	0	0
Thonge .....	2-2-3	7	7	1	0	0	0
Franks .....	4	5	1	0	0	0	3
T-3-30.							



# Blazers In Title Round

By TIMMY STAFF WRITER

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — Valdosta State College's Blazers moved into the finals of the rain-delayed National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Area 5 baseball playoffs after a dramatic 1-0 victory over the David Lipscomb College Bisons here Friday.

The triumph was the second in as many playoff starts for coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers and vaulted them into the finals of the double-elimination area title duel today.

VSC was to go against Birmingham (Ala.) Southern College's Panthers at 1 p.m. today. The Blazers needed one victor to become the Area 5 champ and earn a berth in the NAIA National tourney, which is slated to open next Thursday at Phoenix, Ariz. Southern, which has a 2-1 playoff chart, could cop the area diadem by licking VSC twice.

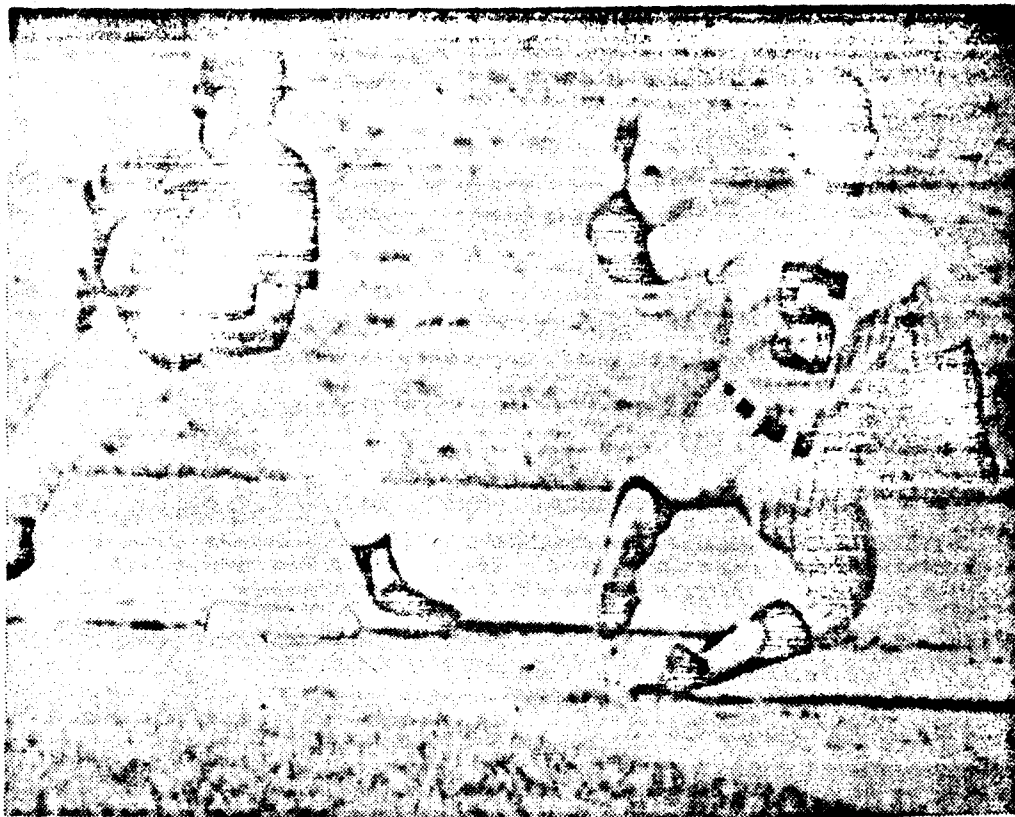
Valdosta State now has a 40-11-1 mark while the Panthers from Birmingham own a 40-7 record. VSC has a 12-game victory streak going.

Friday's action began with the windup of some games that were delayed by rain on Thursday.

In a suspended contest, David Lipscomb, the defending area champ, trimmed Birmingham Southern, 7-4. Then in a loser's bracket tilt the Alabama nine licked State College of Arkansas, 13-2, to send the Bears from Conroy, Ark., to the sideline.

Next was the duel between VSC and David Lipscomb and the Blazers got that game's only run after two out in the bottom of the ninth inning.

Friday's action ended with a duel under the lights between Birmingham Southern and



— AP Wirephoto

## VSC's Bobby Tripp (12) Is Waiting And Ready To Tag Bisons' Kevin Stanford (5)

David Lipscomb. The Alabama entry won this one, 3-0, and David Lipscomb bowed out of the playoffs. The Nashville team went home with a 35-9 mark.

The contest between Valdosta State and David Lipscomb featured a pressure-packed hill duel between the Blazers' senior righthander Pat Arnett and the Bisons' freshman hill whiz Mike McLaughlin.

Arnett blanked the Bisons on five scattered hits. He walked five and struck out seven as he boosted his hill record to 8-2. McLaughlin gave up just four hits, issued two walks and struckout 10 as he suffer-

ed his first pitching defeat after 11 consecutive triumphs.

Valdosta State's all-important run came in the last half of the ninth.

Gene Felts opened the frame with a single. The next VSC batsman flied out and then Felts was forced at second after a grounder by Sam Bowen.

It was now two outs, but Bowen was on first and he promptly stole second. Next up was Jerome Register who bounced one off the fence in center field at the 415 foot mark for a bouble which brought Bowen home and gave Valdosta State its victory.

		ab r h rbi		
David Lipscomb				
Sanforth lf	3	0	1	0
E. Smith 3b	3	0	1	1
Santi 3b	0	0	0	0
Pride rf	3	0	2	0
G. Smith ss	4	0	0	0
Harston 2b	4	0	0	0
Stinson, 1b	3	0	1	0
Robinson cf	3	0	0	0
Sargent dh	4	0	0	0
Dennis c	3	0	0	0
McLaughlin p	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	31	0	5	0
		ab r h rbi		
Valdosta State				
Sumner c	3	0	1	0
Tripp 2b	2	0	0	0
Felts lf	3	0	1	0
Jones 1b	4	0	0	0
Bowen cf	4	1	0	0
Register rf	4	0	1	1
White 3b	3	0	0	0
Fields ss	3	0	1	0
Arnett p	3	0	0	0
TOTALS	29	1	4	1
David Lipscomb	000	000	000-0-5-2	
Valdosta State	000	000	001-4-1	
E - Stinson, Dennis, Arnett				
LOB - VSC 4, DLC 9				
2B - Register				
3B - Stinson				
SB - Robinson, Felts, Bowen				
S - Tripp 2				
SF - Pride				
McLaughlin (L, 11-1) #2.3	4	1	1	2 10
Arnett (6-2)	9	5	0	0 5 7



# Valdosta, Southern Battle for NAIA Title

Valdosta State took a 40-11

DAVID LIPSCOMB 000 000 000-0 3 1  
BIRM. SOUTH. 000 001 02x-3 5 0  
Muncher, Williams (8) and Dennis; Endicott and Goss.

# Valdosta St. Wins NAIA Area 5 Crown

**The Brunswick, Ga., junior**

In the Blazers' ninth, Gene Felts homered and Valdosta picked up two more runs before Birmingham Southern halted the rally.

Southern forced the second contest by handing the Blazers a 10-8 loss earlier.

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME					
BIRMINGHAM SO.			VALDOSTA ST.		
abr hbi			abr hbi		
Boyd ss	4	0 1 0	Summer c	3	0 0 0
Hedrick ss	4	0 0 0	Tripp 2b	3	1 0 0
Mayer lf	4	0 1 0	Felts c	2	0 1 0
Booker rf	3	0 2 0	Bowen p	3	1 2 1
Swartz dh	4	0 0 0	Reinister rf	2	0 0 0
Salem 2b	3	0 0 0	Wh te 3b	4	0 1 0
Miller 3b	3	0 1 0	Flelds ss	3	0 0 0
Goss c	3	0 0 0	Jones lb	3	0 0 0
Swartz cf	3	0 0 0	Stirling lf	3	0 0 0
Hatchett p	0	0 0 0			
Totals	31	0 5 0	Totals	26	2 4 1
BIRMINGHAM SO. 000 000 000-0			VALDOSTA ST. 000 002 000-2		
E-Miller, DP-Valdosta St. LOB-Birmingham Southern S. Valdosta St. 6.					
2B-Bowen, 3B-Bowen, SB-Boyd, Goss, S-Felts.					
IP H R ER BB SO					
Hatchett (L)	8	4	2	2	4
Brown (W)	9	5	0	0	1 17
PB-Goss, WP-Hatchett, T-1:55, A-225, U-Hatcher, Sellars, Hatfield.					

VALDOSTA	STATE	BIRMINGHAM	SOU.
	ab r h bi		ab r h bi
Trimmer, C	4 1 0 0	Boyd, I b	4 2 0 0
Tripp, 2b	4 1 1 0	Headrick, ss	4 2 2 0
Felts, lf	5 2 2 1	Mayer, lf	3 2 1 1
Bowen, cf	2 2 1 1	Brooker, rf	4 1 1 0
Raster, rf	5 2 3 3	Swartz, dh	5 1 3 2
White, 3b	4 0 0 0	Salem, 2b	3 0 2 3
Golden, ph	1 0 0 0	Miller, 3b	4 0 1 1
Jones, lb	5 0 1 2	Goss, c	5 1 0 0
Fields, ss	4 0 1 0	Zeuch, cf	5 1 3 0
Ameli, dh	3 0 0 0	Yeoman, p	0 0 0 0
Dawg, p	0 0 0 0	Lowery, p	0 0 0 0
Leifer, p	0 0 0 0	A. Wilson, p	0 0 0 0
Chwick, p	0 0 0 0		
Bowers, p	0 0 0 0		
Hassell, p	0 0 0 0		

<b>Totals</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>
Bard awarded first on catcher's inter-								
<b>Valdosta State</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>010</b>	<b>203</b>					
<b>BIRMINGHAM SOU.</b>	<b>000</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>01x</b>					
E—Hedrick 3, Salmon, Summer 2, Tripp,								
Bowen, LOB—Valdosta 9, Birmingham								
Southern 13.								
2F5—Swartz, 3B—Bowen, HR—Register,								
Felts, S—Arnett, Tripp.								
	<b>IP</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>ER</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>BB</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>
Daney (L)	4	4	4	4	0	3		
Lehigh	1 1/2	2	1	1	2	0		
Chadwick	1 1/2	2	1	1	2	0		
Bowers	2	3	2	2	2	0		
Hayman	1 1/2	0	0	0	0	0		
Zeissell	1 1/2	2	3	3	1	1		
Lowery (W)	4 1/2	7	5	5	2	1		
A. Wilson	1	0	0	0	0	0		
Sve-A. Wilson, HBP—Mayer (by								
Bowers), PB—Summer, T—3:01, A—200.								



# Blazers Capture Area Title

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

Phoenix, Ariz. and the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) national baseball tournament is the next stop for Valdosta State College's newly crowned Area 5 champions.

Coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers, who earlier won the NAIA District 25 crown, captured title honors in the Area 5 playoffs this past Saturday at Knoxville, Tenn.

VSC went into the finals of the double-elimination area playoffs with a 2-0 mark. Coach Roy Newborne's Birmingham (Ala.) Southern College Panthers reached the final day with a 2-1 mark.

In their first meeting Southern trimmed VSC, 10-8, in a wide-open slugging match. The Blazers bounced back to win the second game 2-0 behind Sam Bowen's five-hit, 17-strikeout hill performance to capture the area

The Valdosta Daily Times, Mon., May 28, 1973 —17—

## Sports

SAMMY GLASSMAN, Editor

crown and claim one of eight coveted places in the National NAIA tourney which is to begin on Thursday at Phoenix.

This is Valdosta State's first Area crown. It was the Blazers' fifth consecutive appearance in the playoffs at Knoxville.

The National NAIA tourney at Phoenix will be a double-elimination affair which is to start Thursday and will take a minimum of six days to complete.

VSC has drawn Phillips University of Enid, Okla. as its first round foe at Phoenix. The Blazers will carry a 41-12-1 mark in the national title event. Phil-

lips has a 29-16 mark.

Other first round games are as follows:

U. S. International University of San Diego, Calif., (31-8) vs Maloney College, Canton, Ohio, (21-8), University of Washington-Oshkosh Branch, (26-7), vs Eastern Connecticut State (28-6) and Pembroke (N.C.) State University (28-8) vs Grand Canyon College, Phoenix, (39-16).

In Saturday's opener at Knoxville VSC took an early two-run lead, but at the end of six frames Southern was ahead, 9-3. The Blazers rallied late in the game, but couldn't make up all the lost ground.

The Alabama entry touched

five Valdosta State hurlers for 13 hits. Starter Lee Daney took the loss and is now 8-6. Among the Blazers' 10 hits were homers by Gene Felts and Jerome Register and a triple by Sam Bowen.

In the second game Bowen left his more familiar spot in center field to pitch for Valdosta State. He allowed just five hits, issued only one walk and struck out 17 for a victory which lev-

eled his hill record off at 2-2.

That wasn't all for the talented Bowen. He had a hand in the scoring of VSC's two runs, which came in the sixth inning.

Bobby Tripp walked and then advanced to second on a sacrifice bunt by Felts. Bowen followed with a triple to bring Tripp home. Bowen himself scored a little later on a wild pitch.

Birmingham Southern closed its season with a 41-8 record.

## Tripp, Felts Selected

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

Two members of Valdosta State College's baseball team, second baseman Bobby Tripp and outfielder Gene Felts, have been named to the NAIA All-Area 5 team.

The 10-man All-Area 5 squad was picked by coaches in the area.

The team follows:

Pitchers — Butch Stinson of David Lipscomb and Lamar

Wright of Shorter; catcher Carl Torush of Carson Newman; first baseman Bobby Howard of Columbus, second base Tripp; third base Butch Bell of Columbus, shortstop Eddie Mizialko of Christian Brothers and outfielders Felts, Dwight Duhart of State College of Arkansas and Jim Crom of Milligan.

Earlier Felts, Tripp and pitcher Pat Arnett were among the Blazers picked on the NAIA All-District 25 team.

3-2, in 12 innings

# Antelopes nip Pembroke

By STEVE WESTON

Grand Canyon College might have found someone last night who'll make 'em forget All-American Bill Catalanotte.

Who? Why, Randy Catalanotte, of course.

Randy, a senior and coach Dave Brazell's starting rightfielder, pushed the Antelopes past Pembroke, N.C., State, 3-2, in the first round of the rain-delayed National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) baseball tournament last night with his booming hit in the bottom of the 12th inning.

Triumph put Canyon (40-16) into tonight's 8 o'clock feature game against Eastern Connecticut State (29-6), which defeated Wisconsin - Oshkosh earlier yesterday, 9-4.

In the other first-round game yesterday (one was played Wednesday), Phillips University of Enid, Okla., defeated Valdosta, Ga., State, 4-3.

That puts United States International University of San Diego (32-8) against Phillips (30-16) at 5 o'clock in the other winner's bracket game.

Loser's bracket games match Valdosta (41-13) and Malone, Ohio, College (21-11) at 11 a.m. and Wisconsin - Oshkosh (26-7) against Pembroke (28-9) at 2 p.m.

All games are at Phoenix Municipal Stadium.

Catalanotte ended the game when he propelled a pitch by Pembroke's Ron Norman far over the right-fielder's

head to the fence at Muny. Doug Coon had walked and scored easily on the hit, Catalanotte getting credit for a triple.

It broke up a tremendous pitching duel between Norman — who went into the game 12-0 — and Canyon's Gary Graham (14-5).

Both went the entire distance, Graham giving up 11 hits and striking out six, Norman surrendering eight hits and fanning five.

Canyon got a couple of unearned runs early — thanks to errors by Pembroke third baseman Al Barbour — and Graham sailed along until the ninth.

A pair of singles, an error, a ground out and a sacrifice fly quickly tied the game at that point. The teams then battled fiercely the next three innings.

Despite the fact the game went 12 innings, it was played in a brisk 2:25. Graham tied a tournament record with two triples, Canyon tied a record with four triples in the game and GCC first baseman Leon Quackenbush tied still another mark with 16 chances.

Brazell will pitch Kent Fulmer, a senior righthander with a 10-5 record, against Eastern Conn. State tonight.

Only inches turned out to be the difference as John Linder scored on a single by Tracy Benton in the bottom of the ninth inning, giving Phillips the 4-3 triumph over Valdosta State.

Valdosta State, now 41-13, battled from behind all night, only to lose the game in heartbreaking fashion.

Phillips' Haymakers started the

game-winning rally when Linder led off with a single. He was sacrificed to second and, after one out, Benton singled sharply to left field.

Gene Felts, the Valdosta Blazers' All-American left fielder, made a perfect throw home on the play, and the tag at the plate was something for instant replay fans.

Valdosta dropped to a losers' bracket game at 11 o'clock this morning against Malone (21-11).

All games are at Phoenix Municipal Stadium.

Darrell Wirthner took the mound for Phillips — which led at one point by 3-0 — in the eighth inning and went on to pick up his seventh victory of the season. Darrel Frolin had started for the Oklahomans and pitched well. Pat Arnett went the route for Valdosta.

Tim Young had three hits for Phillips and Steve Jones was three-for-four with two RBIs for Valdosta.

Just two of Phillips' runs were earned.

Eastern Connecticut, a relative unknown in the tournament, used a five-run explosion in the bottom of the eighth inning to break a 4-4 deadlock and upset hard-hitting Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

PEMBROKE STATE						GRAND CANYON					
AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI
Dunlap cf	5	0	3	1	Coon ss	4	1	0	0	0	0
Suggs 2b	5	0	0	1	Catalanotte rf	6	1	3	1	0	0
Rudecille rf	6	0	1	0	Fulmer cf	5	0	0	0	0	0
Pyrtle lb	5	0	0	0	DeBattista 3b	4	0	0	0	0	0
Johnson c	5	0	0	0	Hall lf	5	1	2	1	0	0
Barbour 2b	5	0	2	0	Quackenbush 1b	5	0	1	0	0	0
Callahan ss	5	1	3	0	G. Graham p	5	0	2	0	0	0
Preston lf	5	1	2	0	Springston c	5	0	0	0	0	0
Welborn dh	3	0	0	0	C. Graham 2b	4	0	0	0	0	0
Oxendine dh	1	0	0	0							
Totals	45	2	11	2	Totals	43	3	8	2		

PEMBROKE 000 000 002 000 — 2

GRAND CANYON 100 100 000 001 — 3

E — Barbour 2, Quackenbush, Preston, Coon.

DP — Pembroke 3, Grand Canyon 1. LOB — Pembroke 11, Grand Canyon 8. JB — G. Graham 2.

Hall, Catalanotte, SB — Dunlap 2.

IP H R ER BB SO

G. Graham (W, 14-5) 12 11 2 2 2 6

Norman (L, 12-1) 11 11 3 1 4 5

T — 2:25. A — 956.

VALDOSTA STATE						PHILLIPS U.					
AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI
Sumner c	5	1	1	0	Linder dh-lf	4	1	1	0	0	0
Tripp 2b	3	0	1	0	Hays cf	4	1	0	0	0	0
Felts lf	4	1	2	1	Young ss	5	1	2	0	0	0
Bowen cf	4	1	1	0	Kincaid lf-c	3	0	1	1	0	0
Reisler rf	3	0	0	0	Benton 1b	4	1	2	1	0	0
Jones 1b	4	0	2	3	Crowder rf	3	3	0	0	0	0
Fields ss	4	0	0	0	Call 2b	3	2	0	1	0	0
Arnett-p	4	0	1	0	Lovd c	2	0	1	0	0	0
Sorrell 3b	3	0	0	0	Howard 3b	4	0	1	0	0	0
White 2b	1	0	0	0	McShadden pr	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	35	3	9	3	Totals	32	4	9	3		

VALDOSTA STATE 000 110 010 — 3

PHILLIPS U. 012 000 001 — 4

E — Sumner 2, Tripp, Sorrell, LOB — Valdosta State 8.

PHILLIPS 8, 2B — Phillips, Lovd, SB — Jones, Arnett, Hays, Young, SF — Phillips, Kincaid, S — Reisler, Crowder, Hays.

IP H R ER BB SO

Frolin 7 8 3 3 2 5

Werther (W, 7-2) 1 1 0 0 0 1

Arnett (L, 8-3) 8 9 4 2 5 6

HBP — Lovd (by Arnett), WP — Werther.

Time — 2:30. A — 379.

WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH						E. CONN. STATE					
AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI	AB	R	H	BI
Hinske lf	5	1	2	0	Richmond s	4	0	0	0	0	0
Gantner ss	5	1	2	0	Reed rf	4	2	3	0	2	0
Miller cf	5	0	1	0	Somers cf	5	1	1	0	0	0
Koujal c	4	0	1	2	Lynn lf	3	0	1	0	0	0
Held rf	5	0	1	0	Asal dh	5	1	3	1	0	0
Wynnaard dh	4	0	1	0	Hickey 3b	4	1	0	0	0	0
VidenAvond 2b	5	1	1	1	Bruton 1b	3	1	0	0	0	0
Hartwin 1b	5	0	1	0	Habereru 2b	4	2	2	0	1	0
Helmstead 3b	4	0	1	1	Keemon c	4	2	2	1	0	0
Totals	42	4	12	4	Totals	36	9	12	4		

WISCONSIN-OSHKOSH 010 010 100 — 4

E. CONN. STATE 000 012 15 x — 9

E — Hinske, Gantner 2, Koujal, Helmstead 2,

Richmond, Hickey 2, DP — Wisconsin-Oshkosh 1, LOB

— Wisconsin-Oshkosh 12, Eastern Conn. State 9, 2B —

Reed, Asal 2, Habereru, SB — Gantner 2, Koujal,

Asal, Keemon, Somers 2.

IP H R ER BB SO

Caniera 5 7 2 1 1 4

Reed (W, 8-2) 3 5 2 2 1 1

Storch 5 8 3 0 2 5

Pirner (W, 4-3) 2 1 3 2 3 0

Kilomilh 1 3 3 3 1 0

Wild Pitch — Storch 2, Pleier. PB — Keemon.

Time — 2:36. A — 201.

# Bowen Pitches One-Hitter, Valdosta State Wins, 2-0

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Sam Bowen, a junior righthander from Brunswick, tied a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics record when he pitched a one-hitter to lead Valdosta State to a 2-0 victory over Malone, Ohio, College in the national tournament Saturday.

Bowen's one-hitter also led to another record: The game was completed in one hour, 38

minutes, the shortest game ever in NAIA tournament competition.

Bowen got two runs in the second inning when Jerome Register was safe on a Malone error, Steve Jones singled him to second and Bob White walked to load the bases. Terry Fields then singled to drive in Register and Jones, giving Bowen all the backup he needed.

The victory was Bowen's third this season to go with two losses. Losing pitcher Rick Zupanic dropped to 5-5 with the loss.

Valdosta State, now 42-13, lost to Phillips University of Enid, Okla., 4-3, in the opening round. The Blazers face the loser of the Pembroke, N.C.-Wisconsin Oshkosh game Sunday at 2 p.m.

Valdosta State 020 000 000-2-4-1  
Malone, O. Coll. 000 000 000-0-1-3  
Bowen and Sumner; Zupanic and Korzan. WP—Bowen (3-2); LP—Zupanic (5-5).



GRAND CANYON					EASTERN CONNECTICUT				
AB	R	H	B	I	AB	R	H	B	I
Coon ss	5	1	1	0	Richmond ss	5	2	3	2
Catalanotte rf	5	0	0	0	Reed rf	4	1	1	1
Fulmer p-cf	4	1	1	0	Scmers cf	2	1	1	1
DeBattista 3b	3	0	0	0	Lynn lf	5	0	1	0
Hall lf	4	0	1	0	Asal dh	5	0	1	0
Quackenbush 1b	4	1	0	0	Hickey 3b	4	0	1	0
G. Graham cf-2b	4	1	1	0	Bruton 1b	4	1	1	0
Springson c	3	1	2	1	Haberen 2b	3	1	1	0
Slidham pr	0	0	0	0	Keemon c	2	1	0	0
C. Graham 2b	2	0	2	0					
Cox p	0	0	0	0					
Kerbow ch	1	0	1	0					
Duncan pr	0	0	0	0					
Totals	33	5	9	3	Totals	34	7	10	4

EASTERN CONN.					GRAND CANYON				
AB	R	H	B	I	AB	R	H	B	I
Reed	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2-6
Conn. 8	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0-5
Grand Canyon 1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 11	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 12	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 13	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 14	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 15	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 16	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 18	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 19	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 20	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 21	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 22	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 23	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 24	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 25	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 26	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 27	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 28	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 29	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 30	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 31	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 32	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 33	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 34	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 35	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 36	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 37	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 38	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 39	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 40	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 41	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 42	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 43	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 44	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 45	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 46	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 47	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 48	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 49	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 50	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 51	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 52	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 53	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 54	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 55	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 56	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 57	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 58	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 59	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 60	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 61	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 62	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 63	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 64	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 65	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 66	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 67	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 68	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 69	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 70	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 71	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 72	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 73	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 74	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 75	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 76	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 77	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 78	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 79	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 80	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 81	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 82	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 83	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 84	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 85	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 86	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 87	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 88	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 89	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 90	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 91	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 92	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 93	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 94	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Conn. 95	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Reed	1	0	0	0	0				

# Antelopes crumble to Valdosta, 10-8

By STEVE WESTON

Valdosta, Ga., State College's Blazers bombed error-plagued Grand Canyon College out of the 17th annual National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics championship baseball tournament yesterday.

The Georgians (43-13) unleashed a 14-hit attack and made the most of a half-dozen errors by coach Dave Brazell's Antelopes (40-18) to continue advancing through the loser's bracket.

The victory put Valdosta State into a 5 p.m. game tomorrow, but the Blazers' opponent won't be known until the completion of last night's loser's bracket game matching Wisconsin-Oshkosh (27-8) and Phillips University (30-17) of



Enid, Okla., and the meeting between the only two teams still unbeaten in the tourney, United States International University (33-8) of San Diego and Eastern Connecticut State College (30-6).

The 10-8 loss to Valdosta State by Canyon was as nightmarish for the 'Lopes as Saturday's 7-5 loss to Eastern Connecticut. In both games, Canyon led early only to be undone by its own errors.

The Antelopes took an early three-run lead over the Blazers, but, just like Saturday night, Brazell could find no pitching to protect the lead and his defense crumbled.

Valdosta got into the lead, 4-3, with a four-run second inning, an error and a key double by Frank Sumner. Canyon then committed three errors in the fourth as the Blazers pushed across two more runs.

The Georgians nailed it down in the eighth on a single by Bobby Tripp, a triple by Gene Felts and an inside-the-park home run by Sam Bowen.

Canyon went into the bottom of the ninth trailing by 10-5. The Antelopes scratched up three runs before reliever Pat Arnett came to get Dennis Coon on a popup and Randy Catalanotte on a strikeout to end the game—and Grand Canyon's season.

Arnett picked up a save which gave the victory to Valdosta's second pitcher of the game Marty Lefiles, now 8-0. Leon Schielke started for Canyon and took the loss, his second in seven decisions.

Canyon had started the tournament—its third appearance under Brazell—with a 12-inning, 3-2 victory over Pembroke, N.C., State Friday.

Valdosta State, figured to be one of the favorites, began Friday with a 4-3 loss to Phillips, but came back Saturday to down Malone, Ohio, College, 2-0, on a one-hitter by Bowen.

GRAND CANYON						VALDOSTA STATE					
ab	r	h	bi	ab	r	h	bi	ab	r	h	bi
Coon ss	6	1	2	0	Sumner c	5	2	3	3	2	1
Catalanotte rf	6	0	2	0	Tripp 2b	5	3	3	3	2	2
Fulmer cf	4	1	3	2	Felts lf	5	1	3	3	2	2
DeBattista 3b	5	2	2	0	Bowen cf	2	1	1	3	2	2
Hall lf	4	2	1	0	Register rf	4	0	0	0	0	0
Quack'busch 1b	4	1	1	1	Jones 1b	5	0	1	0	0	0
G. Graham dph	4	0	0	0	White 3b	5	0	0	0	0	0
Richards c	3	1	1	1	Fields ss	5	1	2	2	0	0
C. Graham 2b	5	0	0	1	Arnett dph-p	5	2	2	0	0	0
Totals	41	8	12	5	Totals	41	10	14	8	8	8
VALDOSTA STATE	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	3	0	10	10
GRAND CANYON	3	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	3	8	8
E—Sumner, White, Hassel, Chadwick, DeBattista, Hall 2, Richards 2, Behrle. LOB—Valdosta State 10, Grand Canyon 12. 2B—Sumner, Catalanotte, DeBattista, 3B—Felts, Fulmer. HB—Bowen. SB—Felts. SF—Bowen.											
IP H R ER BB SO											
Hassel	2 1/2	2	3	1	2	2	1				
Lefiles (W, 8-0)	5	6	2	2	2	2	2				
Chadwick	2 1/2	4	3	2	2	2	2				
Arnett	1	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Schielke (L, 5-2)	1 1/2	4	4	3	2	0	0				
Behrle	3 2/3	6	3	3	1	0	0				
Graham	4	4	3	3	1	0	2				
SAVE—Arnett. HRP—Bowen (by Schielke). HP—Berhrie. PB—Richards. T—2:38. A—1,104.											



# Blazers Fall For Fourth Place

By JULIAN MILLER

PHOENIX, Ariz. — A last-inning rally by Eastern Connecticut State's Warriors sent Valdosta State College's Blazers to the sidelines of the NAIA National Baseball Tournament after a 3-2 defeat here Monday.

A desperation rally by the Warriors in the bottom of the ninth, composed of three consecutive singles spelled defeat for VSC in the first game of the semi-finals and sent the Blazers home with the fourth-place trophy.

In the other semi-final game here Monday, United States International University dumped Oshkosh 8-5, leaving USIU and ECS to battle it out for first place today. Since USIU is undefeated in tourney play, another

game will be needed to decide the national champion Wednesday should ECS win today.

VSC and ECS battled tooth and nail until the bottom of the last frame when first baseman John Bruton, second-bagger Al Haberen, and catcher Micki Redmon teamed up for back-to-back singles to break a 2-2 tie.

The Warriors from Willimantic, scored first in the bottom of the second and watched VSC tie it at 1-all in the top of the fifth.

Moving ahead again in the bottom of the sixth, only to be tied for the second time, at 2-all another Blazer rally in the top of the seventh, ECS finally moved ahead for good in the ninth.

The two teams battled a 97 degree heat in the late afternoon sun for a one-hour and 45 minute game.

The victory gave big right-

hander John Caneria a 10-3 record after he fanned a dozen batters and walked one while giving up six hits and two runs. He had just been announced as a second team NAIA All-America winner. His victory boosted the Warriors to a 31-8 record.

Pat Arnett, taking his second loss of the tournament, both of which Thomas said he shouldn't have lost, dropped to an 8-4 record for the year.

He struck out nine batters, walked one and gave up 11 hits while batting in both runs for his team.

Designated hitter for the warriors, Bill Azal, showed why with three hits and one run and an RBI in four times at bat. Among his laurels were a triple after which he scored the first run.

The triple came in the bottom of the second when he pounded

one over the head of center fielder Sam Bowen. After an out Bruton singled him in.

VSC tied it when first baseman Steve Jones walked and scored on Arnett's single, which bobbled out of the ECS center fielder's hands in the top of the fifth but neither team was through.

In the next frame, Warrior centerfielder Tom Somers doubled and Azal returned to the plate for another hit, which Bowen bobbled, allowing Somers to score.

Tying the game once again in the top of the seventh, VSC's Jerome Register singled, went to third on Jones' double and scored on Arnett's fielder's choice bunt.

The ninth frame, however, spelled defeat for VSC when after two outs, Keemon finally singled in Bruton.

## BLAZER BOXSCORE

Valdosta	ab	r	h	rbt		
Sumner C	4	0	0	0		
Tripp, 2B	4	0	0	0		
Felix LF	4	0	1	0		
Rowen CF	4	0	0	0		
Register RF	4	1	1	0		
Jones 1B	3	1	2	0		
Fields SS	3	0	0	0		
Arnette P	3	0	1	2		
White 3B	3	0	1	0		
TOTALS	32	2	6	2		
Eastern Conn.	ab	r	h	rbt		
Richmon SS	4	0	0	0		
Reed F	4	0	0	0		
Somers CF	4	1	2	0		
Lynn LF	4	0	0	0		
Azal DH	4	1	3	1		
LaVecchia 3B	4	0	0	0		
Bruton, 1B	4	1	2	1		
Habdrern 2B	3	0	2	0		
Keemon C	4	0	2	1		
Caneria P	0	0	0	0		
TOTALS	35	3	11	3		
VSC	000	010	10	0-2-6-4		
ECS	010	001	09	1-3-11-2		
E — Bowen, Jones, Arnette, White, Caneria, Haberen.						
DP — Fields to Tripp to Jones, Richmon to Haberen to Bruton.						
LOB — VSC 6, ECS 7						
B — Jones Somers						
3B — Azal						
SB — Felix, Somers, Haberen 2.						
SAC — Fields, Arnette.						
	ip	h	r	er	hb	so
Arnette (L-8-4)	9	11	3	3	1	9
Caneria (W-10-3)	4	6	2	2	1	12
PB Sumner						



**74**

ILLINOIS STATE REGISTER

# SPORT

**Larry Harnly, Sports Editor**

[illegible]

The Forum is scheduled for Saturday afternoon at two o'clock.

A big Southern Tied booth—made by

GAVE FELLOWS  
Big Night At Plate  
set up to end the threats  
of set the scene for  
Atlantic Conference  
Southern Tied  
booth made

Dan Darden

the best hitting team they had seen. So I took it as quite a compliment."

Collegiate  
Illinois  
will recall the  
having a  
by the  
last

4021  
4000  
4000  
4000  
4011  
4010

[illegible]

00000  
140  
143

straight gal.

show the Blazers  
names.

ment's in  
much  
self  
s

his son  
P. R.  
P. R.

ing plays at the  
ck, now  
batter will

job at shortstop  
bishop making  
Plate

# Fort

MARTY LEF  
Second Win  
his

FILES

100

member

talented Blazers named a

For the  
representative  
of all-America  
and Bower  
this center

the third year  
baseball

**WILLIAM**

AN

Time

**Wed.**

to get it  
student  
June 11.

ve it to center  
the sub. Po. A.  
1974

22

[illegible]

so-so team (August College) threw a no-hitter at us. So you see, despite all

our good hitters, I wouldn't be that surprised to come up to your town and see a the

...bunch of 1-0 games. You call  
...NASCAR  
...never know "who the s...  
...and played  
...ninth

[illegible]

Valdosta  
Blazers  
All-American  
signed by  
California  
Division  
squad in 19

For the  
representative  
of America  
in the  
center  
this season  
College Div  
America. He  
the outfield  
Gene Fel  
by the New  
ed to the  
tion of in  
first/1972  
1972

# Test

# The v Scen sum

Beans and  
Thomas  
Chad  
Vaddosta  
All  
Regis  
Base  
New  
Blazer  
A post  
time  
this  
in bot  
the nat  
Spring  
the tou

was the third time in "we  
Chadwick had  
I pitched again  
before too an  
Blazer by  
Daily Times  
Maurice  
-A-  
ister. Ed M  
for Boston  
New-York  
s particip  
ason play  
season,  
with the Sou  
tional  
n the

...ed  
...rner  
... is the  
... franchis  
... Pennsylvan  
... in 2  
... to  
... for the  
... and  
... with

was a familiar story of Dan Field for a safety, the only Bearcats star but the junior "I was glad to get it out of my system," he said. "I was glad to get it out of my system," he said. "I was glad to get it out of my system," he said.

By JULIAN MILLER  
John Hart drove it to center  
1974  
a good

# Adams

## 1974 RESUME

### VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

It is assumed that after a great year (like the 1973 Blazer season) always leads to a great recruiting advantage for the next campaign. This is not necessarily so, as Coach Tommy Thomas found after the Phoenix trip. He spent the greater part of the recruiting season attempting to advance through tournaments, and it was the middle of June before he hit the road; and found some top talent already gone.

But Thomas had college baseball's best outfield returning with Gene Felts in left, Sam Bowen in center, and Jerome Register in right. Valdostan Darrell Branam (.326) would be behind the plate, while red-shirts Jeff Greenhalgh (.231, first), and Pete Reeves (.271, short) would man infield positions. He recruited Dan Alford (.189) for second, and Steve Sumner (.286; Frank's cousin, who would share play with returnee Marty Bishop, .271) for third, and that left the big position (pitching) to be tackled.

VSC had lost the heart of its 1973 staff, with the departures of Arnett, and Daney, but returned Marty LeFiles (2-2, 4.50 ERA), Dan Chadwick (3-3, 3.12 ERA), and Rick Bowers (6-0, 0.90 ERA), although much more depth was needed. This was solved, after decision delays, and long recruiting battles, when JC transfers Dan Darden, and Foster Foran, and high schoolers Bill Petty, and Steve McDiffitt decided to join the Blazer fold.

Valdosta State began their quest for another NAIA World Series, and the initial South Atlantic Conference championship, with a twin-bill sweep of Shorter, behind Darden (7-2, 2.20 ERA), and Petty (11-2, 2.02 ERA). But it was not easy, early going, as the Blazers stood 6-5 at one point, before ending with a 35-10, regular season mark. Recruits shined early, as Foran (.405) assumed the DH duties, and had 18 RBI's in 11 games, before being sidelined with a broken wrist, and later for the entire season, with a broken ankle. Petty had the best ever year for a frosh pitcher, and Darden (.368) took over the DH job with much success. McDiffitt (5-1, 3.52 ERA) was rained-out of his first two starts, but later defeated Lewis (NAIA National champs), Georgia Southern (33-2, and ranked 4th. in the nation), and Florida State, to earn his nickname of "The Giant Killer."

Darden gave up his pitching career once he became the designated hitter, and at one point in the season went 25x38. He was also prone to slumps, however, and as he hit it, it seemed the rest of the team followed. Register (.347) had another super year, while Felts (.290) had an off-year, for him. The two-time All-American, senior had 34 RBI's, and 10 doubles, and played great defense. Bowen (.344) became VSC's second, first-team, All-American, as the Brunswick, centerfielder displayed great play all season. His impression helped further the reputation of Blazer baseball, nation wide. At the season's end, all three outfielders were drafted, and signed by professional teams. Of all the nation's colleges, no other school could boast this fact.

The South Atlantic Conference proved no obstacle, as VSC ran up a 16-2 league mark, far ahead of second-place Columbus (12-8). The Blazers 35-10, regular season log was a record. All set to enter the NAIA District tourney, Coach Thomas opted for the NCAA Regional in Lakeland, Fla., where three of the nation's six top-ranked (small college) teams lay in wait.

VSC simply destroyed the opposition in Lakeland, smothering Rollins (13-6), and bombing Eckerd twice (11-4 and 15-3; sandwiched between an 8-5 loss). Bowen got the MVP trophy, and also was given the nod for both centerfielder and pitcher



on the All-Regional tourney team. Both LeFiles and Petty pitched well, while Darden and Greenhaigh, especially, murdered the ball.

In their first trip to Springfield, Ill., and the Division II World Series, the Blazers were ousted in two straight games. New Orleans blasted a host of VSC pitchers 13-9 (Bowen had 3-hits), and New Haven won a 1-0 squeaker, although Petty pitched a great game. The final log of 38-13 solidified Valdosta State as a legitimate small college power, especially with their NCAA success.



Branam & LeFiles



Branam



Reeves



Foran

VALDOSTA STATE  
1974 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 38 - lost 13

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Foster Foran, dh	42	12	17	18	.405	3	0	2	1
Dan Darden, dh	106	25	39	8	.368	4	0	0	7
Jerome Register, rf	150	32	52	29	.347	8	3	1	10
Sam Bowen, cf	160	52	55	37	.344	11	6	7	20
Darrell Branam, c	132	28	43	34	.326	7	0	3	2
Gene Felts, lf	183	39	53	30	.290	10	4	0	14
Steve Sumner, 3b	98	16	28	15	.286	3	1	0	3
Pete Reeves, ss	96	17	26	4	.271	3	0	0	3
Marty Bishop, 3b	85	9	23	15	.271	5	1	0	2
Jeff Greenhalgh, 1b	117	20	27	26	.231	2	1	3	2
Dan Alford, 2b	127	19	24	18	.189	3	2	1	12
Bill Parsons, ss	46	12	8	4	.174	1	0	0	3
Jerry Dennis, 1b	44	3	7	3	.159	1	0	0	1
TOTALS	1491	304	427	250	.286	63	18	17	86

(Lark Hahn, of 7-3, .429; Jim Roquemore, c 7-3, .429; Vince Musashe, 2b 32-9, .281; Ralph Starling, of 24-6, .250; Marty LeFiles, p 6-1, .167; Bill Petty, p 29-3, .103)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Rick Bowers	9	50	36	11	5	27	25	6-0	0.90
Bill Petty	14	80.1	64	24	18	24	30	11-2	2.02
Dan Darden	13	69.2	48	32	17	42	56	7-2	2.19
Dan Chadwick	10	57.2	53	25	20	28	21	3-3	3.12
Steve McDiffitt	9	46	42	21	18	18	19	5-1	3.52
Marty LeFiles	16	44	43	27	22	18	17	2-2	4.50
TOTALS	51	397	344	174	123	191	207	38-13	2.79

(Jim Roquemore 0-0, 0.00; Foster Foran 2-2, 3.95; Sam Bowen 2-1, 4.15; Tony Ferrera 0-0, 4.50; Bill Parsons 0-0, 9.00)



Register and Bowen



Felts

VALDOSTA STATE  
1974 Baseball  
FINAL SCORES  
won 38 - lost 13

VSC	9, Shorter	4
VSC	7, Shorter	4
(L) VSC	4, Vanderbilt	8
(L) VSC	5, Vanderbilt	8
VSC	4, Morris Harvey	3
VSC	10, Morris Harvey	0
(L) VSC	2, Morris Harvey	7
VSC	3, Bowling Green State	2
(L) VSC	1, Georgia	3
VSC	7, Ashland	2
(L) VSC	0, Ohio	7
VSC	5, Ohio	3
VSC	1, Mercer-Atlanta	0
VSC	7, Mercer-Atlanta	1
VSC	8, Georgia Southwestern	1
(L) VSC	3, Florida State	6
VSC	4, Erskine	1
VSC	3, Mercer	0
VSC	5, Southern Tech	3
VSC	8, Southern Tech	0
VSC	6, Armstrong State	1
(L) VSC	5, Armstrong State	6
VSC	6, Lewis	5
(L) VSC	6, Lewis	7
VSC	11, Columbus	6
VSC	6, Columbus	3
VSC	6, Georgia Southern	3
VSC	5, Georgia Southern	4
VSC	3, Augusta	0

VSC	4, Augusta	0
VSC	8, Armstrong State	0
VSC	12, Armstrong State	4
VSC	15, Florida State	1
VSC	18, Southern Tech	3
VSC	6, Southern Tech	5
(L) VSC	3, Columbus	7
VSC	5, Columbus	4
VSC	10, Georgia Southwestern	7
VSC	4, West Georgia	3
VSC	2, West Georgia	1
VSC	2, Albany State	1
VSC	4, Albany State	3
(L) VSC	1, Mercer	2
VSC	6, Augusta	0
VSC	1, Augusta	0

NCAA SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL  
Lakeland, Fla.

VSC	13, Rollins	6
VSC	11, Eckerd	4
(L) VSC	5, Eckerd	8
VSC	15, Eckerd	3

NCAA DIVISION II WORLD SERIES  
Springfield, Ill.

(L) VSC	9, New Orleans	13
(L) VSC	0, New Haven	1



Thomas and Bowen

# March 9

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Shorter .....	103	000	0	-	4	8 3
Valdosta State .....	000	342	x	-	9	10 0

Wright, Dean (5) & McGinnis; Darden & Branam. (Felts 2x4; Bowen 3x4, 2b-2b-2b; Branam 2b, 2 rbi's) WP- Darden (1-0), LP- Wright (0-1)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Shorter .....	000	130	0	-	4	4 2
Valdosta State .....	010	420	x	-	7	6 2

Robbins, Johnston (4) & Summers, McGinnis (5); Petty & Branam. (Felts 2x3; Branam 2 rbi's) WP- Petty (1-0), LP- Robbins (0-1)

# March 10

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Vanderbilt .....	202	000	4	-	8	10 1
Valdosta State .....	000	202	0	-	4	7 5

Coyne, Palmore (7) & Tinsley; Foran, LeFiles (3), L. Felts (7) & Branam, Foran (3). (Felts 2x3; Register 3b, 3 rbi's) WP- Coyne (2-0), LP- LeFiles (0-1)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Vanderbilt .....	020	013	2	-	8	11 1
Valdosta State .....	000	005	0	-	5	9 3

Wilson, Rhodes (6), Palmore (7) & Garcia; Bowen, McDuffitt (6), Ferrera (7) & Foran. (Alford 2 rbi's; Foran 3x3, HR, 2 rbi's; Dennis 2x4, Starling 2x4) WP- Wilson (1-1), LP- Bowen (0-1)

# March 11

	123	456	789	1011	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	020	100	0 0	-	3	8 4
Valdosta State .....	000	001	200	0 1	-	4	8 3

Glover, Farrell (8) & Cappuccio; Chadwick & Foran. (Foran 2x5, 2b, 2 rbi's; Register 3x5) WP- Chadwick (1-0), LP- Farrell (0-1)

# March 12

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	000	000	-	0	7 5
Valdosta State .....	000	261	01x	-10	15	1

Francis & Cappuccio; Bowers & Branam, Roquemore (8). (Foran 3x3, 2b, HR, 5 rbi's; Reeves 2x3; Felts 2x5; Dennis 2x5) WP- Bowers (1-0), LP- Francis (0-2)

March 13

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
Morris Harvey .....	000	005	002	-	7	8	1
Valdosta State .....	200	000	000	-	2	9	5

Farrell & Cappuccio; Darden & Foran, Roquemore (7).  
(Felts 2x4, 3b; Register 2x4; Petty 2x4) WP- Farrell  
(1-1), LP- Darden (1-1)

March 20

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Bowling Green State ..	010	100	0	-	2	6	1
Valdosta State .....	200	100	x	-	3	6	0

Hale, Frilling (5) & Owen; Petty, LeFiles (6)  
& Branam. WP- Petty (2-0), LP- Hale (0-1)

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Georgia .....	000	210	0	-	3	4	0
Valdosta State .....	000	100	0	-	1	2	3

Ivie, Tripp (6) & O'Conner; Darden & Branam.  
WP- Ivie (1-0), LP- Darden (1-2)

March 21 - @ Mercer-Atlanta (2), rain

March 22

	123	456	789	R	H	E	
Ashland .....	000	110	000	-	2	6	1
Valdosta State .....	000	030	40x	-	7	11	1

May, Woolford (7), Pedichord (8) & Rupert;  
Bowers & Branam. (Sumner 2x5, 2b; Felts 2x4, 2b;  
Bowen 2b, 2 rbi's; Greenhalgh 2x5) WP- Bowers  
(2-0), LP- May (1-1)

March 23

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Ohio .....	000	304	0	-	7	11	1
Valdosta State .....	000	000	0	-	0	5	1

Tobik & Robertson; Chadwick, Ferrera (6),  
Roquemore (7) & Branam. (Felts 2x4, 2b)  
WP- Tobik (2-0), LP- Chadwick (1-1)

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Ohio .....	011	000	1	-	3	8	2
Valdosta State .....	040	100	x	-	5	3	1

Corron, Williams (4) & Nicholson, Robertson (6);  
Foran & Branam. (Bishop 2b, 2 rbi's) WP- Foran  
(1-0), LP- Corron (0-1)

March 24

	123	456	7	R	H	E	
Mercer-Atlanta .....	000	000	0	-	0	0	1
Valdosta State .....	001	000	x	-	1	2	0

Hurst & Reed; Darden & Branam. (Register  
2x2, HR) WP- Darden (2-2), LP- Hurst (2-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Mercer-Atlanta .....	000	000	1	-	1	7 2
Valdosta State .....	005	020	x	-	7	8 2

Caldwell, Hunter (5) & Reed; Petty & Branam,  
 Roquemore (7). (Bowen 3x3) WP- Petty (3-0),  
 LP- Caldwell (2-2)

March 25 - MacMurray (2), rain

March 27

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Ga. Southwestern .....	100	000	000	-	1	4 3
Valdosta State .....	301	030	01x	-	8	8 3

Sprewell, Cartilage (5) & Strong; Bowers,  
 McDiffitt (9) & Branam. (Felts 2x5; Bowen 2 rbi's)  
 WP- Bowers (2-0), LP- Sprewell (2-3)

March 30

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Florida State .....	120	030	000	-	6	11 3
Valdosta State .....	010	001	010	-	3	11 5

Farmer, Rothschild (6), Kelly (8) & Tandlich,  
 Drews (9); Foran, LeFiles (5) & Branam. (Darden  
 2x6; Felts 3x5, 2b; Branam 2x5; Reeves 2x4)  
 WP- Farmer (3-1), LP- Foran (1-1)

April 1

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Erskine .....	000	100	000	-	1	2 2
Valdosta State .....	010	102	00x	-	4	7 3

Hirst & Pendley, Line (8); Darden & Branam.  
 (Reeves 2x3; Bowen 2x3, 2b; Foran 3 rbi's)  
 WP- Darden (3-2), LP- Hirst (1-1)

April 2 - Erskine, rain

April 4

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Mercer .....	000	000	000	-	0	1 2
Valdosta State .....	001	001	01x	-	3	8 0

Hart, Yopp (7) & Dennis; Chadwick & Branam.  
 (Bowen 2x3; Register 2x3, 2b, 2 rbi's) WP-  
 Chadwick (2-1), LP- Hart (2-2)

April 6

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Southern Tech .....	000	120	0	-	3	6 3
Valdosta State .....	040	010	x	-	5	9 3

Braun & Newman; Foran, LeFiles (6) & Branam.  
 (Register 3x3; Sumner 2x3) WP- Foran (2-1),  
 LP- Braun (0-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Southern Tech .....	000	000	0	-	0	2 1
Valdosta State .....	020	132	x	-	8 10	1

Prince, Benson (6), Mersfelder (6) & Newman;  
 Petty & Branam, Roquemore (7). (Bowen 2x4, 2b,  
 2 rbi's; Register 3x3; Branam 2x3, 2b; Alford  
 3 rbi's) WP- Petty (4-0), LP- Prince (0-3)

April 9 @ Savannah, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	040	020	0	-	6 5	3
Armstrong State .....	000	001	0	-	1 6	2

Darden, LeFiles (6) & Branam; Maner & Barnhill.  
 (Branam HR, 3 rbi's; Alford HR) WP- Darden (4-2),  
 LP- Maner (3-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	030	2	-	5 4	2
Armstrong State .....	000	330	x	-	6 8	1

Bowers, LeFiles (4), Chadwick (5) & Branam;  
 Moore, Zettler (5), Bumgardner (7) & Graham.  
 (Sumner 2 rbi's; Foran 2x4, 2 rbi's) WP- Zettler  
 (2-0), LP- LeFiles (0-2)

April 10

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Lewis .....	000	100	310	-	5 11	6
Valdosta State .....	000	300	03x	-	6 11	2

Fick, Quigley (8) & Baranak; McDiffitt, LeFiles  
 (9) & Branam. (Register 2x4; Branam 3x4, 2b;  
 Sumner 3 rbi's) WP- McDiffitt (1-0), LP- Fick (2-1)

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Lewis .....	003	003	001	-	7 7	0
Valdosta State .....	411	000	000	-	6 11	5

Brennan & Baranak; Foran, Bowers (9) & Branam.  
 (Darden 2x4; Register 2 rbi's; Branam 2x5, HR;  
 Bishop 2x4; Reeves 2x3) WP- Brennan (4-0), LP-  
 Foran (2-2)

April 13 & 14 - @ West Georgia (2), wet grounds?

April 16

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Columbus .....	002	400	0	-	6 8	1
Valdosta State .....	404	003	x	-	11 11	1

Wright & Chester; Darden, LeFiles (5) & Branam.  
 (Felts 3x4, 2b-2b, 4 rbi's; Register 2 rbi's;  
 Branam 2 rbi's; Bishop 2x3) WP- Darden (5-2),  
 LP- Wright (2-7)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Columbus .....	300	000	0	- 3	4	1
Valdosta State .....	023	100	x	- 6	9	1

Marschand, Witt (3), Mallory (6) & Chester;  
 Petty & Branam. (Felts 2x3, 2b; Register 2x3;  
 2b, 3b) WP- Petty (5-0), LP- Marschand (5-4)

#### April 18

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Georgia Southern .....	000	300	0	- 3	8	2
Valdosta State .....	300	003	x	- 6	5	2

Beck & Salter; McDiffitt & Branam. (Darden  
 2x3; Register 2 rbi's; Alford 2 rbi's) WP-  
 McDiffitt (2-0), LP- Beck (3-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Georgia Southern .....	020	020	0	- 4	8	1
Valdosta State .....	032	000	x	- 5	7	0

Kruppa & Salter; LeFiles, Petty (5) & Branam.  
 (Greenhalgh HR, 3 rbi's) WP- Petty (6-0), LP-  
 Kruppa (3-1)

#### April 20

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Augusta .....	000	000	0	- 0	4	0
Valdosta State .....	002	100	x	- 3	4	2

Brown & Tillman; Bowers & Branam. WP- Bowers  
 (4-0), LP- Brown (1-3)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Augusta .....	000	000	0	- 0	3	3
Valdosta State .....	010	030	x	- 4	4	2

Belcher & Tillman; Chadwick & Branam.  
 WP- Chadwick (3-1), LP- Belcher (2-3)

#### April 23

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Armstrong State .....	000	000	0	- 0	5	2
Valdosta State .....	200	105	x	- 8	12	1

Bumgardner & Barnhill; Petty & Branam.  
 (Darden 3x4; Branam 2x4, 2 rbi's; Sumner 2x2,  
 2b-2b; Greenhalgh 2 rbi's) WP- Petty (7-0),  
 LP- Bumgardner (6-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Armstrong State .....	200	011	0	- 4	6	2
Valdosta State .....	471	000	x	-12	12	3

Maner, Holland (1), Zettler (2) & Graham;  
 Darden, Petty (2), LeFiles (7) & Branam,  
 Roquemore (6). (Bower 3x3, HR, 3 rbi's; Felts  
 2x4, 2b-2b; Register 2b, 2 rbi's; Bishop 2x3, 2b,  
 2 rbi's; Greenhalgh 2 rbi's) WP- Petty (8-0),  
 LP- Maner (4-3)



April 24 @ Tallahassee, Fla.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	333	020	103	-15	14	3
Florida State .....	000	100	000	- 1	4	6

McDiffitt & Branam; Herring, Rothchils (2),  
Brown (3), Farmer (5), Mayer (9) & Lugo.  
(Darden 2x4; Felts 2x5, 3b, 4 rbi's; Register  
2 rbi's; Alford 2x4; Parsons 3x3, 2 rbi's)  
WP- McDiffitt (3-0), LP- Herring (4-4)

April 27 @ Marietta, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	320	613	3	-18	23	3
Southern Tech .....	101	000	1	- 3	10	4

Bowers, LeFiles (6) & Branam, Roquemore (6);  
Mersfelder, Gillum (4) & Newman. (Darden 3x3,  
2b; Felts 4x5, 6 rbi's; Alford 2x2; Bishop 2x5,  
2 rbi's; Greenhalgh 2x2; Reeves 2x4) WP- Bowers  
(5-0), LP- Mersfelder (0-4)

	123	456	78	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	001	111	11	- 6	10	1
Southern Tech .....	200	102	00	- 5	11	4

Chadwick, Darden (6) & Branam; Prince & Newman.  
(Darden 2x4, 2b; Register 2x5; Sumner 2x3, 2 rbi's)  
WP- Darden (5-2), LP- Prince (1-7)

April 30 @ Columbus, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	200	000	1	- 3	11	2
Columbus .....	402	001	x	- 7	12	2

Petty, LeFiles (2) & Branam; Marschand & Chester.  
(Darden 2x4; Bowen 2x4, HR, 2 rbi's; Register 2x4,  
2b; Branam 2x3) WP- Marschand (9-5), LP- Petty (8-1)

May 1 @ Americus, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	401	400	001	-10	9	4
Ga. Southwestern .....	000	201	103	- 7	5	4

Darden & Branam; Sprewell, Cartilage (4) &  
Strong. (Greenhalgh 2 rbi's) WP- Darden (6-2),  
LP- Sprewell (6-7)

May 3 @ Macon, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	100	000	000	- 1	3	2
Mercer .....	020	000	00x	- 2	7	1

Chadwick & Branam; Yopp & Dennis. WP- Yopp  
(6-3), LP- Chadwick (3-2)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	100	022	0	- 5	10	0
Columbus .....	010	200	1	- 4	6	1

McDiffitt, Petty (7) & Branam; Wright, Witt (6)  
& Bailey. (Darden 4x4; Bowen 2x4) WP- McDiffitt  
(4-0), LP- Wright (5-8)

May 4 - with VSC ahead 4-2 in the 4th, with the bases loaded, and one out, a cloud-burst (named the Archie Drip, by "Little 'D'") rained-out a win over West Georgia; but the next day...

May 5

	123	456	7	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	200	000	1 -	3	4	0
Valdosta State .....	001	002	1 -	4	7	1

Bennett, Camp (6) & Jandl; Petty & Branam.  
(Bowen 2x4, HR, 2b, 2 rbi's; Branam 2x3, 2b, 2 rbi's) WP- Petty (9-1), LP- Camp (12-3)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	000	010	0 -	1	3	1
Valdosta State .....	000	020	x -	2	3	1

Camp, Newkirk (4) & Lewis; Bowers & Branam.  
WP- Bowers (6-0), LP- Newkirk (4-4)

May 6 @ Albany, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	000	101 -	2	3	1
Albany State .....	010	000	000 -	1	2	2

LeFiles, Darden (4), Bowen (7) & Roquemore,  
Branam (4); Harris & McConnell. WP- Bowen (1-1),  
LP- Harris (3-1)

May 9

	123	456	789	10	R	H	E
Albany State .....	100	100	000	1 -	3	11	1
Valdosta State .....	010	010	000	2 -	4	7	1

McConnell, Harris (10) & Stroble, McConnell (10);  
Chadwick, Darden (6) & Branam. (Bowen HR; Musashe  
3x4, 2 rbi's) WP- Darden (7-2), LP- Harris (3-2)

May 11 @ Augusta, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	200	040	0 -	6	8	1
Augusta .....	000	000	0 -	0	2	4

McDiffitt & Branam; Fitzgerald, Belcher (5)  
& Tillman. (Bowen 2x4, HR, 2b; Branam 2x3)  
WP- McDiffitt (5-0), LP- Fitzgerald (0-5)

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	001	0 -	1	0	1
Augusta .....	000	000	0 -	0	4	2

Petty & Branam; Brown & Crawford. WP- Petty  
(10-1), LP- Brown (3-4)

# Dan's Zip Leads Blazers' Sweep

By MIKE CHASON

Junior righthander Dan Darden was the man of the hour at Blazer field Sunday when he hurled VSC's first no-hitter since 1970.

And Jerome Register ran a close second as he blasted a home run in the third inning for the game's only score in the Blazer's 1-0 victory over Mercer of Atlanta.

In the second game of the twin-bill, lefthander Billy Petty hurled six consecutive innings of shutout ball before the Hawks picked up one run in the last frame to make the final score 7-1 with the Blazers on top.

Darden, a Macon, Georgia native, struck out five and walked only one. Rico Christou, designated hitter, was the only Hawk baserunner in the third inning.

"From the fifth inning on, the no-hitter was on my mind," Darden said.

"My arm was hurting pretty bad before the game, but after I got started, the ball was moving real well.

"In the late innings, I was

getting stronger, but I was awful glad to see Sam (Bowen) catch that last one," Darden laughed. He is now 2-2 on the year.

Bowen simply ran down a drive to center field turning it into a routine flyout to end the game and preserve the shutout.

Valdosta State's last no-hitter prior to Darden's came in 1970 when LeRoy Purdy and Steve Sorgius pitched back-to-back no-hit games against Shorter.

Besides his home run, Register cracked the only other Blazer hit off Mercer-Atlanta's Mike Hurst with a single in the fifth.

Hurst had a fine day himself by striking out five and walking two, but his record fell to 1-2.

In the nightcap, the Blazers scored five runs in the third and two in the fifth to capture their third straight win and fourth in the last five games.

Petty upped his record to 3-0 with the triumph. He showed superb control all afternoon by walking only one and whiffing three.

Darden, in the designated hitter's role, singled to left in the third inning to start the action. Marty Bishop followed him with a base on balls, and Bowen drove Darden home with another single.

Bishop scored a second later when the leftfielder, Chuck Gillman, threw the ball away on the relay. Bowen went to third on the play.

Darrell Branam and Jeff Greenhalgh then drew walks to load the bases.

Jerome Register continued his heroics by lofting a double just inside the right field foul line to plate Bowen and Bill Parsons, who came in as a courtesy runner for Branam.

In the fifth, Mercer-Atlanta relief pitcher Gene Hunter walked Bowen. The talented Blazer centerfielder, who went 3-3 in the game, then went to second on a passed ball.

Branam waited out another walk, and Greenhalgh advanced both runners with his bouncer to the first baseman, Joe Daniel.

Lark Hahn, batting for Register, then slammed his first hit of the year, driving Bowen home.

Bill Parsons, hitting for Dan Alford, then pounded a safety to bring in Jim Roquemore, running for Branam, for the final tally.

Head coach Tommy Thomas was proud of Darden and Petty, but equally pleased by the Blazer defense.

"We had great pitching and outstanding defense in both games today," Thomas said.

"Our defense has looked real good since we made our change a few games ago," he continued.

The change Thomas was referring to was moving Dan Alford from shortstop to second base and adding Pete Reeves to the lineup at shortstop.

"Reeves has made some tremendous plays at short. In fact, the whole defense is not only making the routine play, but the really tough play also.

"If our hitting would just

come around, we'd be in really great shape.

"Of course, with good pitching and defense, we could conceivably stay in every game, but good hitting would make things a lot simpler," he added.

The Blazers are now 9-5 on the year. They were scheduled to take on McMurray College (Illinois) today in a doubleheader beginning at 2 p.m.

Thomas had slated rookie Steve McDuffit to start the first game, and Valdostan Marty LeFiles in the second.

Mercer-Atlanta	ab	r	h	rbi	
Gillman, rf	3	0	0	0	
Mayo, 2b	3	0	0	0	
Hutcherson, 3b	3	0	0	0	
Eberhard, ss	2	0	0	0	
Reed, c	2	0	0	0	
Daniel, cf	2	0	0	0	
Walker, rf	2	0	0	0	
Krueger, lb	2	0	0	0	
Krueger, lb	2	0	0	0	
Colston, of	1	0	0	0	
Hurst, p	0	0	0	0	
Totals	20	0	0	0	
Valdosta State	ab	r	h	rbi	
Sumner, 2b	3	0	0	0	
Dennis, dh	3	0	0	0	
Feltz, lf	3	0	0	0	
Bowen, cf	3	0	0	0	
Branam, c	1	0	0	0	
Greenhalgh, lb	2	0	0	0	
Greenhalgh, lb	2	0	0	0	
Register, rf	2	1	2	1	
Alford, 2b	2	0	0	0	
Reeves, ss	1	0	0	0	
Darden, p	0	0	0	0	
Totals	20	1	2	1	
Mercer-Atlanta	0-0 0-0 0-0-0-1				
VSC	001 000 X-1-2-0				
E - Eberhard					
LCB - VSC 3, M-A 0.					
HR - Register					
	ip	r	h	bb	so
Hurst (L-1-2)	6	2	1	2	5
Darden (w-2-2)	7	0	0	1	5

## SECOND GAME

Mercer-Atlanta	ab	r	h	rbi
Hutcherson, 2b	4	0	1	1
Eberhard, ss	3	0	0	0
Daniel, lb	3	0	0	0
Reed, c	3	0	0	0
Christou, cf	3	0	1	0
Mayo, 2b	2	0	1	0
Walker, rf	3	1	2	0
Gillman, lf	3	0	1	0
Wilson, dh	3	0	1	0
Caldwell, p	0	0	0	0
Hunter, p	0	0	0	0
Totals	27	1	7	1
VSC	ab	r	h	rbi
Darden, dh	3	1	1	0
Bishop, 3b	2	1	1	0
Feltz, lf	4	0	0	0
Bowen, cf	3	2	3	1
Branam, c	1	2	0	0
Greenhalgh, lb	1	1	0	0
Register, rf	2	0	1	1
Alford, 2b	2	0	0	0
Reeves, ss	3	0	0	0
Petty, p	0	0	0	0
Misshelp	1	0	0	0
Hahn, ph	1	0	1	1
Parsons, 2b	1	0	1	1
Roquemore, c	1	0	0	0
Totals	25	7	8	4
Mercer-Atlanta	0-00 000 1-1-7-2			
VSC	005 020 X-1-8-2			
E - Reeves, Branam, Reed, Gillman.				
LOB-M-A 6, VSC 7.				
JB - Register				
SB - Bishop				

2	E. Chester, Alford								
1	DP -- Perry to Foran								
	LGW -- Columbus 3, Valdosta 4								
	2b -- Howard, Foran, Register, Fells								
	Braham								
	dB -- Register								
	DR -- Bowen								
	SB -- Chester, Brooks, Fells								
	S -- Parsons								
	SP -- Alford, Darden								
		p	h	r	e	r	h	s	
	Marshall (L. 1-2)								2
	236 5 5 0 1								
to	Wit	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	2
2	Malbury	1	0	9	0	9	0	9	0
9	Petty (W. 50'	7	4	3	2	5	7		
3	WP -- Marshall								

# Blazers Shock Powerful Eagles In Twin-Bill Sweep

By MIKE CHASON

The powerful Georgia Southern College Eagles swooped down on Blazer Field Thursday carrying an amazing 33-2 record and a fourth place ranking in the major college baseball poll atop their shoulders.

But the weight was a bit too heavy, because it only took a pair of Valdosta State College freshmen pitchers with nothing to lose to topple the Eagles from their perch with back-to-back Blazer baseball victories by 6-3 and 5-4 margins.

Steve McDiffitt from New Martinsville, W. Va. went the

distance in the first game scattering eight Southern hits and walking only one to raise his record to 2-0.

Ace reliever Marty LeFiles started the nightcap, but yielded to lefthander Bill Petty in the fifth inning with the bases loaded and nobody out.

Petty, a Grove City, Ohio native, allowed only two hits the rest of the way, boosting his record to 6-0 on the year.

Blazer head coach Tommy Thomas didn't try to hold back how proud he was of his team.

"We got great jobs from all our boys today from the mound and at the bat,"

Thomas said.

"Our pitchers did the job I didn't think they could do. They kept Southern from killing the ball like everyone knows they're capable of doing. Alford (Dan) hit the ball solid all day, and Jeff Greenhalgh's home run in the second game proved to be the big winner."

Southern's head coach Ron Polk, although disappointed with the losses, was not surprised at the strength at the VSC squad.

"We knew Valdosta State had a fine team when we came down here," Polk said.

"I think being on the road

and the seven inning games hurt our team, but you can't take anything away from Valdosta. They hit the ball better than I thought they would."

Valdosta State wasted no time in getting on the board when they rapped Eagle pitcher Barry Beck for three hits and three runs in the first inning of the afternoon.

Dan Darden led off with an infield hit, followed by Sam Bowen who reached first on a miscue by Southern's shortstop Rich Toth.

Gene Felts then slammed a double off the left field fence to plate Darden and send

Bowen to third.

Foster Foran walked, and Jerome Register delivered a clutch single to center to score Bowen and Felts.

That ended the scoring for the inning, but not the action. When Foran was sliding into third, his foot jammed against the bag, and the result was a broken ankle which will sideline him for the rest of the season.

In the fourth, Southern came roaring back to chalk up three runs after McDiffitt hit Jim Morrison, and Mike Cash drove him home with a double down the right field line.

Cash scored on a sacrifice fly by Rich Toth after Steve Garcia had singled. Garcia moved into scoring position on a walk to Jamie Ivins, and Bobby Salter obliged him by slashing a single to left.

Ivins had a notion of going home on the play, but a perfect strike from Bowen in center field to Darrell Branam behind the plate ended his hope as well as the Eagle scoring.

In the sixth, Beck walked Register and Branam, and Felts reached base on an error by second baseman Cash.

Dan Alford took advantage

of the situation by lining a single to right to score Felts and Register. Branam scored on Marty Bishop's fielder's choice.

In the second game, Southern's Cash hit a two run homer in the top of the second to put the Eagles on top.

Not to be outdone, Jeff Greenhalgh crushed a three run shot off GSC's Ken Cruppa in the bottom half of the frame to send the Blazers out front to stay.

Register legged out a triple in the third frame to score Bowen who had singled and then crossed the plate himself a moment later on Branam's

single to left.

The Eagles added two more runs in the fifth on four consecutive walks and a fielder's choice, but a double play from second baseman Alford to Greenhalgh wiped out any scoring hopes.

"On this day, I'd have to say that Southern was not the club I thought they would be," Thomas surmised. "but if we played again tomorrow, things might be different."

VSC, now 20-3 is scheduled to take on South Atlantic Conference foe Augusta College at Blazer Field Saturday in a 1 p.m. doubleheader.



# McDiffitt Got His Chance At Ga. Southern's Expense

By JULIAN MILLER

Steve McDiffitt left his home in New Martinsville, W. Va for the baseball diamond at Valdosta State College looking for some top name competition, but he never expected to his second start of his collegiate career to be against the fourth placed team in the nation.

It didn't seem to phase the freshman right hander here Thursday, however, as he mowed down the Georgia Southern College Eagles in his second start ever, going the distance with for the first of two victories the Blazers were to chalk up against the previously 30-2 Statesboro team.

"I kept telling myself they were no better than any body else," the mild mannered freshman said after the 6-3 win. "I had heard a lot about them about how good they were.

"But around the fifth inning I began thinking they didn't deserve that number four rating, that we were a better team. I still believe that."

Although he went the distance, McDiffitt was never sure of the win until the last

## STEVE McDIFFITT Gets Second Win

play was over. His teammates had backed him up with three runs in the first inning only to be tied when he ran into trouble in the top of the fourth.

"I didn't know what to think then," he admitted. "I kept saying 'well, this is gonna be my last inning.' But we got out of it. Then Dan Alford came through with a great hit (one that scored two more runs for VSC to clinch the win) and

things looked different."

McDiffitt issued one base on balls, walked another by hitting him with a pitch and struck out three while giving up eight hits for his second win.

"My arm got tired in the fourth inning and I could tell I was losing alot," he admitted. "I started using a lot of change up pitches and the curve ball a lot more. My curve ball was working today, I'd have to say say it was."

Not being in the regular rotation, McDiffitt had vowed to prove himself any time he got to the mound. He had mixed reactions about pitching against the Eagles.

"You always hope to get a chance to prove yourself good enough," McDiffitt said. "I was a little scared when I heard I was going to start. 'I guess I wasn't really sure what to think. I still don't. I think they might be a better team than what they showed me today.'"

"I was really impressed, I had heard they played good baseball up here, but I didn't know that good. If we keep playing like we are I think we have a chance to go all the way."

FIRST GAME				
Ga. Southern	ab			
Chauncey, cf	4 0 2 0			
Butler, rf	4 0 0 0			
Person, lb	4 0 1 0			
Morrison, 3b	2 1 0 0			
Cash, 2b	3 1 1 0			
Garcia, dh	3 1 1 1			
Ivins, lf	2 0 1 0			
Toth, ss	2 0 1 1			
Salter, c	3 0 1 1			
Beck, p	0 0 0 0			
TOTALS	27 3 8 3			
Valdosta State	ab			
Darden, dh	3 1 2 0			
Bowen, cf	3 1 0 0			
Felts, lf	3 2 1 1			
Foran, lb	0 0 0 0			
Register, rf	2 1 1 2			
Branam, c	2 1 0 0			
Alford, 2b	3 0 1 2			
Bishop, 3b	3 0 0 1			
Parsons, ss	3 0 0 0			
McDiffitt, p	0 0 0 0			
Starling, rf	0 0 0 0			
Greenhalgh, lb	1 0 0 0			
TOTALS	23 6 5 6			
Ga. Southern	600 3000 0-3-8-2			
Valdosta State	300 003 x-6-5-2			
E-Toth, Cash, Bishop, Alford,				
E-Toth, Cash, Bishop, Alford,				
DP-Bowen to Branam, Parsons to				
Alford to Greenhalgh, Cash to Toth to				
Person.				
LOB: GSC 4 VSC 3.				
2B: Cash, Felts.				
SB: Bishop				
S: Greenhalgh				
SE: Toth				
Beck (L, 5-2)	4 5 6 3 4			
McDiff (W, 2-0)	7 8 3 1 3			
HBP--Morrison				
WP--Beck, McDiffitt				

## Valdosta Raps Southern Twice

VALDOSTA—Georgia Southern's baseball team should have stayed at home Thursday. After compiling a 33-2 record without hitting the road, Southern visited Valdosta State...and promptly lost both ends of a double-header. The scores were 6-3 and 5-4.

FIRST GAME  
Georgia Southern 6 0 300 0-3 8 2  
Valdosta State 300 003 x-6 5 2  
Beck and Salter; McDiffitt and Branam.

SECOND GAME  
Georgia Southern 5 0 000 0-4 8 0  
Valdosta State 000 000 x-5 7 0  
Ivins and Salter; LeFles, Petty (5) and Branam.

SECOND GAME				
Ga. Southern	ab			
Chauncey, cf	3 1 1 0			
Butler, rf	3 1 0 0			
Person, lb	2 0 0 0			
Morrison, 3b	3 1 2 1			
Cash, 2b	3 1 1 2			
Garcia, dh	3 0 1 0			
Ivins, lf	3 0 1 0			
Toth, ss	3 0 2 0			
Salter, c	3 0 0 0			
Cimpa, p	0 0 0 0			
TOTALS	26 4 8 3			
Valdosta State	ab			
Darden, dh	3 0 0 0			
Bowen, cf	3 1 1 0			
Felts, lf	3 0 1 0			
Register, rf	3 1 1 1			
Branam, c	2 0 1 1			
Alford, 2b	3 1 1 0			
Sumner, 3b	3 0 0 0			
Reeves, ss	3 1 1 0			
Greenhalgh, lb	2 1 1 3			
LeFles, p	0 0 0 0			
Petty, p	0 0 0 0			
TOTALS	25 5 7 5			
Ga. Southern	020 020 0-4-8-1			
Valdosta State	032 000 x-5-7-0			
E--Butler				
DP--Alford to Greenhalgh 2, Branam				
to Sumner				
LOB: GSC 4, VSC 4				
LB--Register				
HR: Cash, Greenhalgh				
Cimpa (L, 3-1)	4 7 5 1 3			
LeFles	4 4 4 4 1			
Petty (W, 6-0)	3 2 0 1 0			

# Petty, VSC Top Armstrong Twice

By MIKE CHASON

In the old days of baseball, an iron man was a pitcher who was able to pitch back to back games, or pitch day after day without any rest.

A new "Iron Man" was born at Blazer Field Tuesday when Valdosta State College freshman left-hander Bill Petty picked up both wins in a baseball doubleheader with South Atlantic Conference for Armstrong State College.

Petty, a Grove City, Ohio native, shutout the Pirates 8-0 in the first game and pitched 42-3 innings in relief to gain credit for the Blazers' 12-4 triumph in the final game of the twin-bill.

"I didn't get tired until the fourth inning of that second game," Petty said. "I was throwing mostly fastballs, trying to keep them low." Petty is now 8-0 for the year.

"Petty has always had good control," VSC head coach Tommy Thomas said. "Also he's got a real good off speed pitch which he uses very effectively."

Although Petty did the job on the Armstrong nine from the mound, Thomas wasn't about to slight his Blazer offense.

"Today was without a doubt the best hitting day that we've had all year," Thomas said.

Dan Darden slammed the first pitch of the first game into left field for a clean base hit, and the Blazers were on their way.

The VSC diamond crew chalked up two runs in that first frame when Jerome Register drove Darden to third and Darrell Branam cracked another safety to left to plate both runners.

Dan Alford added a third run in the fourth inning when he reached base on a fielders' choice, and Steve Summer

lined up his second double of the game down the left field line to send Alford home.

The Blazers' added insult to injury in the sixth inning when they pounded Armstrong's Tom Bumgardner for five hits and an equal number of runs.

Armstrong came to life in the second game when they managed a pair of runs in the first inning to end 24 consecutive scoreless innings by VSC pitchers dating back to the final Georgia Southern game on April 18.

In that inning, Blazer starter Dan Darden walked Lynn Earnsed, and gave to a single to Tommy Varbrough and a double to Bruce Coleman.

In their half of the first, the Blazers barrage exploded for four runs on five hits including doubles by Gene Felts, Register, and Marty Bishop.

With one man out, and the bases loaded in the second inning, Petty came back to the mound much to the chagrin of the now 19-10 Pirates.

Pete Reeves backed him up with some outstanding infield plays, and Petty allowed only two runs the rest of the way including a home run by Darden in the fifth.

In the bottom of the second frame, the Blazers led the game with seven big runs. Sam Beaven did most of the damage as he hit a 340' home run and single in this inning alone.

VSC marked up one more run in the third when catcher Branam punched out his third hit of the day to score Register.

Bowen, Felts, and Darden also collected a trio of hits for the afternoon.

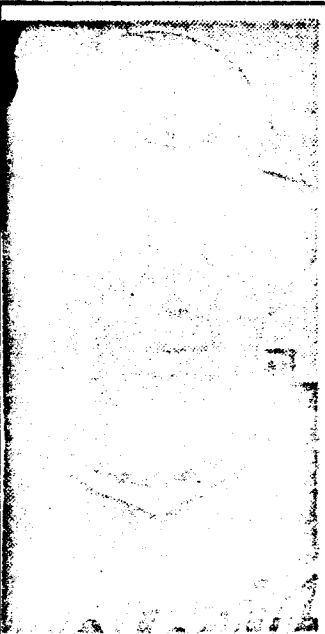
Valdosta State is now 248 overall and 91 in the South Atlantic Conference. Armstrong fell to 7-5 in the SAC.

The Blazers are scheduled to travel to Florida State University tonight to collide with the high and mighty Seminoles in a 7:30 p.m. contest.

FIRST GAME		Valdosta State	
Armstrong	ab r h bi	ab r h bi	State
McNeil cf	3 0 0	Darden dh	4 1 3 0
Coleman 2b	3 0 1 0	Bowen cf	3 0 0 0
Burnsed rf	3 0 1 0	Felts lf	3 0 1 1
Varbrough c	3 0 0 0	Register rf	4 1 1 0
Varbrough 1b	3 0 0 0	Branam c	4 1 2 2
Graham dh	2 0 1 0	Alford 2b	3 2 1 0
South lf	2 0 0 0	Summer 3b	2 1 2 1
Wolfe ss	0 0 0 0	Grinch 1b	3 1 1 2
McNair 2b	2 0 1 0	Parkers ss	3 1 1 1
Bumgardner p	0 0 0 0	Petty p	0 0 0 0
Snelling lf	1 0 1 0		
Totals	25 6 5 0	Totals	29 8 12 7
Armstrong	000 000 0-0-5-2		
Valdosta State	230 105 x-8-12-1		
E-Varbrough, Wolfe, Summer.			
DP-Starting to Greenbalch, Wolfe to McNair to Varbrough.			
LOB- Armstrong 5, VSC 6.			
2B- Summer 2.			
SR- Branam 2, Alford.			
SF- Felts.			
	lp h r hb so		
Bumgardner (L-6-2)	6 12 8 2 1		
Petty (W-7-0)	7 5 0 0 2		

SECOND GAME		Valdosta State	
Armstrong	ab r h bi	ab r h bi	State
McNeil cf	3 0 1 0	Petty dh	3 1 0 1
Snelling lf	3 0 0 0	Bowen cf	3 2 3 3
Burnsed rf	3 2 1 1	Felts lf	4 2 2 1
Varbrough 1b	3 1 2 2	Register rf	2 2 1 2
Graham c	2 0 0 1	Branam c	2 1 1 1
Coleman dh	1 0 0 0	Alford 2b	1 1 0 1
Thomas 2b	0 0 0 0	Bishop 3b	3 1 2 2
Wolfe ss	2 0 0 0	Grinch 1b	3 1 1 2
Maner p	0 0 0 0	Reeves ss	3 1 1 0
Holland p	0 0 0 0	Darden p	0 0 0 0
Zettler p	0 0 0 0	Dennis 3b	2 0 0 0
McNair 2b	2 0 1 0	Haha lf	1 0 0 0
Thomas 1b	1 0 0 0	Register c	1 0 0 0
Darden ph	1 0 0 0	Starling rf	1 0 0 0
		Lois p	0 0 0 0
		Musash 2b	2 0 1 0
Totals	24 4 6 4	Totals	19 12 12 11
Armstrong	260 011 P-4-6-2		
Valdosta State	471 005 x-12-12-3		
E-B- Coleman, Thomas, Bowen.			
Starting- Bishop.			
DP- Reeves to Musash to Dennis.			
LOB- Armstrong 7, VSC 6.			
2B- B. Coleman, Felts 2, Register.			
Bishop.			
HR- Burnsed, Bowen.			
SR- Register, Alford.			
S- Wolfe, Branam.			
SF- Graham, Alford.			
	lp h r hb so		
Maner (L-4-3)	2 3 4 4 1 0		
Holland	2 3 4 5 1 0		
Zettler	2 3 4 3 2 1		
Darden	1 1 3 2 2 4 1		
Petty (W-8-0)	2 3 3 2 0 0		
LeFelix	1 1 0 1 0		
RHP- Register by Zettler.			
WP- Petty 2.			

# McDiffitt, Blazers Rout Seminoles, 15-1



**STEVE McDIFFITT**  
VSC's Giant Killer

By JULIAN MILLER

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Gene Felts calmly stepped to the plate here Wednesday night and slammed a two-run triple to the Florida State University retaining fence and it was all Steve McDiffitt needed to chalk up his third straight win over an over-rated foe.

But someone forgot to tell the Blazers because it was nowhere near all Valdosta State College wanted as they pounded out 14 hits and added some nifty defensive work to slaughter the FSU Seminoles 15-1 for their biggest winning margin ever over the Tribe.

The wide open victory not only avenged an earlier 6-3 loss to the Seminoles in Valdosta, but boosted Coach Tommy Thomas' Blazers' winning streak to nine, and their overall record to 25-3. And Thomas, who is usually straight faced, even after the

big wins, was having a hard time hiding his emotions.

"I am thrilled to death," he beamed after the victory. "I have to think back and look real hard to find a better night for Valdosta State hitters. And I'm thrilled for Steve McDiffitt who has done it again against top notched competition."

McDiffitt, a freshman from Martinsville, W. Va. was just as thrilled. The congenial pitcher added the victory to his 6-3 decision over Georgia Southern College, ranked fourth nationally at the time, and a win over Lewis College.

Battling cold winds and a total of five Seminole pitchers on a brisk April night, the Blazers mounted up three runs in each of the first three innings, two more in the fifth a twelfth in the seventh and went out with another three markers in the ninth while

holding the now 26-20 Seminoles to a single tally in the fourth.

Felts' triple came after FSU pitcher Ron Herring had walked leadoff batters Dan Darden and centerfielder Sam Bowen. Then the talented left fielder from Lakland, Ga. scored on a sacrifice fly to center by right fielder Jerome Register to make it 3-0.

That was enough to win it. But the Blazers began the runaway in the second when Jeff Greenhalgh, who had tripled, Bill Parsons and Bowen scored on two hits and two errors.

In the third Dan Alford, Greenhalgh and Alford scored again, making use of four singles, a fielder's choice and a wild pitch to make it 9-0 and VSC had already gone through three pitchers.

It seemed as though the Blazer attack would taper off

after mounting the 9-0 lead, but the Seminoles, after holding VSC scoreless in the fourth, started things again with their only run in the bottom of the frame.

Designated hitter Jim Foxwell doubled, advanced on a hit by Guillermo Banilla and scored on a fielder's choice by Carlos Lecano. It was enough to get the Blazers cranked up again.

Parsons, then got into the act the most of it. The shortstop singled and scored when Bowen slapped out VSC's third triple of the night. Then Bowen came home on Felts' third of four RBI's for the night and the visitors had an 11-1 lead.

Pete Reeves, filling in for Parsons then got into the act after walking and stealing home for the 12th run.

Then with mostly Blazer subs in the lineup VSC went

out in a final burst when Vince Musashe, Felts and Register scored on a single, a hit batter, two base on balls, two fielder's choices and FSU's sixth error of the night.

McDiffitt walked only two batters and faced four enroute to his third win, holding the powerful FSU sticks to only four hits. The loss went to Herring to level his record at 4-all.

Felts, a first team All-America selection last season, showed why with his two hits and four RBI's in five times at bat. But Parsons had the best night of his career, going three for three, scoring three runs and batting in two other Blazers.

The Valdosta nine hits the road again Saturday, taking on Southern Tech in Marietta for a South Atlantic Conference doubleheader.



# Blazers Get Two Wins In Marietta

MARIETTA — Gene Felts pushed in six runs in the first game and Valdosta State College scored one run each in the last six innings of an extra inning nightcap to give the Blazers two victories over Southern Tech in a South Atlantic Conference baseball twin-bill Saturday.

Felts, VSC's All-American left fielder slammed four singles in five times at bat, scoring one run himself and batting in one each in the first and second and two each in the fourth and sixth to lead the Blazers in their 18-3 onslaught.

And in the second game the Blazers slowly regained their composure with a steady attack to tie the game five all in the last frame and with 6-5 when Jerome Register singled Bill Petty home.

The second game had it's close moments, along with it's controversies. It was then VSC's star centerfielder, Sam Bowen, assistant Coach Dave Waples and manager Larry Ranew were ejected from the game.

Bowen was ejected when he protested a called third strike that had hit the dirt, according to Waples. Head coach Tommy Thomas tried to discuss the ejection with the unidentified Umpire but the ump stopped when Waples approached.

"Do you want to go to the bus too?" Waples quoted the ump.

"You missed one," Waples answered. He was sent to the bus. But later on when the ump saw Ranew, who wears a beard and long hair, unlike the coach he mistook him for the clean-shaven Waples and started to throw him out again.

"I made a mistake," said the ump.

"You certainly did make a mistake," an insulted Ranew replied.

"Now you're gone," the ump countered.

The Blazers, now 27-8 overall with a 11-1 SAC worksheet

for undisputed possession of first place in the fledgling conference had little trouble in the first game. Starting off with a three-run outburst in the first and two in the second they expanded a 51-1 lead to the 18-3 margin.

The second game was another story . . . a nip and tuck affair to the finish.

Southern jumped ahead in the bottom of the initial frame when Godfrey slammed a two-run homer.

VSC didn't get in on the scoring act until the top of the third when they began their one-per-inning rally. The Blazers tied it up in the fourth at 2-all only to see the Hornets take the lead again with a single run in the bottom of the frame.

VSC added a run each in the fifth and sixth only to see the Hornets tie it again with a two run outburst in the bottom of the sixth.

In the top of the seventh, Steve Sumner's clutch single scored Daryl Brannan to tie it at 5-all and sent the game into extra innings.

It was then, in the top of the eight with two away that Register singled Petty home for the winning run.

Dan Darden, who relieved starting Pitcher Dan Chadwick in the sixth then struck out the side in the bottom of the frame to preserve the win.

Darden picked up the win for the Blazers, his fifth in seven decisions. Rick Bowers, who turned the hill over to Marty LeBlanc in the sixth was credited with the win, his fifth in as many starts.

"It was good for us that we got scared," said Thomas after his Blazers won their 11th straight game. "That should make us play harder."

The Blazers travel to Columbus Tuesday for another SAC twin-bill. Their game with Shorter scheduled to be played today was canceled due

(Continued on Page 10A)

## -Blazers

(Continued from Page 9A)

to the Shorter Administration requesting the Hawks play no more Sunday games.

### Blazers' Box

VSC					Southern Tech						
ab r h bi					ab r h bi						
Darden	da	3	3	3	0	Widom	3b	4	1	4	0
Roquemr	c	2	1	1	1	Newman	c	4	0	1	0
Bowen	cf	3	1	1	1	Godfrey	da	4	1	2	0
Felts	lf	5	1	4	6	McDonald	3b	2	1	0	0
Register	rf	1	2	1	0	Kasperian	cf	3	0	1	0
Gillum	cf	2	0	1	0	Gillum	ss	4	0	1	1
Brannan	c	2	0	1	1	Kemp	lf	7	0	0	0
LeBlanc	p	1	1	1	0	Garnett	2b	3	0	0	0
Alford	2b	2	1	2	1	Murray	lf	4	0	0	0
Musashie	2b	1	2	1	0	Griffin	2b	2	0	1	0
Bishop	3b	5	2	2	2	Mrsikr	p	0	0	0	0
Greening	lf	2	1	2	1						
Dennis	lf	1	1	1	1						
Reeves	ss	4	2	2	0						
Bowers	p	0	0	0	0						
Sumner	pr	0	0	0	0						
TOTALS 34 18 23 14					TOTALS 31 3 10 1						

VSC 329 613 3-18-23 3  
ST 101 953 1-3-10-4  
E Register, Alford, Reeves, McDaniel, Merstelder, Newman 2, DP — Newman to Griffin, LOB VSC 8;  
ST 11, 2B — Darden, Widom, SB — Darden, Alford, Musashie, Sumner, S — Reeves, SE — Boquemr, Bowen, Brannan.

up h r er bb so  
Bowers (W, 5-0) 5 6 2 0 2 3  
LeBlanc 2 4 1 1 0 0  
Merstelder (L) 3 1 3 11 9 8 5 1  
Gillum 3 2 3 12 9 8 3 1  
HEP — McDaniel by LeBlanc, BALK — Bowers, Merstelder, WP — Gillum 2.

VSC					Southern Tech				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Darden	4	0	2	1	Windom 3b	4	0	1	0
Bowen cf	3	0	1	0	Newman c	2	1	1	0
Babin lf	1	0	0	0	Godfrey da	3	2	2	2
Petty lf	1	1	1	0	McDonald 3b	3	1	1	0
Felts lf	2	1	0	0	Kasperian cf	3	1	2	1
Register cf	5	0	2	1	Gillum ss	2	0	0	0
Brannan c	5	2	0	0	Benson lf	4	0	3	2
Alford 2b	4	0	1	0	Kemp lf	4	0	0	0
Sumner 3b	3	0	2	2	Gillum 2b	4	0	1	0
Greening lf	3	1	0	0	Prince p	0	0	0	0
Parsons ss	3	1	1	1					
Chadwick p	0	0	0	0					
TOTALS	34	6	10	4	TOTALS	29	5	11	5

VSC 601 111 11-6-10-1  
ST 255 102 60-5-11-4  
E — Petty, Widom, Kemp, Gillum, Benson EP — Register to Greenhalch, LOB VSC 11; ST 7, 2B — Darden, Parsons, 3B — Benson, HIC — Godfrey, SB — Petty, Sumner, S — Darden, Greenhalch, Parsons, Newman, McDaniel, Gillum.

up h r er bb so  
Chadwick 5 1 3 9 5 5 1 1  
Darden (W, 5-2) 2 2 3 2 0 0 3 3  
Prince (L) 8 10 6 3 5 3 3  
WP — Prince.

# Blazers Rally To Take Two From Braves

By STEVE ROBERTS

The clutch hitting of Sam Bowen and Darrell Branam in the first game and steady three-hit pitching by Rick Bowers in the nightcap paced the Valdosta State College Blazers to 4-3 and 2-1 victories over arch-rival West Georgia College Sunday afternoon at Blazer Field.

The Blazers had to come from behind in both games and by doing so improved their overall record to 31-10 and their league-leading South Atlantic Conference worksheet to 14-2.

The visiting Braves, who had to forfeit 30 wins for playing an ineligible player, saw their records drop to 4-35 and 3-13 respectively.

The opener, which was marred by controversy resulting in VSC coach Tommy Thomas being ejected in the bottom of the seventh inning, was a nip-and-tuck affair.

West Georgia broke on top in the first inning with a two-out rally that produced two runs. Ed Lewis singled off Blazer starter Bill Petty and moved to second on a walk to Tim Dedmon. Barry Evans followed with a single up the middle, scoring Lewis and chasing Dedmon to third. The Braves then faked a double steal, and Dedmon raced home when a flustered Petty threw to second base.

Valdosta State made it close in the third when Pete Reeves worked Brave starter Jeff

Bennett for a walk and scored when Bowen lined a double to the gap in left-center field.

Bowen got the Blazers even in the sixth with a line drive home run to straight away left to open the inning. After one out Jerome Register singled to right and scored the go-ahead run when Branam drilled a double to left-center.

Bennett was injured on the play when Register accidentally ran over him after crossing home plate. He was taken to South Georgia Medical Center but later returned. The injury was diagnosed as a bruise to the lower back area.

Rick Camp replaced Bennett and ended the rally with two quick strike outs.

West Georgia tied the game again in the seventh. Dedmon walked, moved to second on a single by Richard Wood and scored when VSC third baseman Steve Sumner booted Jim Johnson's ground ball with two out. The Blazers argued to no avail that the ball was foul, and the tying run counted.

Thomas got his early shower in the Blazer half of the seventh when plate umpire James Jennings called the first pitch to lead off batter Reeves a strike. The Blazer head coach questioned the call, maintaining it was low, but Jennings who also made the fair ball call in the top half of the inning, apparently had had enough and

asked Thomas to leave early.

When play resumed, Reeves singled to right but was forced at second on Dan Darden's attempted sacrifice. Bowen struck out, but Gene Felts and Register walked to load the bases, and Branam delivered again with a line drive off the third baseman's glove which scored Darden with the winning run.

Petty, who allowed just four hits and struck out seven, won his ninth game of the year against only one loss. Camp was tagged with his third loss of the year in five official decisions.

In the fifth inning of the second game after West Georgia had scored an unearned run, the Blazers

took advantage of Brave reliever Paul Newkirk's wildness to score the game-winning runs.

Jeff Greenhalgh singled with one out and went to third when Newkirk threw Darden's bunt away. Bowen walked to load the bases, and Newkirk, who had relieved Camp in the fourth, then walked Felts and Register, forcing in two runs.

Bowers then retired the last six Braves in order to record his sixth victory of the year against no defeats.

Valdosta State plays again today, traveling to Albany for a 6 p.m. game with the Albany State Rams. The final home game of the year is Thursday when the Rams come to Blazer Field for a 3:15 p.m. game.

## Blazer Boxes

WEST GEORGIA - VSC											
ab r h bi				ab r h bi				ab r h bi			
Payne 2b	3	0	0	Darden dh	4	1	0	Payne 2b	3	0	0
Traylor rf	3	0	0	Bowen cf	4	1	2	Traylor rf	3	0	0
Lewis lf	3	1	0	Felts lf	3	0	0	Lewis c	3	0	0
Dedmon cf	1	2	0	Register rf	3	1	0	Dedmon cf	3	0	0
Evans lb	3	0	2	Branam c	3	0	2	Evans lb	2	0	0
Wood dh	3	0	1	Alford 2b	3	0	0	Wood lf	2	0	0
Jandl c	2	0	0	Sumner 2b	2	0	0	Rogers dh	3	0	0
Johnson ss	3	0	0	Greenhalgh 1b	3	0	0	Johnson ss	3	1	0
Edwards 3b	3	0	0	Reeves ss	2	1	0	Edwards 3b	1	0	0
Bennett p	0	0	0	Petty p	0	0	0	Camp p	0	0	0
Camp p	0	0	0					Camp p	0	0	0
Rogers ph	1	0	0					Newkirk p	0	0	0
Totals	25	3	4	Totals	27	4	7	Totals	23	1	3
West Ga. 200 000 1-3-4-0				West Ga. 000 010 0-1-3-1				West Ga. 000 020 x-2-3-1			
VSC 001 002 1-4-7-1				VSC 000 020 x-2-3-1				VSC 000 020 x-2-3-1			
E - Sumner, LOB - West Ga. 3,				E - Bishop, Newkirk, LOB - West				E - Bishop, Newkirk, LOB - West			
VSC 1, 2B - Bowen, Branam, HR -				Ga. 4, VSC 4, SB - Alford, S - Ed-				Ga. 4, VSC 4, SB - Alford, S - Ed-			
Bowen, SB - Felts, Dedmon, Darden,				wards,				wards,			
ip h r er bb so				ip h r er bb so				ip h r er bb so			
Bennett 5 1-3 5 3 3 2				Camp 3 1 0 0 2 2				Camp 3 1 0 0 2 2			
Camp (L, 2-3) 1 1-3 2 1 1 3				Newkirk (L, 0-3) 3 2 2 0 3 3				Newkirk (L, 0-3) 3 2 2 0 3 3			
Petty (W, 9-1) 7 4 3 2 2 7				Bowers (W, 6-0) 7 3 1 1 2 4				Bowers (W, 6-0) 7 3 1 1 2 4			
AP - Bowers				AP - Bowers				AP - Bowers			

# VSC Seeded First In District Play

By TIMES STAFF WRITER

Valdosta State College's Blazers are headed for Rome and what is billed as an eventual showdown with the team they started out against to decide who represents the 25th district in National Athletics play.

Coach Tommy Thomas said his Blazers have been invited to the District 25 playoffs to defend their title as the number one seeded team at the Shorter College diamond Wednesday.

Shorter's Hawks, now 22-7 overall and the Georgia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Champions, are seeded second with Columbus College's Cougars, 23-21, seeded third.

The fourth team in the four-team double-elimination tournament is still to be decided and is a tossup between Berry College, Piedmont and Georgia Southwestern College. It could be decided as late as Monday, officials said.

The Blazers, who placed third in the NAIA national tournament in Phoenix, Ariz. last season, are scheduled to open play Wednesday at 1 p.m. against the fourth seeded team.

Shorter and Columbus are to square off at 4 p.m.

The two losers battle for existence Thursday at 11 a.m., according to the schedule, while the winners play at 2 p.m. with a third game at 5 p.m.

Friday's schedule has the first championship game at 1 p.m. with the second, if needed, at 4 p.m.

The Blazers posted a 33-10 record so far this season and capturing the first South Atlantic Conference championship. They are scheduled to wind up the season Saturday with a doubleheader against SAC foe Augusta College in Augusta.

VSC opened its season against the Hawks, taking 9-4 and 7-4 victories in the twin-bill.

## Blazers Accept NCAA Bid

By JULIAN MILLER

Bypassing the NAIA, which has led to such success in the past, the Valdosta State College Blazers have accepted a bid to participate in the NCAA Regional Tournament to begin next Friday.

Tommy Thomas announced Monday night he has withdrawn his Blazers from the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics District 25 tournament

to begin Wednesday in Rome after learning of the National Collegiate Athletic Association offer Monday afternoon.

The Blazers, at 35-10 in their best season ever, are the defending District 25 champs and went all the way to third place in the NAIA national tournament last season.

But Thomas not only views the NCAA as a step above the younger, less prestigious NAIA, but it puts his Blazers one step

closer to the national tournament, all in their first year ever campaigning in the NCAA.

"It's not only more prestigious," Thomas said of the NCAA bid, "we feel like we didn't have a choice. We had to accept the bid and frankly it's something I've been looking forward to."

"What it means is we're one of four teams out of a possible 100 schools from Virginia through Florida, the largest region in NCAA Division II, to

be selected. And I don't feel we are shunning the NAIA in anyway. They're first class too. But in this case the NCAA can't be outdone."

The Blazers, the only non-Florida team participating, are scheduled to take on Rollins College's Tars from Winter Park, Fla. (23-18) at noon Friday to start the double-elimination tournament. Host Florida Southern (23-13) meets Eckard College (27-10) at 3 p.m.

Lakeland, Fla., was selected as the site for the second year because the tournament actually showed a profit from gate receipts last season.

"There are a lot of schools in this division," Thomas offered, "and the fact that three Florida schools were selected just goes as a credit to the type baseball they play down there. And being the only out-of-state team selected makes it even more prestigious for us."

"Some of the boys were disappointed. They know what the NAIA tournament is and want to give it another try. But I think after this one, win or lose, they'll realize they've made a great step forward."

"I feel more eyes will be upon us in this tournament than on the way up to the NAIA national tournament and since we'll be playing in Florida there will be more pro scouts there than we've ever seen before."

Thomas said he has already

been impressed by the professionalism and finesse the NCAA puts into handling its tournament.

"I've already been questioned by the selection committee on player eligibility and we're supposed to send in literature to the same effect this week."

Whereas the District 25 tournament would have qualified VSC for the NAIA Area V tournament, a stepping stone to the National tournament, the NCAA tournament

in Florida automatically earns a berth in the NCAA national in Springfield, Ill. the following week.

He sees no hard feeling coming from the NAIA on dropping out of the tournament they had already accepted.

"It was met with mixed emotions, I'm sure," Thomas explained. "Some of the players, especially from Shorter wanted to play us again. But they understood that if we got this bid we'd have to take it."

# Rollins In Opener

Pete Reeves, Sumner, Darden, Bowen, Register and Braman all had hits in the inning wrapped around

	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Lorenz (1-9-4)	1-1-3	8	7	5	1	2
Benson	4-2-3	5	3	2	1	0
Anderson	1-3	3	3	1	1	0
Poropatich	1-2-3	0	0	0	2	1
McDuffin	3-1-3	7	4	4	1	0
Leites (wsg 2-7)	5-2-3	5	2	0	1	2

HBP Kirkwood-McDuffin, WP-Leites.  
PB-Goetz.

# Rollins Breaks String . . . Valdosta Starts Blazing

## Southern Will Stay Home

By MIKE COBB  
Ledger Sports Writer

Rollins' 8-7 11-inning win over Florida Southern not only kept them alive in the tournament, it broke a seven game losing streak.

And that's probably what pleased Tars coach Boyd Coffie most. "That's the nice part of the win," said Coffie. "We were on an extended losing streak. I think seven in a row. But it couldn't have come at a better time."

While the win did good things to Rollins' string, it stopped one the Mocs had going for them. Southern has been involved in the NCAA Division II Baseball World Series the last three years, but this time around it will be going nowhere.

Dave Merullo delivered the winning hit

off of Jim Gerken in the 11th on a curve ball with a 1-2 count scoring Jack Goetz from third.

"I was looking for the curve," said Merullo. "He'd thrown it a couple of times before, so I figured he'd come back with it again."

Southern coach Hal Smeltzly said, "He (Gerken) just threw it too good. We would've taken the walk. In fact that's what we were going to do. I told him not to throw anything good."

Gerken came in in the 10th inning for John Chapman who had thrown six innings in relief of starter Rick Tomlin. If Smeltzly had it to do over again, he would've taken Chapman out in the eighth. That's when Rollins tied it at 7-7.

See MOCS, 5C

## Rips Eckerd By 11-4 Score

By MIKE COBB  
Ledger Sports Writer

Valdosta State came into the South Atlantic baseball regionals in a slump, but you wouldn't believe it by seeing its first two games of the tourney.

The Blazers have pounded out 28 hits and 24 runs in two games. Eleven of the runs and 12 of the hits were against Eckerd Saturday in their 11-4 win to vault them into the championship.

However, the Blazers did hit a slump in the tourney. Fortunately for them, though, it only lasted five innings. They came back from a 4-0 deficit after five scoring one in the sixth, three in the seventh, and six in the eighth.

"I'm not really surprised though," said Blazer coach Tommy Thomas. "We've been doing things like that all year. But one thing

is that we're not used to making six run innings."

Actually the six runs were just icing for Valdosta State. The real damage was done by Dan Darden and Sam Bowen in the seventh.

Darden's single to center in the seventh tied the game. Bowen's single right after that put them in the lead.

"I was looking for a slider on the pitch," said Darden. "But he threw a fastball. I just swung through it though and hit it good."

Bowen went to the plate with a different perspective. "I'm not a guess hitter. I just swing. I had been doing bad all day but everyone said just keep swinging, and I did. I think I hit a curve."

Bill Petty went the distance for Valdosta

See VALDOSTA, 5C

## Valdosta

### Continued From 1C

State turning in probably the most steady pitching performance of the tournament. After the four run first inning, Petty held the Triton's scoreless.

"I don't know what happened in the first," Petty said. "I was loose, but it was just so hot down here. I'm not used to the heat. I'm from the north."

"I was nervous before the game, though. More than usual. That could've had something to do with it. But I've had trouble in the first inning all year."

Eckerd did jump on Petty in the first, but after that the Tritons couldn't score.

"We had them, then we let them back in with defensive lapses," said Eckerd coach Bill Livesey. "A team like that you just can't give them anything. You can't be a championship team if you just open doors for people."

Up until the seventh, Eckerd's Chuck Gordon had held the Blazers to two runs and

three hits. Then everything happened.

"I got a little tired and started setting a few pitches up," said Gordon. "I made a few mistakes. I came in with a few pitches that were too good on the first pitch and they're a first-pitch-hitting team. Also I'd been in better shape if I'd kept them off the bases so much."

Gordon left in the seventh and was replaced by the Triton's ace Joe Cipriano. But he couldn't do much better. He only lasted until the eighth.

"I was loose, and the pitches were pretty good. But they just hit them," said Cipriano. "We knew they were a first-pitch-hitting team and they showed it today. They hit the first pitch a lot."

"When that happens, you have to do something to break the momentum. You have to walk someone, brush a guy back or something, and I wasn't doing that."

Cipriano summed it all up by saying, "They just hit the ball."

That they did for sure.

# On To Finals

## VSC Rallies To Bury Eckerd, 11-4

By STEVE ROBERTS  
LAKE LAND, Fla. — Valdosta State College, a team feared here for its brutal hitting attack, exploded in the seventh and eighth innings for nine runs Saturday and shelled the Eckerd College Tritons, 11-4, to enter the championship game of the South Atlantic region NCAA baseball tournament.

The Blazers came off the floor to overtake an early 40 Eckerd lead with the late inning fireworks and become the only unbeaten team in the double elimination tourney.

Host Florida Southern College was the meet's first casualty, dropping an exciting 8-7 decision in 11 innings to Rollins College in Saturday's first game.

Eckerd later defeated Rollins College 6-3 and faces VSC today at 1:50 p.m. for the region crown and the right to go on to the national finals beginning June 2 in Springfield, Ill.

Eckerd must beat the Blazers twice today to win the tournament. VSC needs only one more win to nail down the title of their first NCAA post season event.

Freshman lefthander Bill Petty started Saturday's game and immediately found himself in trouble.

The Grove City, Ohio

### The Valdosta Daily Times

### SPORTS

Sunday, May 26, 1974 — Page 12-A

native, who has had a history of early inning problems this year, gave up four runs in the opening frame as a result of four hits, a walk, and a sacrifice fly.

After the troublesome first, Petty settled down and blanked the Tritons the rest of the way while waiting for the Blazer bats to do the job.

Except for Jeff Greenhalgh's line drive home run leading off the third, Eckerd starter Charles Gordon held the VSC bats in check until the sixth, when the Blazers began making comeback noises.

In the sixth, Dan Darden, who has six hits in the two games, drew a walk, went to second on Gene Felt's single and scored on a single to left by Jerome Register, cutting the Tritan lead to 4-2.

The seventh frame proved

the charm for the second straight day as the Blazers scored three times to take a 5-4 lead. It was a six-run burst in the seventh Friday that sewed up VSC's win over Rollins.

Dan Alford started the one-out rally with a single and went to second when Steve Sumner reached on an error. Alford and Sumner scored on Darden's single which was misplayed in centerfield, and Darden ended up at third. Darden crossed with the go-ahead run on Sam Bowen's single to left off Tritan reliever Joe Cipriano.

In the eighth, VSC put the game away with six runs, highlighted by Bowen's two-run triple. Greenhalgh, Darden and Felt also knocked in runs and for the first time the Blazers could relax.

Although Petty pitched well

the last eight innings, he was backed by sparkling defensive play. Shortstop Pete Reeves saved a run in the seventh by fielding a ground ball to his left and throwing out the runner.

In the eighth, Bowen made a great running catch and doubled a runner off first base with a perfect strike to Greenhalgh to end the inning.

Petty picked up his 11th win of the year against a single loss.

Coach Tommy Thomas was naturally pleased following the comeback victory.

"It's just a great feeling. I'm real proud of the boys for the way they continued to come from behind and win.

"It was just like it has been all year. Although we have struggled, I think this team truly deserves all the good things that have happened so far.

"I certainly want to commend Petty for coming back from what was a jolting first inning. This was his biggest game, and to hold a team as good as Eckerd to no runs for the last eight innings is outstanding.

"Now we've just got to do it one more time and get ready for the national tournament. It's not over yet but we are in good shape."

Thomas has picked senior right hander Rick Bowers, 6-0, against Eckerd in today's game. If a second game is needed he looks to Bowen, who is 1-1 on the year.

ECKERD	ab	r	h	e	VSC	ab	r	h	e
Dennis, 2b	3	1	0	0	Darden, dh	4	3	3	2
Westall, rf	5	1	1	0	Bowen, cf	5	1	2	3
Petite, 3b	4	1	3	1	Felt, 1b	4	1	3	1
Evers, lb	4	1	1	0	Register, rf	3	0	2	1
Outway, cf	3	1	2	1	Brumam, c	4	0	0	0
Coca, dh	4	0	1	1	Reeves, ss	4	0	0	0
Dinoble, c	3	0	2	1	Alford, 2b	5	2	1	0
Gillis, 1b	2	0	0	0	Sumner, 3b	2	2	0	0
Gher, 1b	1	0	0	0	Greenhalgh, 1b	4	2	2	2
Masenti, ss	3	0	0	0	Petty, p	0	0	0	0
Waterson, ph	1	0	0	0					
Gordon, p	0	0	0	0					
Zimmer, p	0	0	0	0					
Marshall, p	0	0	0	0					

Totals	33	4	19	4	Totals	35	11	17	9
Eckerd					VSC				
	400	000	000	406-2		001	000	000	1103-1

E — Petite, Outway, Petty DP — Gordon to Evers; Evers to Masenti to Evers; Bowen to Greenhalgh; Petty to Greenhalgh, LOB — Eckerd 7; VSC 8. 2b — Bowen HR — Greenhalgh, SB — Westerdell; Evers, S — Gillis, SF — Dinoble.

	ip	h	r	er	ba	so
Gordon (L, 10-4)	4	2	3	0	5	5
Zimmer	2	3	5	5	1	1
Marshall	2	3	2	1	0	0
Petty (W, 11-1)	9	10	4	4	3	1
FB — Dinoble						

*Enter National Finals*

# Blazers Bomb Way To NCAA Title

By STEVE ROBERTS

LAKE LAND, Fla.—Pitching, which had not played a key role in the South Atlantic Region tournament, finally proved to be the difference here late Sunday afternoon.

The Valdosta State College Blazers had an ace in the hole, the Eckerd College Tritons didn't, and the result was a lopsided 15-3 Blazer victory for the National Collegiate Athletic Association South Atlantic Region championship.

Eckerd forced a second game Sunday with a comeback 8-5 win over Valdosta State in the double elimination event, but the Tritons exhausted their pitching staff in the process.

The Blazers, who could have ended the tourney early with a win in the opener, used five pitchers in an effort to stop the rallying Eckerd express. But it was to no avail.

Being forced into a second game for all the marbles, VSC coach Tommy Thomas played his ace and got winning results.

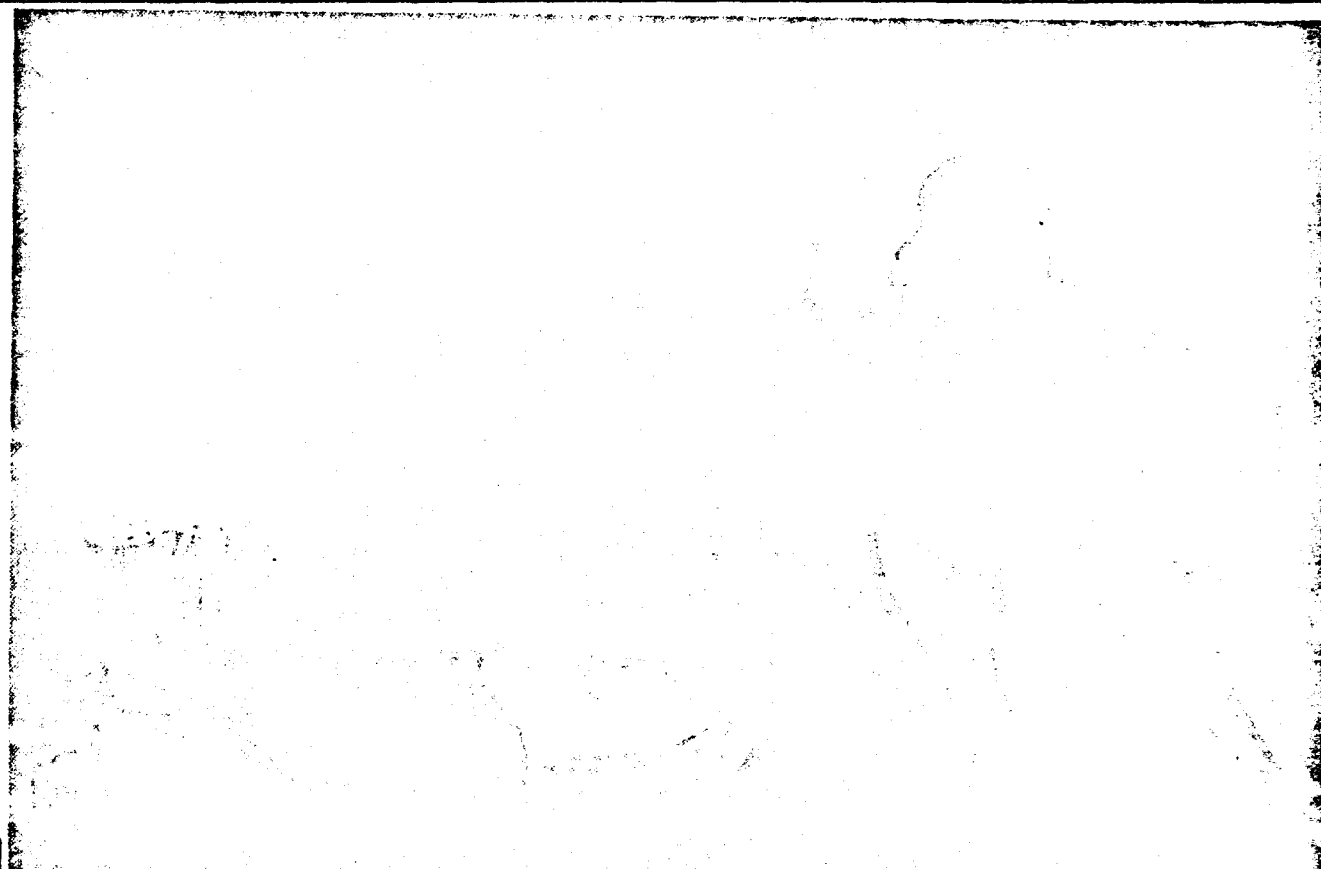
Sam Bowen, a centerfielder by trade but a pitcher on occasion by necessity, was called on to pitch the championship game, and the Brunswick senior responded with an outstanding effort.

The stocky righthander went the distance, scattering nine hits, walking seven and striking out eleven. He helped himself with the bat, slugging a two-run homer in the first inning to shake the Blazers to an early 2-0 lead. Bowen also had a triple and a stolen base, and was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

The easy second game triumph Sunday earned Valdosta State a trip to the NCAA Division II finals in Springfield, Ill., which begin Sunday. The national meet is a six-team, double elimination affair.

The Blazers looked for awhile Sunday like they would end the tournament by mid-afternoon. After reliever Marty LeFiles bailed VSC starter Rick Bowers out of trouble in the second, Valdosta State built a 5-2 lead and LeFiles was sailing along.

He sailed into the seventh with the three-run cushion only to see it quickly vanish. After a leadoff single, the Blazers failed to turn a double



Blazers' Jeff Greenhalgh Takes A Swipe At Eckerd's Bob Outwater In First Game Action Sunday

—AP Wirephoto

The Blazers continued the merry-go-round in the seventh and eighth frames, picking up two runs in each inning. Consecutive doubles by Darrell Braman and Greenhalgh did the damage in the seventh while a bases loaded walk to Kowen and an infield out scored the two eighth inning runs.



### Sam Bowen:MVP

Four Blazers were named to the all-tournament team. Bowen made it as a pitcher and as the tourney's centerfielder, as well as winning the MVP award. Freshman

Greenhalgh was 8 for 16 in the tourney with nine runs batted in while Darden had 8 hits in 11 trips.

## Blazer Boxes

[illegible]



# UNO Bats Boom Valdosta Into Submission, 13-9



**SITTING . . . BUT, PRETTY**—Third baseman Chris Boreus of the University of New Orleans was sent spinning to the ground with a thud in a collision with Valdosta's Sam Bowen

Saturday in the opening round of the NCAA College Division World Series. Boreus held on to the ball, and Bowen was out on the throw from shortstop Bert Bercecky. NO won 13-9.

## Mound Ace Kieffer Uncommonly Wild

But Bottom of Privateer Lineup  
Comes Through in Clutch

By TOM GAGE

(Times-Picayune Staff Correspondent)

SPRINGFIELD, Ill.—Faced with the dilemma of having their ace Terry Kieffer, wild boy and rascally, the University of New Orleans responded with a team of bats here Saturday to get by Valdosta State, 13-9, in the opening round of the College Division World Series.

While Kieffer never did find his rhythm on the mound, the Privateer hitters immediately found theirs in the paces, plating four Privateer bunters for 15 hits.

Tom Fitzmaurice had a home run and four runs batted in, Chris Boreus had three hits, but the biggest help came from the bottom of the lineup where two players who weren't even supposed to start contributed four hits and six RBI.

Catcher Randy Miller and shortstop Bert Bercecky were in the lineup only because regulars, Dennis Strode and Rudy Hardouin, were injured.

**RANDY MILLER**  
... gave NO punch

Both replacements came up with probably their best game of the year.

Miller especially.

Randy came up with three hits and four RBI from the ninth position in the lineup. Beczky had a key double in the seventh.

And all the runs, all the hits, were needed as Valdosta was getting a break from Kieffer's unusual wildness.

Terry walked five in the first two innings and paid the price as Valdosta's superb center-fielder Sam Bowen cleared the bases in the second with a three-run triple.

The results that came in on that hit were the result of walks.

"I just never found my rhythm," Kieffer said after the game. "My slider wasn't working, neither was the curve."

"My arm wasn't bothering me at all. It isn't sore. While I was warming up before the game, I was really lipping it. I was throwing hard and the fastball was really moving."

"This is the worst control I've had all year."

So Kieffer went to his fastball, the only pitch he could depend on, it seemed, and consequently by the eighth inning he was tired.

"I must have thrown at one point 30 fastballs in a row."

Coach Ron Maestri took him out in the eighth in favor of Gil Mills.

"It was probably the first time this year I've had to pull him from a ball game," Maestri said.

"Any other guy I probably would have pulled earlier but Terry is such a great competitor. His pitches were moving but with the layoff since the regional, he had lost his rhythm."

But there were all those hitters who came to the rescue. The Privaters got off to a 3-0 lead in the first with Rick Pygman driving in two with single. The Blazers tied it up in the second on Bowen's triple.

Fitsimones hit a three-run home run in the fourth as the Privateers were rallying for five.

Using a lighter bat, Fitsi-

Continued on Page 8

## Hot-Hitting UNO Saves Wild Kieffer

Continued from Page 1

mones said he hit a slider "the count several times an inning. hardest I've hit a ball all year."

Valdosta's Jack Greenhalgh came right back with a three-run shot of his own in the top of the fifth. The Blazers rallied for four runs at that time with Greenhalgh's the key hit.

From there on, the game really depended on the bats of Miller and Beczky.

Miller's triple in the fifth drove in two and both players drove in a run apiece in the eighth as the Privateers lengthened their lead to 13-3.

The Blazers got to Kieffer in the eighth, though, and Maestri decided to go to Mills.

Mills did the job, getting the last four outs without incident. Kieffer, in all, walked seven hitters but was going to the full

Valdosta hurlers were even more generous, giving up eight free passes.

The Privateers Sunday will meet at 8 p.m. Central Missouri, which defeated Ohio Northern 2-0 Saturday night.

Earlier games will match Valdosta State and New Haven at 2 p.m. and Ohio Northern and California-Irvine at 5 p.m.

In the first game of the day defending champion California Irvine got off to a quick start ripping New Haven 6-2 in Game No. 1.

Jeff Malinoff's bases loaded double in the bottom of the eighth was the big hit for Cal-Irvine. It cleared the bases and gave the Anteaters a commanding 5-2 lead.

Malinoff, Cal's leading hitter on the season, earlier had driven in a run with a single and had four RBIs on the day.

Keith Bridges sent UCI into an early 1-0 lead, leading off in the bottom of the first with a belt over the left field fence.

New Haven had tied the game in their half of the eighth before succumbing to Malinoff's big hit.

The weatherman indeed came through for the opening day of the series with sunny skies and cool temperatures after a full week of rain. Despite the rain which ended Friday, Lanphier Park here was in excellent condition.

**VALDOSTA STATE**  
(ab-r-h) Dargatz, dh 4-1-0; Bowen, cf 4-0-3; Feltz, cf 4-1-0; Remister, rf 4-1-2; Brannan, c 5-1-1; Greenhalgh, lb 5-1-1; Sumner, ss 3-1-0; Alford, 2b, 3-0-0; Musashe, dh 1-1-1; Reeves, ss 2-1-0; Bishop, ph 0-1-0; McDuffit, 0 0-0-0; Chadwick, p 0-0-0; Totals 35-9-8.

**NEW ORLEANS**  
(ab-r-h) Fitsimones, lf 3-2-1; Barcus, 3b 5-0-3; Rima, cf 4-1-2; Roussel, lb 3-1-0; Koe, rf 3-2-2; Pygman, dh 2-1-1; Strode, ph 1-0-0; Gomes, pr 0-0-0; Bennett, 2b 1-1-0; Owen, ph 2-2-2; Beczky, ss 5-2-1; Miller, c 4-1-3; Kieffer, p 0-0-0; Totals 33-15-5. Score by Innings:  
Valdosta State ..... 030 040 020 — 9  
New Orleans ..... 300 520 30x — 13

RBI—Bowen 4, Brannan 1, Greenhalgh 1. Hits—4, Rima 1, Pygman 1, Beczky 2, Miller 4, E. Alford, DP — Valdosta 5; Left—Valdosta 3, New Orleans 7. 2B — Beczky, Ewen 3B — Miller, Bowen, HR — Fitsimones, Greenhalgh 5B — Bowen, SF — Fitsimones.

IP H R ER BB SO  
McDuffit ..... 3 4 4 3 3 2  
LeFevre ..... 1-3-2 4 4 1 0  
Parsons ..... 1-3-4 2 2 2 0  
Chadwick ..... 3-3-5 3 3 2 1  
Kieffer ..... 7-2-R 9 9 7 7  
Mills ..... 1-2-0 0 0 0 1  
WINNER — Kieffer LOSER — McDuffit.  
WP — McDuffit, Mills, HBP — By McDuffit (Rima, Pygman) D — Fisher, Jones, Plarski, T-2:50.

**—NEW HAVEN**  
(ab-r-h) Small, ss 5-0-0; Pikor, rf 4-1-2; Monahan, dh 4-0-1; Pochalung, lb 4-0-1; Basco, cf 4-0-0; Menswar, c 3-0-2; Keating, 3b 4-0-0; Cipollini, 12 3-0-0; Malmauist, ph 1-1-1; Mantzuli, lf 3-1-1; Sayles, ph 1-0-1; Brown, pr 0-0-0. TOTALS 36-2-9.

**—IRVINE**  
(ab-r-h) Bridges, cf 4-3-3; Belusco, rf 3-1-1; Stupny, c 2-1-0; Malinoff, lb 4-1-2; Spence, lf 3-0-0; Whitehead, ss 4-0-0; Anderson, 2b 3-0-2; Wheelock, p 3-0-0; Lyons, 3b 3-0-0; TOTALS 29-4-8.

Score by Innings:  
New Haven ..... 001 000 010 — 2  
U. C. Irvine ..... 109 001 04x — 7  
E-Anderson, Small, DP—Wheelock, Whitehead and Malinoff, LB—New Haven 8, Irvine 3, 2B—Pikor 2, HR—Bridges 5B, Bridges 2, Mantzuli, Malinoff, 5H—Belusco, Stupny, SF—Spence.

IP H R ER BB SO  
Schuler (L) ..... 6 4 4 1 7  
Wheelock ..... 2 9 2 1 0 6  
Winner—Wheelock, Loser—Schuler, HBP—By Wheelock (Monswar) U-Jones, Plarski, Fisher, T-2:31.



**CLOSE TO HIS HEART**—Steve McDuffie of Valdosta puts the tag on UNO's Tom Rima in Saturday's opening round game of College Division World Series. Rima was

trapped between second and third on a ground out by NO's Joe Russell and was tagged out. NO won the slugfest, 13-0.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat

## Salukis fourth, Cougars eighth in final poll

TUCSON, ARIZ., AP. — Miami of Florida and the University of Texas are co-champions in the final rankings of the season by Collegiate Baseball newspaper.

The Salukis of SIU-Carbondale were fourth, while the SIU-Edwardsville Cougars were 8th in the college division.

Miami and Texas each team received 439 of a possible 500 points Monday, displacing the University of Arizona for the first time this season.

The rankings:

### UNIVERSITY DIVISION

1. (Tie) Miami	489
Texas	489
3. Oklahoma	488
4. Southern Illinois- Carbondale	486
5. Southern California	484
6. Northern Colorado	480
7. Arizona	476
8. Seton Hall	470
9. South Carolina	469
10. Harvard	465
SECOND 10. Georgia South. Cal State Los Angeles, Louisiana Tech, Vander- bilt, Pan American, Minnesota, Iowa, Miami of Ohio, Arizona State, Santa Clara.	

### COLLEGE DIVISION

1. California-Irvine	485
2. Valdosta State	480
3. Ohio Northern	477
4. New Haven	476
5. New Orleans	473
6. Central Missouri	470
7. Puget Sound	469
8. Southern Illinois- Edwardsville	465
9. Florida Southern	464
10. Cal State Eastern	460
SECOND 10. Eastern Illinois, Western Illinois, Delta State, Eastern Illinois, Illi- nois, Cal State Northridge, Montclair State, Union State, C.W. Post.	

# New Haven Stays Alive, Ousts Valdosta State

By JIM WILDRICK

Not so long ago, the three Rs used to be the big thing around educational institutions.

But the bet here is that all they're talking about at the University of New Haven (Conn.) today are the three Ps — Paglialunga, Pulit and Powers. First baseman Len Paglialunga, starting pitcher John Pulit and reliever Bob Powers were the three heroes Sunday at Lanphier Park as Coach Frank Vieira's Chargers eliminated Valdosta (Ga.) State from the National Collegiate Division World Series. New Haven, with its back to the wall after losing Saturday, made Valdosta the Series' first casualty by handing the Blazers a 1-0 defeat. It was only the second time Valdosta, which bowed out at 38-13, had been shut out this year.

But the heroes had to get an assist from the law of averages in posting their 25th victory against seven losses.

Just as a New Haven error paved the way for a run to California-Irvine Saturday, so a Valdosta error was one of the key factors in sending the Blazers packing Sunday.

Joe Small, the man who made the error that opened the gates to a four-run Irvine inning Saturday, learned Sunday how it feels to be on the other side of the fence. He opened the bottom of the sixth inning by lacing a grounder off Blazer pitcher Bill Petty's ankle. The ball caromed over to near the third base line before Petty could retrieve it and, when he did, he tossed wildly down the right-field line in a futile attempt to throw out Small. Small ended up at third.

Petty then got Ed Pikor to ground out and was able to glove Rich Montoni's hot smash back to the box. But Paglialunga, a .398 hitter coming into the tournament,

drilled a single to left to score the only run New Haven needed.

But don't get the idea it was smooth sailing for New Haven, which became the

fourth "home" team to win in four games. Far from it.

Pulit, who lowered his earned run average from 0.60 to 0.54 (the nation's best among Division II teams) was in hot water in the eighth before Powers came on to earn the save.

Gene Felts singled, but was retired at second as Jerome Register reached on a fielder's choice. Catcher Darrell Branam then blooped a single down the left-field line, sending Register to third. Pulit worked the count to 1-1 on left-handed hitter Jeff Greenhalgh, but Vieira went to the mound and singled for Powers.

The junior right-hander made good use of his slider, getting Greenhalgh to fly out

Continued On Page 9

FIRST GAME			
Valdosta (0)	abr h	New Haven (1)	abr h
Garden, dh	4 0 1	Small, ss	4 1 2
Bowen, cf	4 0 2	Pikor, rf	4 0 1
Felts, lf	4 0 1	Montoni, dh	3 0 0
Red'ner, rf	3 0 1	Paglialunga, 1b	3 0 1
Branam, c	3 0 1	Montoni, c	3 0 0
Green, lf	4 0 1	Barry, cf	3 0 0
Fisher, 3b	2 0 0	Register, 2b	3 0 1
Johnson, 1b	1 0 0	Feeling, 3b	3 0 1
Muske, 2b	4 0 1	Ren'li, lf	3 0 0
Reeves, ss	3 0 0		
b-Alford	1 0 0		

Totals	33 0 8	Totals	29 1 6						
a-rolled out for Bishop in 9th									
b-rolled out for Reeves in 9th									
Valdosta	000 000 000—0								
New Haven	000 001 007—1								
RBI—Paglialunga, F—Pikor, Petty									
PO-A—Valdosta 24-13, N.H. 27-20, LOB									
—Valdosta 9, New Haven 5, SH—Paglialunga, SH—Bishop									
	IP	H	R	E	R	B	B	S	O
Petty (L)	8	7	1	0	1	3			
Pulit (W)	72/3	8	0	0	1	3			
Powers	1 1/3	0	0	0	0	0			
HBP—By Pulit (Branam); U—Jones.									
Fisher, Marsh, T—1, 3B—A—40.									

## New Haven—

Continued From Page 8

to right. Powers set down the side in order in the ninth on three ground balls to preserve the victory.

"He (Pulit) is my roommate and my best friend and I hadn't saved one for him all year, so I'm really happy with the way things turned out," said Powers. "I was here Saturday night when Greenhalgh hit his homer, so I threw him all sliders and tried to keep the ball away from him. The one he hit was an outside slider. He tried to pull it and ended up not getting real good wood on it. I wasn't that concerned about walking him cause they had a right-hander coming up after him, so I shot a little more for the corners.

"I'll tell you, I've owed him (Pulit) one for awhile now. I relieved him in a game where we were down, 3-1, against Quinnipiac. I gave up a run and we ended up losing by one and that's the only loss he's had this year."

Pulit, 7-1, admitted he was tiring.

"It was probably the best thing that could have happened," Pulit said of Vieira's decision. "I was having some trouble with my curveball not breaking. I was a little tight when the game started, but, once we got going, I figured we were the better team. Our defense did it. They've been great all year. We wouldn't be here without our defense."

"When I go to the mound, they know they're gone," said the self-described "crazy man." "I saw the home run he (Greenhalgh) hit Saturday and, when I saw him hit that long foul off John, I made up my mind. John did a good job. He went over seven innings and that's all we wanted from him. Sure, he was on the ropes awhile, but he's been on the ropes before and he's a kid who never loses his cool. He just doesn't get shook up out there. If he's not an All-American, I don't know who is. I just thank God for a guy like John Pulit."

Paglialunga said he hit a fastball for the game's only run batted in.

"The pitching here is better than what we've seen all year," he admitted. "I just wanted to make contact with the ball. They're not just throwing the ball over here, they're aiming for the corners."

TKE CALENDAR  
GIRL  
Miss Ann Price



'75

## 1975 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

After two consecutive National Tournament appearances, 1975 must be considered a "down" year. The Blazers did go 36-17 on the season (the fifth best percentage mark in school history), and received an NCAA Regional bid, but failed to win the South Atlantic Conference (14-4, to winning Columbus' 15-4), and dropped six of their last eight encounters. The loss of Felts, Bowen, and Register proved to be a big obstacle to overcome, in VSC's quest for National honors.

Hitting was the major problem (.262 as a team), but even more frustrating was VSC's inability to hit with men-on-base. JC recruit, Dave Taylor (.354) led the team from his short-stop position, while 1974 hero, Dan Darden (.332, and now in centerfield), and returnees Moose Greenhalgh (.291), and Darrell Branam (.274) provided help. Frosh recruit, Craig Viers (from Crown Point, Ind.) hit a solid .284, but no other regular was over the .250 mark.

Pitching-wise, the team had a 2.65 ERA, and was led by Lawrence Clarington (5-1, 1.66 ERA), Bull Giddens (4-2, 1.83 ERA), Tony Ferrera (5-1, 2.33 ERA), and ace-reliever Bill Parsons (5-0, 2.40 ERA). Veteran, sophomores Bill Petty (7-6, 2.94 ERA), and Steve McDiffitt (5-5, 3.24 ERA) pitched the "big" games, and were most often the victims of the lack of clutch hitting.

VSC jumped to a 23-7 mark, including 3-wins over NAIA National champion, Lewis (who won the Nationals in '74, '75, and '76). Darden got all three game winning hits (twice in the bottom-of-the-ninth, and once in the bottom-of-the-eighth), in 8-7, 6-5, and 5-4 decisions. Columbus took the wind out of the Blazer sails by winning a conference twin-bill in Columbus, but the good-guys did get the decision in a fight between the team, and a roudy group of Cougar fans. The record stretched to 29-9, 31-10, and 34-11 before the late season demise began. Included, however, in the late-season losses, were conference set-backs to Columbus and Augusta, that cost VSC the title.

The Blazers returned to the site of their big regional win, in 1974, at Lakeland, Fla., and were promptly eliminated in two straight games (Florida Southern 6-0, and Columbus 5-2). Darden, and Greenhalgh especially had good years, with the "Deacon" having 25 stolen-bases (in 26 attempts), and 25 extra-base-hits, while "Moose" hit 9 homers, and played a superb first-base. Taylor was a great leader, besides hitting for the second-best average ever, by a VSC short-stop.



Taylor & Greenhalgh



VALDOSTA STATE  
1975 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 36 - lost 17

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Dave Taylor, ss	164	40	58	28	.354	7	1	3	2
Dan Darden, cf	223	45	74	36	.332	12	8	5	25
Jeff Greenhalgh, 1b	175	35	51	32	.291	5	2	9	1
Craig Viers, lf	183	30	52	31	.284	9	1	3	10
Darrell Branam, c	157	29	43	24	.274	4	0	5	3
Dan Alford, 2b	104	13	26	15	.250	2	1	1	8
Foster Foran, rf	119	7	28	15	.235	4	2	1	1
Steve Sumner, 3b	137	17	30	11	.219	3	0	0	4
Mike Balboni, dh-c	103	12	22	12	.214	6	0	0	1
Kim Jones, of	52	10	11	9	.212	4	1	0	13
Pete Reeves, ss	70	12	9	4	.129	0	0	0	4
TOTALS	1698	288	445	245	.262	58	16	28	84

(Vic Feist, p 3-1, .333; Bill Parsons, p 20-6, .300; Carlton Bassett, rf 43-11, .256; Ken Purdy, of 12-3, .250; Gary Giddens, p 28-5, .179; Marty Bishop, 3b 46-8, .174; Bill Petty, p 21-3, .143; Vince Musashe, 2b 36-4, .111; Steve McDiffitt, p 1-0, .000; Tony Ferrera, p 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Larry Clarington	13	54.1	38	18	10	31	28	5-1	1.66
Gary Giddens	6	39.1	36	12	8	9	24	4-2	1.83
Tony Ferrera	9	46.1	43	20	12	23	32	5-1	2.33
Bill Parsons	16	48.2	45	14	13	15	19	5-0	2.40
Bill Petty	14	104	102	45	34	29	49	7-6	2.94
Steve McDiffitt	13	91.2	81	44	33	41	61	5-5	3.24
Lavon Keadle	7	42.1	39	20	16	21	23	3-1	3.40
TOTALS	53	458	405	188	135	191	254	36-17	2.65

(Vic Feist 2-0, 0.95; Dan Darden 0-0, 2.08; Carlton Bassett 0-1, 4.50; Foster Foran 0-0, 18.00)



# VALDOSTA STATE 1975 Baseball

FINAL SCORES  
won 36 - lost 17

(L) VSC 0, Florida State .....	9	VSC 5, West Georgia .....	2
(L) VSC 3, Florida State .....	8	VSC 3, West Georgia .....	0
VSC 6, Morris Harvey .....	3	(L) VSC 2, Columbus .....	3
VSC 21, Morris Harvey .....	1	(L) VSC 3, Columbus .....	4
VSC 3, Morris Harvey .....	2	VSC 7, Mercer .....	6
VSC 3, West Liberty State ....	2	VSC 10, Georgia College .....	2
VSC 3, David Lipscomb .....	1	VSC 2, Augusta .....	1
(L) VSC 0, David Lipscomb .....	1	VSC 4, Augusta .....	0
VSC 4, Illinois Benedictine ..	3	VSC 6, Armstrong State .....	5
VSC 2, Illinois Benedictine ..	1	VSC 1, Armstrong State .....	0
(L) VSC 3, Illinois Benedictine ..	4	(L) VSC 3, Albany State .....	4
(L) VSC 3, Florida .....	11	VSC 9, Southern Tech .....	2
VSC 8, Lewis .....	7	VSC 5, Southern Tech .....	0
VSC 6, Lewis .....	5	(L) VSC 2, Georgia Southern .....	9
VSC 5, Lewis .....	4	VSC 2, Georgia Southwestern ..	1
VSC 6, Macalester .....	0	VSC 11, Florida A&M .....	3
VSC 4, Macalester .....	2	VSC 6, Columbus .....	4
(L) VSC 2, Erskine .....	3	(L) VSC 3, Columbus .....	4
VSC 4, Erskine .....	3	(L) VSC 3, Florida A&M .....	4
VSC 10, Ft. Valley State .....	2	VSC 17, Georgia College .....	1
VSC 7, Westmar .....	4	(L) VSC 1, Albany State .....	6
VSC 23, Westmar .....	1	(L) VSC 1, Augusta .....	6
VSC 8, Southern Tech .....	3	VSC 6, Augusta .....	1
VSC 10, Southern Tech .....	5		
(L) VSC 4, Mercer .....	6		
VSC 7, Armstrong State .....	4		
VSC 7, Armstrong State .....	3		
VSC 12, Georgia Southwestern ..	11		

## NCAA SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL Lakeland, Fla.

(L) VSC 0, Florida Southern .....	6
(L) VSC 2, Columbus .....	5



McDiffitt



# *Bassett Singles Blazers*

# Past Bears In 12th



**CARLTON BASSETT**  
Blazer Hero

**By MIKE CHASON**

In the Valdosta State College baseball brochure, Carlton Bassett is listed as an 18-year-old freshman pitcher from Thomasville who throws right, bats right and for all practical purposes, has no outstanding attributes.

But all that was before Wednesday when he started his first college game ever in right field for VSC, and cracked a pair of hits including the game winner in the bottom of the 12th inning to push the Blazers past Mercer's Bears 7-6.

Most of the slim crowd at Blazer Field had long departed when VSC second baseman Dan Alford looped a long double to right center

field to lead off the 12th for Coach Tommy Thomas' Valdosta State nine.

**Alford was followed by Bassett, who promptly drilled a single up the middle to score Alford and gain the praise of his teammates and his coach.**

"It was a great win for us," Thomas said. "Especially after those two losses Tuesday to Columbus. Mercer has a good baseball team, and I'm real pleased to beat them."

"I have to single out some individuals like Carlton, of course, who really came through for us in right field and at the plate. He'll get another chance out there for sure.

"Dan Darden made one of the finest catches I've ever seen in center field in the 12th inning. Then there's Bill Parsons who came on in relief and stopped them from the mound."

Thomas added he felt his men had a little revenge to get on the Bears after a recent trip to Macon where VSC came back with a loss and a few complaints about the umpires.

There was much arguing both ways Wednesday, but as usual the umpires never reversed their decision.

It was evident from the start of the three and one half hour contest that the Blazers' Lawrence Clarington just did not have the stuff to last on

**the mound.**

He gave a pretty good indication in the opening frame when he walked four Bears and gave up a double to Greg Engle for a total of three Mercer runs.

**Mercer's John Hart didn't have much better luck in the VSC half of the first, allowing five walks, a single to Craig Viers and two Blazer tallies.**

The Bears managed another run in the second and Clarrington was gone. Tony Ferrera appeared in relief only to take the long walk from the mound himself in the fourth when the Bears woke up for two more runs.

As did Parsons, Robert Yopp had to come on in relief in the fourth for Mercer after

**Darrell Branam had slammed his fifth homer of the year in the third and VSC had brought in two more runs in the fourth.**

**Viers' single which plated Darden in the eighth tied things up until the lanky freshman rightfielder did his thing in the 12th.**

Darden's diving grab of Bob Mitchell's sinking liner in the top of the 12th could have spurred Bassett's emotions since the ball looked impossible to catch until the speedy Macon native made believers out of everyone.

The now 24-9 Blazers were scheduled to take on Georgia College in Milledgeville today before hitting the road to Augusta Saturday.

Mercur	ab	r	h	i	VSC	ab	r	h	i
Burke 2b	3	2	1	0	Darden c	6	2	2	1
Pertini ss	3	1	1	0	Taylor ss	4	1	1	0
Elgin c	5	1	2	0	Frigh 1b	5	3	0	0
Engler f	6	1	3	0	Brannan c	3	0	2	2
Hier p	1	0	0	0	Viers f	3	0	2	2
Yopp p	3	0	0	0	Musashie dh	2	0	0	0
McIntosh 3b	5	0	1	0	Balboni dh	1	0	0	0
Phelan c	2	0	0	1	Jones pr	0	0	0	0
Grabtree cf	2	0	0	0	Bishop 3b	2	0	0	0
Road 1b	2	0	0	0	Sumner 3b	2	0	0	0
Hed 1b	4	0	0	0	Alford 2b	4	1	2	0
Disher f	1	1	1	0	Bassett rf	3	1	2	1
Meddox lf	3	0	0	0	Crimm p	0	0	0	0
					Ferrera p	0	0	0	0
					Parsons p	0	0	0	0

Totals	40	6	9	6	Totals	38	7	1	6
Mercer	310	200	000	000	6	9	2		
VSC	201	200	010	001	7	1	1		
E	Bishop,	Pettini,	Mitchell;	DP					
Mitchell	to Burke	to Head,	Taylor	to Alford					
Greenhalgh;	LOB	Mercer	11,	VSC	10;				
2B	Shin	2,	Darden	Alford;	3B				
Brannen;	SB	Alford,	Pettini	5;	Alford				
Taylor;	SF	Patterson.							
	ip	h	r	e	r	bb			
Hart	3	1	3	4	5	4	5	1	
Yopp (L4-3)	7	2	3	7	2	2	5	1	
Clarington	1	1	1	4	4	4	1		
Ferra	2	2	3	3	2	2	3		
Persons (W4-0)	8	1	3	5	0	0	2	3	
HBP	Brannen	by Yopp;	WP	Persons					



**THE CALENDAR GIRL**

**Miss Suellen Harbour**

**'76**

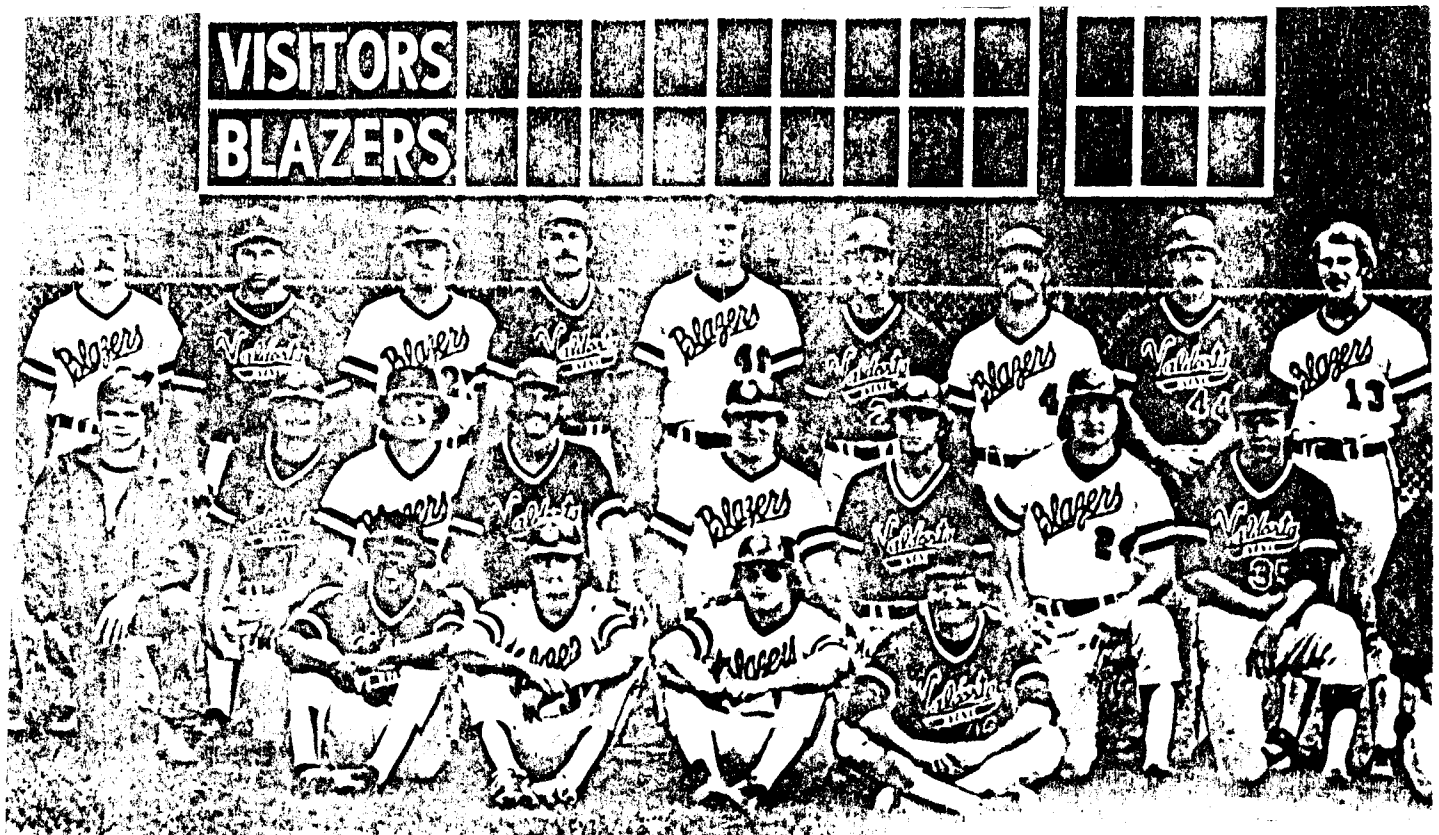
## 1976 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Valdosta State blasted to a 9-1 get-away, in the first ten games, including wins over Georgia, Western Kentucky (twice), and Duke. People were saying that the 1976 team would be the best in VSC history. Indeed, on paper, a great year was in the offing. Pitching-wise, the frosh phenoms of 1974 were back (Bill Petty 6-3, 2.14 ERA; and Steve McDiffitt 6-6, 1.94 ERA), along with returnee Bull Giddens (3-6, 3.47 ERA), and JUCO tranfers Richard Sullivan (5-6, 2.29 ERA), and Hodges McLendon (3-3, 3.17 ERA).

The infield was also supposed to be the school's best ever, with Danny Blizzard (.241) at third, Dave Taylor (.240) at short, Skip Fite (.312) at second, and Moose Greenhalgh (.247) at first. Mike Balboni (.151), and Cecil Whitehead (.258) would share the catching duties. In the outfield, Dan Alford (.324) was in left, Craig Viers (.313) in center, while David DeMersseman (.248), and Chuck Beale (.313) alternated in right.

The Blazers dropped a double-header (4-1, and 1-0) to Illinois Benedictine, the day prior to Winter Quarter finals, and never recovered. They ended the year 28-25 (the worst record since 1967), with a humiliating 8-10, South Atlantic Conference mark. For the first-time since 1968 no tournament bid was offered.

The hitting was pathetic (.263), and unlike 1975 where clutch hitting was the problem, the 1976 crew (after the first ten games) was unable to even get men on base. They were shut-out 8 times, and scored above 4-runs only 23-times in 53-games. The pitchers suffered from all this, with Petty, McDiffitt, and Sullivan mostly being the victims. Chuck Beale (3-0, 2.14 ERA), Lawrence Clarington (1-1, 2.18 ERA), and Billy Tyler (1-0, 3.27 ERA) pitched well in relief. The staff would have been even stronger, had fire-balling, southpaw Vic Feist (0-0, 0.00 ERA) recovered from arm surgery.



TOP (l-r): Petty, Giddens, DeMersseman, Greenhalgh, Feist, Sullivan, Alford, Tyler, Blizzard. MIDDLE (l-r): Wright (mgr.), Fite, McDiffitt, Taylor, Balboni, Shuman, Whitehead, McLendon. BOTTOM (l-r): Clarington, Viers, Jones, Viers.

VALDOSTA STATE  
1976 Baseball

FINAL STATISTICS  
won 28 - lost 25

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Dan Alford, rf	173	26	56	30	.324	8	2	1	10
Craig Viers, cf	176	30	55	23	.313	8	4	2	15
Chuck Beale, p-dh	80	18	25	6	.313	2	1	0	1
Skip Fite, 2b	186	41	58	17	.312	7	0	1	20
Cecil Whitehead, c	66	13	17	8	.258	2	0	0	3
David DeMersseman, lf	101	10	25	18	.248	7	0	0	7
Jeff Greenhalgh, 1b	154	28	38	31	.247	1	2	9	6
Danny Blizzard, 3b	162	20	39	22	.241	10	0	2	3
Dave Taylor, ss	154	28	37	11	.240	4	0	1	7
Bart Shuman, inf	74	2	17	9	.230	0	2	0	1
Mike Balboni, c	86	6	13	7	.151	1	0	0	2
TOTALS	1522	236	400	195	.263	53	12	19	77

(Kim Jones, of 39-10, .256; Billy Tyler, dh 31-6, .194; Ken Purdy, of 21-3, .143; Bill Petty, p 9-1, .111; Gary Giddens, p 5-0, .000; Larry Clarington, p 2-0, .000; Richard Sullivan, p 2-0, .000; Hodges McLendon, p 1-0, .000)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Steve McDiffitt	13	88.1	72	41	19	36	64	6-6	1.94
Bill Petty	11	80	71	24	19	23	37	6-3	2.14
Richard Sullivan	12	74.2	60	34	19	43	71	5-6	2.29
Hodges McLendon	11	59.2	66	30	21	11	38	3-3	3.17
Gary Giddens	10	62.1	63	29	24	21	33	3-6	3.47
TOTALS	53	419.1	379	176	116	164	270	28-25	2.49

(Vic Feist 0-0, 0.00; Chuck Beale 3-0, 2.14; Larry Clarington 1-1, 2.18; Billy Tyler 1-0, 3.27)



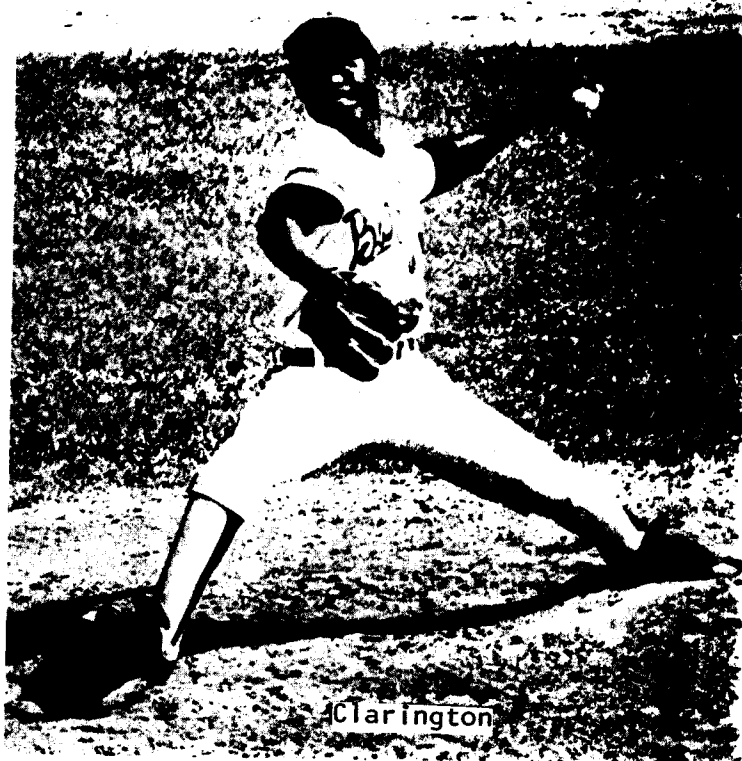
VALDOSTA STATE  
1976 Baseball  
FINAL SCORES  
won 28 - lost 25

VSC	8, Georgia	4
VSC	8, Western Kentucky	3
VSC	5, Western Kentucky	1
VSC	7, Duke	6
(L) VSC	3, Morris Harvey	4
VSC	3, Morris Harvey	0
VSC	7, Morris Harvey	0
VSC	6, West Liberty State	2
VSC	6, Illinois Benedictine	5
VSC	7, Illinois Benedictine	0
(L) VSC	1, Illinois Benedictine	4
(L) VSC	0, Illinois Benedictine	1
(L) VSC	3, Howard	4
(L) VSC	0, Florida State	9
VSC	8, Tennessee	0
VSC	14, Ft. Valley State	1
VSC	5, Ft. Valley State	0
VSC	9, Otterbein	8
(L) VSC	1, Otterbein	2
(L) VSC	0, Wright State	2
(L) VSC	2, Florida State	6
VSC	3, Erskine	1
VSC	8, Albany State	3
(L) VSC	0, Georgia Southern	5
(L) VSC	3, Georgia Southern	6
(L) VSC	4, Georgia Southwestern	6
VSC	5, Southern Tech	3

VSC	12, Southern Tech	2
VSC	7, Armstrong State	6
VSC	8, Armstrong State	1
VSC	11, Mercer	5
VSC	3, Florida	1
(L) VSC	3, West Georgia	5
(L) VSC	1, West Georgia	3
VSC	4, Columbus	3
(L) VSC	0, Columbus	1
(L) VSC	1, Lewis	5
(L) VSC	0, Lewis	3
(L) VSC	1, Lewis	2
(L) VSC	1, Augusta	2
VSC	6, Augusta	0
(L) VSC	1, Armstrong State	7
VSC	6, Armstrong State	0
VSC	6, Georgia Southwestern	4
(L) VSC	4, Southern Tech	8
VSC	17, Southern Tech	1
(L) VSC	0, Columbus	7
(L) VSC	1, Columbus	3
VSC	3, Florida	2
(L) VSC	0, West Georgia	6
VSC	13, Albany State	4
(L) VSC	3, Augusta	5
(L) VSC	3, Mercer	4



McDiffitt



Clarrington

## A black and white photograph capturing a dynamic moment in a baseball game. In the foreground, a player in a light-colored uniform is sliding into a base, his body angled towards the right. A fielder in a dark uniform is positioned to tag him out, reaching out with his arm. The background is a blurred stadium setting, suggesting a high-speed action shot. The image has a grainy, high-contrast quality typical of older newspaper prints.

## Riverside's All American

None of the Blazers appeared to be suffering.

Just when the fight seemed about over, several VSC players pulled a Highlander off to the side and delivered a little individual attention.

Just when the fight seemed about over, several VSC players pulled a Highlander off to the side and delivered a little individual attention.

Just when the fight seemed about over, several VSC players pulled a Highlander off to the side and delivered a little individual attention.

Just when the fight seemed about over, several VSC players pulled a Highlander off to the side and delivered a little individual attention.

## 1977 RESUME VALDOSTA STATE BLAZERS

Sometimes when things look the bleakest, good things happen. Such was the 1977 season, that saw VSC go 47-16, and make their third National Tournament appearance in 5-years. Coming off the disappointing years of 1975 (36-17), and 1976 (28-25), the Blazers had things fall together, and won their second South Athletic Conference title (13-2) since the inception of the League in 1974.

The hitting (.315) was the best in the school's history, although averages in both college, and professional ball were way up. The pitching was good, even though the team ERA of 3.51 was the third highest in VSC history. The higher batting averages, and soaring ERA's were attributed to baseballs stitched in Hiati.

Local-boy, Cecil Whitehead (.373) led the hitters, and had the greatest power year, since Gene Felts (1972). Cecil had 26 extra-base-hits, and broke the record for runs-batted-in (53). He got adequate support from a host of .300 hitters, including Skip Fite (.366), Craig Viers (.348), Ken Smith (.333), Sal Amadeo (.330), Bruce Fowler (.329), David DeMersseman (.326), and Billy Fortenberry (.320). Fortenberry, Amadeo, and Viers formed the best hitting outfield since Felts, Bowen, and Register (1973 and 1974).

Freshman, lefthander Jimmy Wall (8-1, 1.93 ERA), veterans Steve McDiffitt (10-1, 2.50 ERA), Bill Petty (7-2, 3.18 ERA), and Richard Sullivan (9-4, 3.62 ERA) handled the starting chores, while Charlie Beale (2-2, 2.81 ERA) pitched brilliant relief. Frosh Mike Raines (4-0, 6.59 ERA), and lefty, reliever Billy Tyler (3-2, 3.83 ERA) added much depth to the staff.

The Blazers raced to 8-1, and 15-3 marks, and were 20-8 when they began their quest for the SAC crown. They shut-out Armstrong State three-times, blasted West Georgia in a 3-game series (allowing only 3-runs), and beat Southern Tech thrice (allowing only two runs). In Columbus, for a 3-game set, VSC won the Friday contest (10-3), before losing twice the next day (6-5, and 16-7). The Blazers held a 5-0 lead in that first-game, going into the bottom of the eighth, only to be beaten on a tenth-inning homer.

Going into the final series of the season (at Augusta), Valdosta State had to sweep, while West Georgia had to beat Columbus 2 of 3. It happened exactly that way, and gave VSC the right to host the first South Atlantic Conference tournament, as regular season champions. Super, relief pitching by Beale, and a solid-hitting attack won the tourney, and put the NCAA Regionals in Valdosta.

In the SAC tourney, the Blazers blasted Columbus, before splitting with West Georgia (losing 16-8, and winning 8-5) the next day. The last day twin-bill was particularly important to VSC morale, since it was played without Whitehead, whose father had passed-away, the day before (it was the sixteenth, and seventeenth games that Cecil missed in 1977; the first 15 because of a hand injury). Freshman Ken Smith went 5x7, for the day, in Whitehead's position, as the team rallied for Cecil.

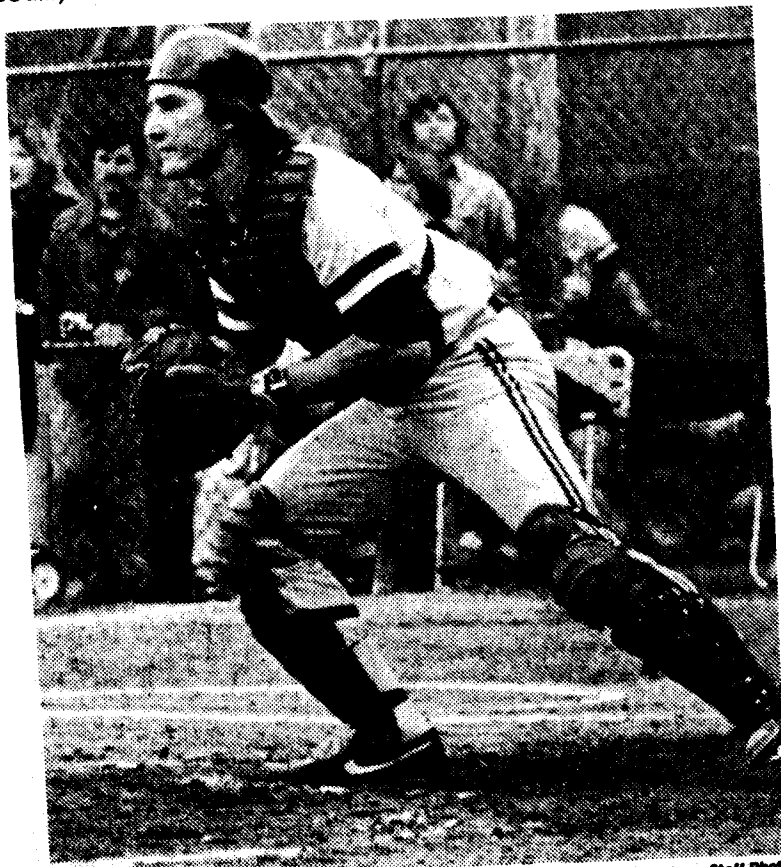
The Regionals were a hard-fought affair, as VSC lost to West Georgia in the second-round (4-3, in 10-innings) to put themselves in the losers bracket. They had blasted 20-hits, a day earlier to pound Columbus 18-3 (behind Viers' 7 RBI's, and McDiffitt's pitching), and had to face them again, in a Saturday do-or-die situation. The Blazers won it 4-1, and moved into the finals versus the Braves.

After falling behind 4-0 in the first-inning of the Sunday opener, VSC won a 9-6 decision, and a second game became necessary. Bill Petty pitched a brilliant



game (allowing only two runs; both unearned), and a bottom-of-the-ninth, 2-run homer, by Viers put the Blazers in Springfield (Ill., and the Nationals), with a 3-2 win. Viers was Regional MVP, going 11x19 at the plate, in five games.

As usual in National Tournaments, VSC lost their first game (2-1, to top-ranked Eckerd), but did fight their way through the losers bracket, beating Shippensburg State (2-1, in 13-innings), and UMo-St. Louis (11-4). They were eliminated in the bottom-of-the-ninth, when UCalif-Riverside scored two-runs, for an 8-7 win. The school's National Tournament(s) record became 4-6 (with 5 of the losses by 1-run), with a 1-6 record as visitors (VSC is 3-0 as the home team).



— Times Staff Photo.

***VSC Catcher Cecil Whitehead Waits For Throw***

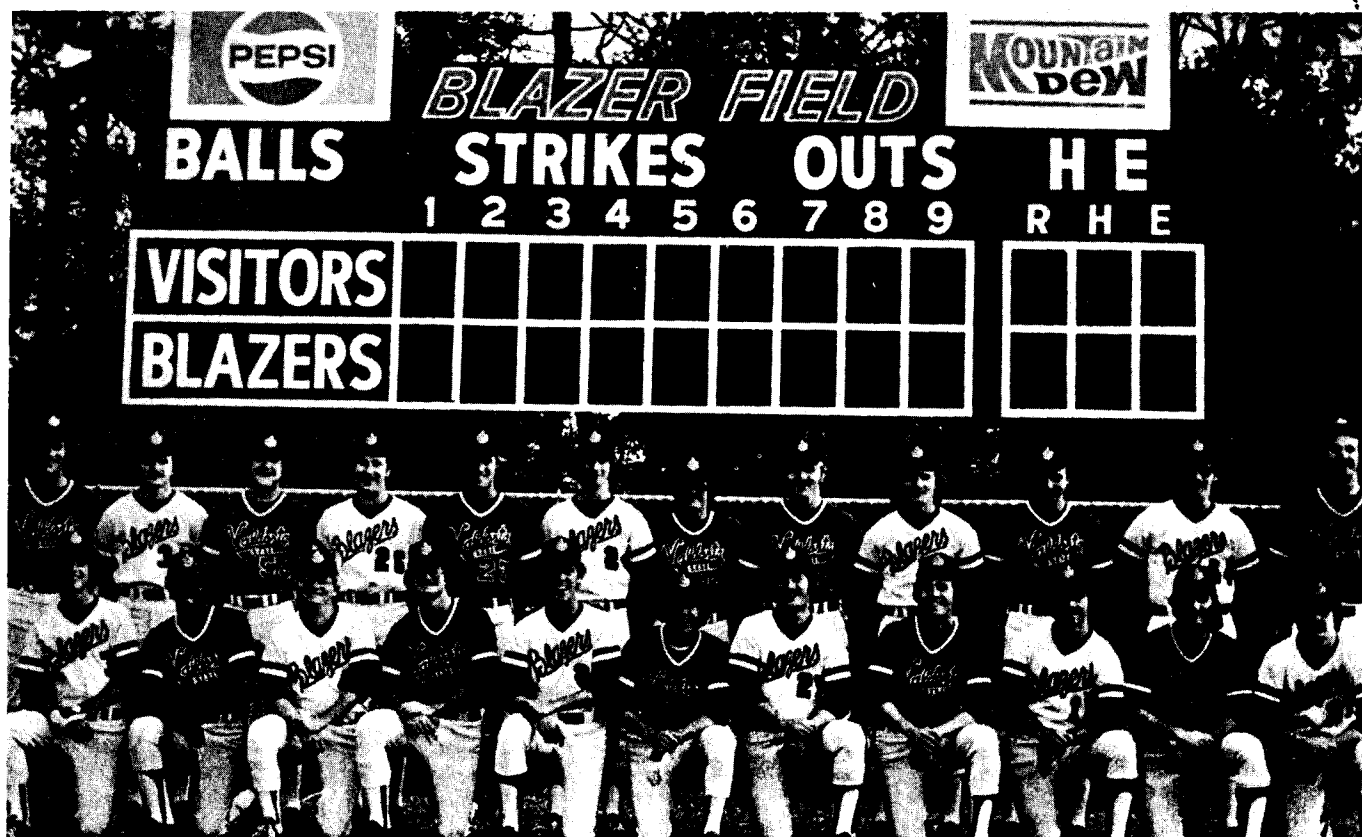


**Sullivan**

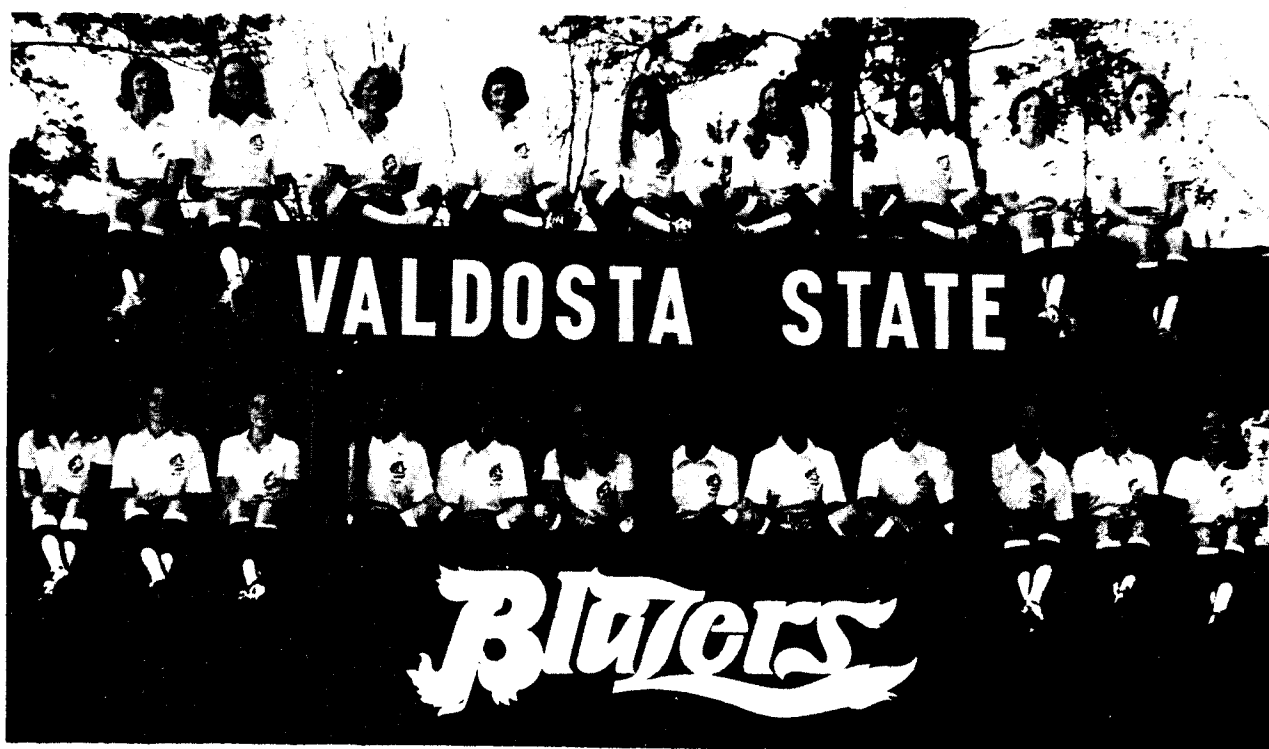


**Griffin**





TOP (l-r): Leach, Petty, McDiffitt, Fowler, DeMersseman, Raines, Viers, Smith, Whitehead, McLendon, Tyler, Feist. BOTTOM (l-r): Maini, Clarington, Beale, Fite, Sullivan, Amadeo, Purdy, Shuman, Wall, Griffin, Fortenberry.



VALDOSTA STATE  
1977 Baseball  
FINAL STATISTICS  
won 47 - lost 16

	AB	R	H	BI	AVG.	2B	3B	HR	SB
Cecil Whitehead, c	150	51	56	53	.373	10	6	10	10
Skip Fite, 2b	227	72	83	26	.366	10	4	0	28
Craig, Viers, rf	181	45	63	49	.348	14	6	2	17
Ken Smith, dh-c	81	14	27	21	.333	2	2	3	2
Sal Amadeo, cf	212	61	70	32	.330	11	2	5	11
Bruce Fowler, 1b	167	40	55	22	.329	11	2	1	6
David DeMersseman, dh	227	58	74	37	.326	16	2	2	20
Billy Fortenberry, lf	194	31	62	38	.320	10	1	2	1
Bart Shuman, ss	142	14	39	27	.275	1	2	1	2
Dale Leach, 1b	120	19	33	29	.275	4	0	2	3
Keith Griffin, 3b	181	31	47	36	.260	9	1	2	9
Keith Maini, ss	88	21	17	14	.193	4	0	0	5
TOTALS	2025	470	638	389	.315	104	29	30	119

(Bill Petty, p 4-2, .500; Billy Tyler, p 7-2, .286; Scott Alvarez, utl. 12-3 .250; Ken Purdy, of 21-4 .190; Jimmy Wall, p 11-1 .091)

	G	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	W-L	E.R.A.
Jimmy Wall	11	79.1	48	24	17	36	32	8-1	1.93
Steve McDiffitt	15	101	82	36	28	37	64	10-1	2.50
Chuck Beale	22	41.2	44	21	13	19	21	2-2	2.81
Bill Petty	13	73.2	81	38	26	23	27	7-2	3.18
Richard Sullivan	16	74.2	68	34	30	35	45	9-4	3.62
Billy Tyler	11	44.2	36	25	19	33	38	3-2	3.83
TOTALS	63	521.1	483	269	203	249	293	47-16	3.51

(Dale Leach 1-1, 2.45; Larry Clarrington 1-0, 4.87; Hodges McLendon 2-1, 5.26; Bill Ranne 0-2, 6.37; Mike Raines 4-0, 6.59; Ken Purdy 0-0, 37.70; Scott Alvarez 0-0, 81.00)

VALDOSTA STATE  
1977 Baseball  
FINAL SCORES  
won 47 - lost 16

(L) VSC 4, Auburn .....	8	(L) VSC 3, Florida State .....	9
VSC 14, Rose-Hulman .....	1	VSC 17, Southern Tech .....	2
VSC 7, Morris Harvey .....	3	VSC 9, Southern Tech .....	0
VSC 3, Morris Harvey .....	2	VSC 6, Southern Tech .....	0
VSC 10, Morris Harvey .....	2	VSC 2, Georgia Southern .....	1
VSC 9, Rose-Hulman .....	1	(L) VSC 5, Georgia Southern .....	26
VSC 10, Rose-Hulman .....	2	VSC 10, Georgia Southwestern ..	9
VSC 7, Rose-Hulman .....	0	VSC 10, Auburn .....	9
VSC 9, Rose-Hulman .....	1	VSC 10, Columbus .....	3
(L) VSC 5, Florida State .....	14	(L) VSC 5, Columbus .....	6
(L) VSC 3, UWis-Parkside .....	4	(L) VSC 7, Columbus .....	16
VSC 4, Western Kentucky .....	2	(L) VSC 3, Georgia Southwestern ..	4
VSC 17, Tennessee .....	5	VSC 13, Augusta .....	6
VSC 13, Illinois Benedictine ..	2	VSC 6, Augusta .....	1
VSC 6, Illinois Benedictine ..	2	VSC 7, Augusta .....	2
VSC 9, Illinois Benedictine ..	2		
VSC 8, Illinois Benedictine ..	5	SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TOURNEY	
VSC 11, North Central .....	3	Valdosta, Ga.	
(L) VSC 7, North Central .....	8	VSC 10, Augusta .....	5
VSC 5, St. Francis .....	1	VSC 18, Columbus .....	7
VSC 7, St. Francis .....	5	(L) VSC 8, West Georgia .....	16
(L) VSC 3, St. Francis .....	4	VSC 8, West Georgia .....	5
VSC 10, Otterbein .....	7		
VSC 2, Otterbein .....	1	NCAA SOUTH ATLANTIC REGIONAL	
VSC 4, Otterbein .....	2	Valdosta, Ga.	
(L) VSC 5, Florida .....	9	VSC 18, Columbus .....	3
VSC 7, Armstrong State .....	0	(L) VSC 3, West Georgia .....	4
VSC 1, Armstrong State .....	0	VSC 4, Columbus .....	1
VSC 8, Armstrong State .....	0	VSC 9, West Georgia .....	6
(L) VSC 4, St. Xavier .....	5	VSC 3, West Georgia .....	2
VSC 6, St. Xavier .....	5		
VSC 10, St. Xavier .....	6	NCAA DIVISION II WORLD SERIES	
VSC 9, West Georgia .....	0	Springfield, Ill.	
VSC 4, West Georgia .....	1	(L) VSC 1, Eckerd .....	2
VSC 15, West Georgia .....	2	VSC 2, Shippensburg State ....	1
		VSC 11, UMo-St. Louis .....	4
		(L) VSC 7, UCalif-Riverside .....	8

VALDOSTA STATE  
1977  
GAME LINESCORES

February 26

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Auburn .....	010	041	200	--	8-11	2
Valdosta State .....	111	000	001	--	4-8	1

Wimberly, Lowe (3) & Tragesay; Sullivan, Beale (5),  
Clarrington (7), Raines (9) & Whitehead. (Fortenberry 2x3)  
WP: Lowe, LP: Sullivan (0-1)

March 6

	123	456		R	H	E
Rose-Hulman .....	000	010	--	1-	2-	6
Valdosta State .....	207	50x	--	14-	13-	1

Ellis, Wycoski (3) & Neal; McDiffitt, Tyler (5) &  
Whitehead, Smith (5). (DeMersseman 3x4, 2b, 2b; Amadeo  
2x4; Whitehead 3-rbi's, 3b; Viers 3x3, 2b; Leach 3-rbi's)  
WP: McDiffitt (1-0), LP: Ellis.

March 8

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	021	000	--	3-7	9
Valdosta State .....	100	120	30x	--	7-7	3

Brown, Chittum (6) & Samms; Petty & Whitehead. (Fite  
3x4; DeMersseman 2x5, 2b, 2b) WP: Petty (1-0), LP: Brown.

March 9

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	010	001	000	--	2-11	2
Valdosta State .....	010	001	001	--	3-	6-1

Pugliese & Samms; McLendon, Beale (6) & Whitehead.  
(Whitehead 3x3, 2b; Leach 2-rbi's) WP: Beale (1-0), LP:  
Pugliese.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Morris Harvey .....	000	000	2	--	2-6	0
Valdosta State .....	105	310	x	--	10-9	1

Lees, Lakas (6) & Bailey; Sullivan & Whitehead, Smith  
(6). (Maini 2x3; Amadeo 2x2; Whitehead HR, 6-rbi's;  
Griffin 2x3) WP: Sullivan (1-1), LP: Lees.

March 11

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Rose-Hulman .....	000	100	0	--	1-1	3
Valdosta State .....	202	130	x	--	9-9	3

Hammer, Skinner (6) & Neal; Clarrington & Whitehead.  
(Fortenberry 2x2, 2-rbi's; Leach 2-rbi's; Fowler 3x3,  
3-rbi's) WP: Clarrington (1-0), LP: Hammer.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Rose-Hulman .....	000	000	2	--	2-	2-2
Valdosta State .....	070	201	x	--	10-11	5

Skinner, Foushee (3) & Bell; McDiffitt & Smith. (Fite  
3x4; Leach 2x3, 2-rbi's; Maini 2-rbi's; Fowler 2-rbi's;  
Smith 2-rbi's) WP: McDiffitt (2-0), LP: Skinner.

March 19

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Illinois Benedictine .....	001	100	0	--	2-9-3	
Valdosta State .....	240	000	x	--	6-4-1	

Schultz & Deegan; Tyler, Beale (7) & Smith.  
(DeMersseman 2-rbi's; Leach HR, 2-rbi's) WP: Tyler (2-0),  
LP: Schultz.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Illinois Benedictine .....	110	000	0	--	2-5-0	
Valdosta State .....	021	420	x	--	9-10-2	

Deering, Litzinger (4) & Terreberry, Foley (6); McLendon  
& Smith. (Viers 2x3, 2b, 3b; Griffin 2x3, 3-rbi's; Smith  
2-rbi's) WP: McLendon (1-0), LP: Deering.

March 20

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Illinois Benedictine .....	201	020	000	--	5-10-0	
Valdosta State .....	013	030	01x	--	8-11-3	

Chalkey & Terreberry; Raines, Beale (3), Sullivan (5)  
& Smith. (DeMersseman 3x3, 2b; Amadeo 2-rbi's) WP:  
Sullivan (2-1), LP: Chalkey.

March 21

	123	456	789	R	H	E
North Central .....	100	001	001	--	3-8-4	
Valdosta State .....	202	420	01x	--	11-14-2	

Lewis, Shimp (5), Dolan (7) & Dyke, Dakeovitch (7); Wall  
& Smith. (Fite 4x5, 2-rbi's; Maini 2x5; Leach 2x4, 2-rbi's;  
Viers 2x5, 2b) WP: Wall (1-0), LP: Lewis.

March 22

	123	456	789	R	H	E
North Central .....	001	130	012	--	8-9-2	
Valdosta State .....	010	010	041	--	7-7-3	

Tapar, Shimp (8), Dolan (8) & Dyke; Clarrington, Tyler  
(5), Beale (9) & Smith. (Amadeo 2-rbi's; Griffin 2x4, 3b;  
Smith 2x3) WP: Dolan, LP: Beale (0-2).

March 23

	123	456	789	R	H	E
St. Francis .....	001	000	000	--	1-7-3	
Valdosta State .....	200	200	01x	--	5-10-2	

Kmiec & Ford; McDiffitt & Smith. (DeMersseman 2x5; Viers  
2x4, 2-rbi's; Fortenberry 2x4; Smith 2x4) WP: McDiffitt  
(4-0), LP: Kmiec.

March 24

	123	456	789	R	H	E
St. Francis .....	101	030	000	--	5-15-4	
Valdosta State .....	000	011	32x	--	7-10-2	

Nickelson, Brown (8) & Ryley; Petty, Raines (8) & Smith.  
(DeMersseman 2x5; Fortenberry 3x3; Leach 2x4, 2-rbi's)  
WP: Raines (2-0), LP: Brown.

March 12

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Rose-Hulman .....	000	000	0	--	0-	3-2
Valdosta State .....	011	203	x	--	7-11-	2

Woszscwski & Leitgabel, Bell (6); Tyler & Whitehead.  
(Fite 2x4; Amadeo 2x4; Whitehead 2-rbi's; Fowler 2x3)  
WP: Tyler (1-0), LP: Woszscwski.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Rose-Hulman .....	010	000	0	--	1-1-	4
Valdosta State .....	020	502	x	--	9-7-	2

Schultz, Skinner (4) & Neal; Raines & Smith. (Viers  
2x4, 3-rbi's; Leach 2x2; Fortenberry 2-rbi's) WP: Raines  
(1-0), LP: Schultz.

March 13

	123	456	78	R	H	E
Florida State .....	111	000	65	--	14-14-	1
Valdosta State .....	000	000	41	--	5-	8-3

Jones, Smith (6), Bedingfield (8) & Kennedy; Petty,  
Beale (7), Sullivan (8) & Whitehead, Amadeo (3). (Fite  
2-rbi's; Fortenberry 3x4; Griffin 2x4) WP: Jones, LP:  
Petty (1-1).

March 17

	123	456	7	R	H	E
UWis-Parkside .....	000	004	0	--	4-6-	2
Valdosta State .....	001	200	0	--	3-4-	1

Frankcour, Fosterly (5) & McKenna; Clarington, Beale  
(6) & Amadeo. WP: Fosterly, LP: Beale (0-1).

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Western Kentucky .....	001	001	0	--	2-10-	2
Valdosta State .....	400	000	x	--	4-	7-2

Brooks, George (6) & Kendall; Sullivan & Smith.  
(Leach 3x3) WP: Sullivan (1-1), LP: Brooks.

March 18

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Tennessee .....	000	002	210	--	5-	7-2
Valdosta State .....	431	034	02x	--	17-19-	2

McConkey, Hilton (5) & Basham, Mathews (6), Green (7),  
Huskiison (8); McDiffitt, Beale (7) & Amadeo, Smith (5).  
(DeMersseman 5x5, 2b; Fite 2x2, 2-rbi's; Amadeo 2-rbi's;  
Leach 2x4, 2-rbi's; Fortenberry 2-rbi's; Maini 3x6, 2-rbi's;  
Griffin 3x5, 2-rbi's) WP: McDiffitt (3-0), LP: McConkey.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Illinois Benedictine .....	200	000	000	--	2-6-	6
Valdosta State .....	040	306	00x	--	13-9-	2

Lally, Deering (6) & Terreberry; Petty & Amadeo, Smith  
(6). (Fite 3x5; Leach 2x4, 3-rbi's; Griffin 2x2) WP:  
Petty (2-1), LP: Lally.

March 25

	123	456	789	R	H	E
St. Francis .....	000	020	200	--	4-6-3	
Valdosta State .....	000	001	110	--	3-9-5	

Beyler, Mutz (9) & Ford; Ranne, Tyler (6) & Smith.  
(Fite 2x4; Amadeo 3x5) WP: Beyler, LP: Ranne (0-1).

March 26

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Otterbein .....	031	102	0	--	7-14-3	
Valdosta State .....	231	301	x	--	10-9-6	

Dyson & Hoyle; Sullivan, Raines (2), Beale (4) & Smith.  
(DeMersseman 2x4, 2b, 3-rbi's; Amadeo 2x3, 2b; Griffin  
2-rbi's; Shuman 2x3, 2-rbi's; Smith 2x4) WP: Raines (2-0),  
LP: Dyson.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Otterbein .....	010	000	0	--	1-3-0	
Valdosta State .....	100	001	x	--	2-7-1	

Hillier & Clark; McLendon & Smith. (DeMersseman 2x3,  
HR) WP: McLendon (2-0), LP: Hillier.

March 27

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Otterbein .....	000	200	000	--	2-6-0	
Valdosta State .....	000	003	10x	--	4-7-0	

Williams & Hoyle, Clark (8); Wall & Smith. (Fortenberry  
3x4, 2-rbi's, 3b; Griffin 2-rbi's) WP: Wall (2-0), LP:  
Williams.

March 29 at Gainesville, Fla.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	014	000	--	5-8-2	
Florida .....	050	000	40x	--	9-9-0	

McDiffitt, Ranne (2), McLendon (4) & Smith; Meadows &  
Shulock. (DeMersseman 3x5, HR, 4-rbi's; Fortenberry 2x4)  
WP: Meadows, LP: McLendon (2-1).

April 1 at Savannah, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	212	000	110	--	7-11-4	
Armstrong State .....	000	000	000	--	0-1-1	

Wall & Whitehead; Heller & Seitz. (DeMersseman 3x5; Fite  
2x5; Whitehead 2x4, HR, 3-rbi's; Amadeo 2x4, 2b, 2b) WP:  
Wall (3-0), LP: Heller

April 2 at Savannah, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	000	001	--	1-4-1	
Armstrong State .....	000	000	000	--	0-5-0	

McDiffitt & Whitehead; Aenchbacher & Seitz. WP: McDiffitt  
(4-0), LP: Aenchbacher.

April 2 at Savannah, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	202	103	0	--	8-8-0	
Armstrong State .....	000	000	0	--	0-2-5	

Sullivan & Whitehead, Smith (7); Moore, Black (6),  
Kinder (7) & Cox, Green (7). WP: Sullivan (3-1), LP: Moore.

April 3

	123	456	7	R	H	E
St. Xavier .....	000	202	1	--	5-8-1	
Valdosta State .....	102	010	0	--	4-11-2	

Fazy & Johnson; Tyler, Beale (6) & Whitehead. (DeMersseman  
2x4; Fite 2x4; Whitehead 2x3, 2b, 3b, 2-rbi's; Fortenberry  
2x3) WP: Fazy, LP: Beale (0-2).

	123	456	7	R	H	E
St. Xavier .....	020	000	0	--	2-5-2	
Valdosta State .....	020	022	x	--	6-12-2	

Rogers, Benazo (6) & Lacascio; Petty & Whitehead.  
(DeMersseman 3x4; Viers 2x3, 2-rbi's; Amadeo 3x3; Shuman  
2x3, 2-rbi's) WP: Petty (3-1), LP: Rogers.

April 4

	123	456	789	R	H	E
St. Xavier .....	000	000	060	--	6-6-2	
Valdosta State .....	201	203	02x	--	10-13-2	

Hussey, Mazo (4), Maroni (8) & Johnson; Raines, Clarington  
(8), Beale (8) & Whitehead, Smith (8). (Fite 2x3; DeMersseman  
2x5, 2-rbi's; Whitehead 2-rbi's; Fowler 3x4, 2b; Shuman 2x3,  
2-rbi's) WP: Raines (3-0), LP: Mazo.

April 8

	123	456	789	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	000	000	000	--	0-4-5	
Valdosta State .....	202	200	03x	--	9-11-0	

Taylor, Detzer (3), Ayers (5) & Fite; Wall & Whitehead.  
(Fite 2x5; DeMersseman 2-rbi's; Whitehead 2x4, 3b, 3b, 2-  
rbi's; Leach 2x4; Shuman 2x3) WP: Wall (4-0), LP: Taylor.

April 9

	123	456	789	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	000	100	000	--	1-10-2	
Valdosta State .....	400	000	00x	--	4-7-3	

Campbell & Fite; McDiffitt & Whitehead. WP: McDiffitt  
(5-0), LP: Campbell.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	002	000	0	--	2-6-0	
Valdosta State .....	040	920	x	--	15-15-0	

Taylor, Bennett (2), Criswell (4), McElroy (4), Germain  
(6) & Fite; Sullivan & Whitehead, Smith (6). (Leach 2x3;  
DeMersseman 3x4, 3-rbi's; Whitehead 2x2, 2b, HR, 2-rbi's;  
Shuman 2x2, 3-rbi's) WP: Sullivan (4-1), LP: Taylor.



April 12 at Tallahassee, Fla.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	120	000	--	3-5-7	
Florida State .....	205	020	00x	--	9-9-3	

Ranne, McDiffitt (3), Tyler (3) & Whitehead; Jones, Smith (5) & McGlone, Kennedy (7). (DeMersseman 2x4) WP: Smith, LP: Ranne (0-2).

April 15

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Southern Tech .....	000	002	000	--	2-5-3	
Valdosta State .....	151	220	33x	--	17-15-1	

Dilbeck, Brackett (5) & Meintzey; Wall, Beale (8) & Whitehead, Smith (5). (Fite 2x4, 2-rbi's; DeMersseman 2x3, 3-rbi's; Petty 2x2, HR; Smith 2x3, 3b, HR, 3-rbi's; Tyler 2-rbi's; Shuman 3x4, 3b) WP: Wall (5-0), LP: Dilbeck.

April 16

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Southern Tech .....	000	000	000	--	0-5-5	
Valdosta State .....	110	200	32x	--	9-9-0	

Wood, Hunter (8) & Moss; McDiffitt & Whitehead, Smith (8). (Fowler 2x4, 3b, HR; Fortenberry 2x3; Leach 2x4, 2-rbi's) WP: McDiffitt (6-0), LP: Wood.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Southern Tech .....	000	000	0	--	0-3-2	
Valdosta State .....	040	002	x	--	6-7-0	

Stancil & Meintzer; Sullivan & Whitehead, Smith (7). (Fortenberry 2x3; Shuman 2-rbi's) WP: Sullivan (5-1), LP: Stancil.

April 17 at Statesboro, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	110	0	--	2-8-0	
Georgia Southern .....	000	001	0	--	1-9-1	

Petty & Whitehead; Hodges & Hynko. (Viers 2x4) WP: Petty (4-1), LP: Hodges.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	021	100	1	--	5-7-5	
Georgia Southern .....	156	149	x	--	26-24-1	

Tyler, McLendon (2), Beale (3), Clarington (3), Purdy (5), Alvarez (6) & Whitehead, Smith (6); Steidl & Hynko. (Fite 3x4; Fortenberry 2x3, 2-rbi's) WP: Steidl, LP: Tyler (2-1).

April 19

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Georgia Southwestern .....	053	000	010	--	9-7-0	
Valdosta State .....	200	061	001	--	10-18-4	

Smith, Tighe (6) & Baynard; Raines, Clarington (2), Tyler (3) & Whitehead. (Viers 2x6, 2b; DeMersseman 2x6, 3b; Whitehead 3x4, 3b, HR, 2-rbi's; Fortenberry 2x3; Fowler 3x4; Amadeo 3x5; Griffin 3-rbi's, 2b) WP: Tyler (3-1), LP: Tighe.

April 21 at Auburn, Ala.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	210	023	110	--	10-13-6	
Auburn .....	020	150	001	--	9- 9-5	

Ranne, Leach (4) & Whitehead; Chewalk, Sullivan (5), Lowe (5), Williams (6), Wimberly (8) & Rushing. (Fite 2x5; DeMersseman 3x5, 2b; Fortenberry 3x5; Viers 3x5, 2b, 3-rbi's) WP: Leach (1-0), LP: Wimberly.

April 22 at Columbus, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	300	000	700	--	10-17-1	
Columbus .....	000	110	001	--	3- 6-5	

Wall, Petty (6) & Whitehead; Stonica, Masengale (7) & Hall. (Fite 2x5; Fowler 2x5; DeMersseman 2x5; Whitehead 2x4, HR, 4-rbi's; Fortenberry 2x5, 2b; Viers 4x5, 3b; Griffin HR, 2-rbi's) WP: Wall (6-0), LP: Stonica.

April 23 at Columbus, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	100	040	--	5-7-4	
Columbus .....	000	000	051	--	6-8-2	

McDiffitt, Petty (8) & Whitehead; Prather, Betsill (8) & Hall. (Fite 2x5; Whitehead HR, 3-rbi's; Amadeo 2x4, HR) WP: Betsill, LP: Petty (4-2).

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	120	012	1	--	7-12-3	
Columbus .....	440	242	x	--	16-14-0	

Sullivan, Tyler (1), Raines (2), Beale (4) & Whitehead; Bailey, Betsill (5) & Hall. (Fite 2x4, 3b; Fortenberry 2x4, 2b; Fowler 2x4; Amadeo 2x3, HR, 2-rbi's; Shuman 2-rbi's) WP: Bailey, LP: Sullivan (5-2).

April 26 at Americus, Ga.

	123	456	789	10	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	010	002	000	0	--	3- 9-3	
Georgia Southwestern .....	020	000	100	1	--	4-16-0	

Leach & Whitehead; Bonagura & McCorkle. (Viers 2x5; Fowler 2x5; Shuman 3x4) WP: Bonagura, LP: Leach (1-1).

April 29 at Augusta, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	002	131	132	--	13-15-4	
Augusta .....	006	000	000	--	6- 4-2	

Wall & Whitehead; Freeman, Crown (8) & Crawford. (Amadeo 2x3, 2b, HR, 3-rbi's; DeMersseman 2x5, 2b; Whitehead 2x4, 2b; Fortenberry 2x4; Griffin 2x3, 2b, HR, 4-rbi's; Shuman 2x5, 2b) WP: Wall (7-0), LP: Freeman.

April 30 at Augusta, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	000	420	000	--	6-10-4	
Augusta .....	001	000	000	--	1- 7-3	

McDiffitt & Whitehead; Belcher & Crawford, Key (6). (Fowler 2x3, 2b; Fortenberry HR, 3-rbi's; Griffin 2x4) WP: McDiffitt (7-0), LP: Belcher.

April 30 at Augusta, Ga.

	123	456	7	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	110	000	5	--	7-11	0
Augusta .....	200	000	0	--	2-	3-1

Petty & Whitehead; Poppell, Crown (7) & Key, Crawford (2). (DeMersseman 3x4, 2b, 2-rbi's; Fite 3x4, 2b, 2-rbi's; Fortenberry 2b, 2-rbi's) WP: Petty (5-2), LP: Poppell.

May 6-- SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT at Valdosta, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	201	220	111	--	10-13	0
Augusta .....	000	003	200	--	5-10	4

Petty, Beale (7) & Whitehead. Freeman, Crown (3), Poppell (5) & Crawford. (Fite 3x4, 2b, 2b, 2-rbi's; Viers 3x5, 2b, 2b, 2-rbi's; Whitehead 3x4, HR; Fowler 2x6; Amadeo 2x4, 2b, 2-rbi's) WP: Petty (6-2), LP: Freeman.

May 7-- SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT at Valdosta, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Columbus .....	000	042	010	--	7-12	4
Valdosta State .....	200	842	02x	--	18-18	3

Stonica, Masengil (4), Montgomery (4), Blair (6) & Hall; McDiffitt, Beale (6) & Whitehead. (DeMersseman 2x4; Fite 3x4, 2b, 2b; Viers 3x5, 2b; Whitehead 3x5, HR, 6-rbi's; Fowler 2x6, 2b; Amadeo 2x4, 2b; Griffin 2-rbi's) WP: McDiffitt (8-0), LP: Stonica.

May 8-- SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT at Valdosta, Ga.

	123	456	789	R	H	E
West Georgia .....	400	502	401	--	16-18	2
Valdosta State .....	020	102	030	--	8-12	6

Ayers, Criswell (8) & Fite; Wall, Tyler (4), McLendon (6), Raines (7) & Smith. (Fowler 2x4, 2b; Amadeo 3x4; Fortenberry 2x4, HR, 3-rbi's; Smith 3x4, 2b, HR, 3-rbi's) WP: Ayers, LP: Wall (7-1).

	123	456	789	R	H	E
Valdosta State .....	010	041	110	--	8-13	5
West Georgia .....	000	003	020	--	5-11	1

Sullivan, Beale (8) & Smith; Criswell, Campbell (2), McElroy (7) & Fite. (DeMersseman 2x4, 2b; Fite 2x3, 2b; Smith 2x3, 2-rbi's; Griffin 2x4) WP: Sullivan (6-2), LP: Criswell.

NOTE: see all tournament game linescores in the TOURNAMENT section ..... The South Atlantic Conference Tournament has no "official" designation with the NCAA, although in 1977, the tournament winner (VSC) had the inside-track to hosting the NCAA Regional Tournament ..... To be included in the hitter's list re: each linescore, a player must have had 2, or more, hits; 2, or more, rbi's; no extra-base-hits are included unless a player met the above criteria.

NOTE: in other games in the South Atlantic Conference Tournament-- Columbus 7, West Georgia 4; West Georgia 2, Augusta 0; West Georgia 12, Augusta 9 .....  
Blazers selected to the All-Tournament team, included: Chuck Beale (p); Cecil Whitehead (c); Skip Fite (2b); Sal Amadeo (cf); and Craig Viers (lf).



## *'V' For Viers, VSC and Victory*

Valdosta State College rightfielder Craig Viers is mobbed by happy teammates moments after he drilled a two-run, game-winning home run against West Georgia College here Sunday which handed the Blazers the South Atlantic Regional baseball championship. VSC swept a doubleheader from West Georgia Sunday to claim the title and advance to the NCAA Division II

national tournament May 28-31 in Springfield, Ill. Viers' dramatic home run came in the bottom of the ninth inning with the Blazers trailing 2-1. The VSC junior was named the tournament's most valuable player. Details of the exciting twin bill sweep are on page 10. — Times Staff Photo by Mike Dowse.

# Viers' Homer Gives VSC Regional Title

By MARTIN REGISTER

Craig Viers lofted a ninth-inning two-run homer over the right field fence here Sunday, lifting Valdosta State College's Blazers to a 3-2 win over West Georgia in the NCAA South Atlantic Regional Division II baseball championship game.

Valdosta State had upended the Braves, previously unbeaten in the double elimination tourney, 9-6, in a game played earlier in the day, to force the final contest.

West Georgia pitcher Brad Campbell had held coach Tommy Thomas's Blazers hitless through two innings after relieving starter Bill Taylor in the seventh frame, before Viers pulled the game out of fire for VSC.

Valdosta State collected just four hits, half as many as the Braves of coach Archie White, and committed three errors to none for West Georgia.

But the Braves made little use of the runners it put on base, stranding seven to the Blazers' three.

Viers' shot just cleared the right field corner as West Georgia outfielder Leonard Hartsfield crashed into the fence in a vain effort to avert disaster.

Hartsfield lay stunned for a few moments as the highly partisan crowd roared to its feet.

Bill Petty went the distance on the mound for the Blazers, scattering eight hits effectively in the do-or-die win.

The victory put the Blazers

among prestigious company, as one of only eight division II teams remaining in the race for the national championship.

The national tourney is to be held in Springfield, Ill., in two weeks.

West Georgia left men on the bases in four of the first five innings, but Valdosta State had difficulty getting men even that far.

Sal Amadeo finally gave the Blazers their first hit, in the fifth inning, with a towering home run to left field.

But West Georgia answered in the sixth when, aided by two Blazer errors, it scored both its runs.

That's the way things stood, as Taylor and Campbell consistently mowed down VSC's powerful hitters, until Viers' blast, with second baseman Skip Fite on board, decided the outcome.

Viers, as White pointed out later, had attempted to bunt on two previous pitches. "If he had been able to bunt," White said, "this would never have happened."

The Blazer rightfielder, who batted .599 and banded out 15 RBI in the three-day tourney, was chosen its Most Valuable Player by a special all-tournament team committee.

Skip Fite was named to the team as second baseman, while Amadeo was tabbed as its centerfielder, VSC catcher Cecil Whitehead was chosen as the designated hitter, and Petty and teammate Steve McDuffitt were named as pitchers.

West Georgia's towering Dan Logan, who is 6-7 and looks even bigger, was tabbed as the all-tournament first baseman, while fellow Brave Bill Fite was named to the catcher's position.

The fiery ex-paratrooper, older brother of VSC's Skip Fite, was obviously a team leader for the Braves, but his

enthusiasm got him into trouble Saturday.

Violently contesting a call at the plate, he was finally ejected from that game.

Third baseman James Brown, shortstop Tommy Harrell and leftfielder Mark Landers were named to the honor team from Columbus College.

Randolph-Macon, the tourney's only team not from the state of Georgia, absorbed two lopsided losses early in the tourney and failed to place a player on the all-tournament team.

Thomas, ecstatic over his team's rise from what looked like certain elimination twice in one day, did little to hide his emotions.

"It was really a great win," he said, understating the situation after the second game. "I'm still on a cloud. I'm just thrilled, thrilled for the boys."

"I have to hand it to West Georgia, and to all the teams in this tournament. They worked hard... but so did we."

"I think its only right that we won, and that we are going to the national tournament. This team had the best season of anyone in the region, so it deserves to go."

White disagreed. "We did allright," he said. "I still think we have the better ballclub, though. Look at the hits. With four hits, there's no way VSC should have won this game."

"But I really hope they (VSC) do well out there at the national tournament."

"Viers was just amazing," Thomas said of his small, gutty outfielder, who tied two school records with five hits and seven RBI in a game, against Columbus on Friday, and Petty did a great job, especially toward the finish."

"But I could go on and name every player on the team. There are so many people who are in on this, and I'm so happy for all of them."

Thomas was right in

## The Valdosta Daily Times

### SPORTS

Monday, May 16, 1977 - 10 -

pointing out that the championship was not won on the efforts of just a few players.

Keith Maini came in at shortstop in the ninth inning of the second game and promptly ignited a double play, which ended a potentially dangerous situation for the Blazers by cutting down Brave runners at first and second and ending the inning for West Georgia.

But the second game wasn't the only time VSC rallied out of a bad situation.

Helped along by three VSC errors and two hits, the Braves breezed to a 4-0 lead in the first inning of the first game, where a win would have given them the title outright.

But a three-run triple by Viers in the third inning

helped to tie matters up, and VSC came back to go ahead 8-4 in the fourth inning on hits by Whitehead, Amadeo and first baseman Bruce Fowler, and on two walks given up by Brave pitcher Chris Criswell.

Criswell had come in for Phil Taylor, who had replaced starter Lynn Ayres in the third frame.

Chuck Beale, who came in during the third inning for starter Dale Leach, was awarded the hill win for the Blazers.

Richard Sullivan, who pitched the majority of the final three innings, was credited with a save. Ayres took the mound loss for West Georgia.

The Blazers outthit West Georgia, 13-11, in that game, but also committed more errors, four to one.

### Boxes

#### FIRST GAME

VSC	abr	h	bi	WG	abr	h	bi
DMssmn dh	2	0	0	Spwl lf	2	1	2
Smh dh	3	0	1	Cmpbl	4	2	0
Fite 2b	4	1	1	Hmr cf	6	1	0
Vrs rf	3	2	1	Evns ss	6	1	0
Whthd c	3	2	2	Fite c	3	1	2
Amdoc f	5	1	4	Lgn lb	4	1	1
Fwlr lb	5	1	1	Htrk dh	5	0	4
Frtby lf	4	0	1	Htsd rf	5	0	1
Grfn 3b	3	1	1	Dose 3b	5	0	1
Shmn ss	3	1	1	Bck 2b	5	0	0
Lchp	0	0	0	Ayrs p	0	0	0
Blep	0	0	0	Tylr p	0	0	0
Silvnp	0	0	0	Cwlp	0	0	0

TOTALS 35 9 13 9 TOTALS 40 6 11 5

VSC 004 041 000-9-13-4

WG 400 001 100-6-11-1

E - Shuman, Leach 2, Griffin, Spewell;

DP - W.G.: LEFT - VSC 6, W.G. 8.

2B - Whitehead, Logan, Hatterick; 3B -

Viers; SB - Griffin; SH - Viers, Hamer;

SF - Shuman, Logan.

ip h r er bb so

Leach 2 2 3 5 4 3 3 0

Beale 4 6 2 2 2 2 0

Sullivan 2 1 3 0 0 0 1 2

Ayres 2 2 3 3 3 3 2 0

Taylor 1 2 3 6 5 5 2 0

Criswell 4 1 3 4 1 1 3 0

PB - Fite.

#### SECOND GAME

WG	abr	h	bi	VSC	abr	h	bi
Hmr cf	4	0	1	Smh dh	4	0	0
Htrfd rf	4	0	1	Fite 2b	3	1	0
Evns ss	4	0	0	Vrs rf	2	1	2
Fite c	4	0	0	Whthd c	3	0	0
Lgn lb	3	1	2	Amdoc f	3	1	1
P. Tylr lf	4	1	1	Fwlr lb	3	0	1
Htrk dh	4	0	0	Frtby lf	3	0	1
Dose 3b	4	0	3	Grfn 3b	3	0	0
Bck 2b	4	0	0	Shmn ss	1	0	0
B. Tylr p	0	0	0	DMssmn dh	1	0	0
Cpbl p	0	0	0	ANiss	0	0	0
				Pity p	0	0	0

TOTALS 35 2 8 1

TOTALS 26 3 4 3

WG 000 002 000-2-8-0

VSC 000 010 002-3-4-3

E - Viers, Fowler, Fortenberry; DP -

WG, VSC: LEFT - WG 7, VSC 3.

2B - Taylor, Dubose; HR - Viers,

Amadeo; SB - Viers.

ip h r er bb so

Taylor 6 3 1 1 3 3

Campbell 2 1 2 2 1 1

Petty 9 8 2 0 1 2

# It Was A Big Home Run

It wasn't the fabled "shot heard 'round the world", but to the people involved, it was just as big a home run.

Craig Viers connected for the most important hit of his life at Blazer Field here Sunday when he slapped a 335-foot job just out of the reach of West Georgia rightfielder Leonard Hartsfield.

As Hartsfield dived onto the right field fence, the now suddenly tiny white piece of cork and cowhide landed a tantalizing foot beyond his outstretched glove.

When Hartsfield collapsed in a gummy display of disgust and pain back on the playing field, the hopes of the Braves from Carrollton collapsed with him.

In the other dugout, the red-jerseyed Blazers exhibited unbridled emotion. Their joy was deep rooted since Viers' home run meant a 3-2 VSC win and a trip to Springfield, Ill. for the NCAA Division II national tournament.

As Viers rounded the bases, pushing through teammates on his way from third to home, different thoughts clouded the minds of key individuals in the piece of Valdosta State history unfolding out on the diamond.

"I knew it was gone, but I thought it was going to hook foul," Viers said of only his second home run of the season. "He (VSC head coach Tommy Thomas) had me bunting at first, but after that I was just trying to hit it."

Thomas took off the bunt when Braves' pitcher Brad Campbell got two quick strikes on the Crown Point, Ind. lefthander. With that 0-2 count, and teammate Skip Fite waiting in the blocks at first base, Viers smashed any national tournament hopes West Georgia might have entertained.

And Braves' head coach Archie White was entertaining them.

"I thought we had them whipped," White said of the 2-1 lead his club had going into the bottom of the ninth inning. "If the guy had laid the ball down like he was supposed to, it might have been different. I wanted him to lay it down."

"I knew they had two righthanders coming up, and I figured Brad would get them. Normally, he (Viers) would have ended up the goat for not bunting, and he winds up the hero."

"But I still think we had the best ballclub. For a ballclub that wasn't even supposed to be here, I thought we did a helluva job."

VSC catcher Cecil Whitehead was following Viers in the batting order and would have come up with one out and Fite on second had the sacrifice bunt worked.

"I was just hoping Craig would do it because I didn't want to come up," Whitehead said. This was the same modest Whitehead who already has more RBI (50) than any player on the team and needs only one more to break Gene Felts' alltime record.

From Bill Petty, the VSC pitcher in the game who had seen his teammates commit crucial errors to let in both of West Georgia's runs, there was no comment ... only a physical reaction.

Viers' swing had given new life to Petty's final season in a VSC uniform. He was one of the first to reach the hero of the day and one of the last to stop crowing about it. How fitting it was for he and Steve McDiffitt, the freshmen



Mike

## Chason

Times Sports Editor

sensations back in '74, to trot to the infield together when they were announced to the all-tournament team.

And finally there was Thomas himself.

The man who suffered through a 28-25 season a year ago had a deep grin plastered on his suntanned face and a merry twinkle sunk deep into his eyes behind his glasses.

And he couldn't stop giggling like a schoolgirl headed for her first Sunday School party with a member of the opposite sex.

Accepting congratulatory handshakes from the men and hugs from the women, young and old, the home-grown bachelor took a long time just to soak up the enormity of it all.

"I honestly felt there was a chance to win it," Thomas said. "We had the meat of the order coming up. But a home run was the last thing on my mind."

This reporter reminded Thomas of a similar blast former VSC standout Leroy Purdy had hit many long years ago.

"That was a good one," Thomas agreed, "but this one is better because it is now."

Purdy's home run came in a bottom of the ninth, two-out situation in the NAIA District 25 tournament in Columbus. It sent Valdosta State to the area tournament.

"It is fitting that we should win this tournament," Thomas said. "We had the best season record, we had the best record against the teams in the tournament, and by cracky, our guys deserved it."

Thomas said last week that neither Columbus nor West Georgia should have been invited to the regional because VSC had defeated both for the South Atlantic Conference regular season and tournament titles. As it turned out, the Blazers again proved they were the best team.

As the sun began to set on Blazer Field, Thomas was still around long after the batgirls, fans, major league scouts, Braves and Blazers had left.

What was going through his mind as he gazed onto the now empty field which had been filled with so much excitement only minutes before.

"It's all over," he said. "I know for sure West Georgia's not going to get to bat again."

# Blazers Eye Win In First Round

By MIKE CHASON

In 1974, a pair of wild-eyed freshmen with Yankee accents joined the Valdosta State College baseball team.

At the time, nobody expected much out of Bill Petty, a smooth-working lefthander from Grove City, Ohio, or Steve McDuffitt, an awkward-looking New Martinville, W. Va. righthander.

But as the season progressed, the two first-year men, who became fast friends, gained almost as much ink as VSC's famed '74 outfield of Sam Bowen, Gene Felts and Jerome Register.

With the outfield trio, all destined to sign minor league contracts, supplying the offensive power, Petty and McDuffitt provided the pitching.

Nicknamed the "giant-killer" because of his clutch performances against major college competition, McDuffitt gained the starting nod in VSC's first game ever in the NCAA Division II national tournament.

Either Springfield, Ill. wasn't his kind of town or New Orleans University had some Cajun magic working for it, because McDuffitt got shelled in the first three innings.

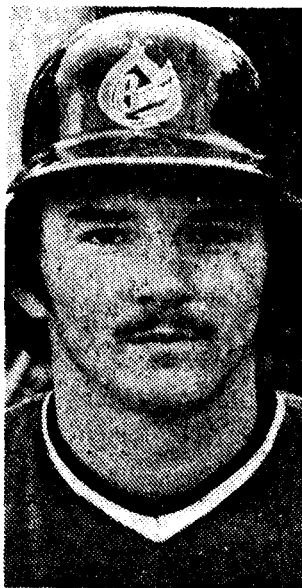
VSC eventually lost the game 13-9.

The next day, Petty was near perfect against New Haven, Conn. but lost a tough 1-0 decision, and the Blazers headed for home.

Now, it's three years later and Valdosta State is back in Springfield after that same national title it didn't even get a smell of in 1974.

And again, McDuffitt is scheduled to pitch Saturday's 2:45 p.m. (CST) first game against Eckerd (Fla.).

"I'm hoping it will be better this time," McDuffitt said, "but my arm has been hurting me lately. I've been getting some ultrasound on it, but I doubt it will really be



**BILL PETTY**  
'Pretty Good Pitching'

ready."

McDuffitt piled up 10 wins against no defeats this year with the second lowest earned run average (2.29) on the team. Freshman lefthander Jimmy Wall had a 2.10 ERA with a 8-1 record.

Has three extra years of experience turned McDuffitt into a battle-hardened veteran?

"I know I'll still be a little nervous out there, but I think anybody would," he said. "The butterflies will still be there."

"I think this team is better all-round than the one in '74. We had some great players, but we didn't have any pitching."

Petty, who hasn't been designated a tourney starting assignment so far by VSC head coach Tommy Thomas, agrees this year's 45-14 club is better.

"We're a better hitting team," Petty said. "Our outfield was great that year, but the infield wasn't that good."

"I say we'll do all right. I believe we'll play at least four games. The last time, after me and Steve pitched, nobody else was that impressive."

"Our pitching has been pretty good this year. I think Chuck Beale has made the difference."

Beale, a senior righthander, provided timely relief performances in both the South Atlantic Conference



**STEVE MCDUFFITT**  
Giant-Killer

tournament and the South Atlantic Regional.

Petty, 7-2 with a 3.00 ERA, was also instrumental in the Blazers' success in the tournaments. He was named to the all-regional tourney team along with McDuffitt.

Other members of the team figure winning the first game is the real key in the double elimination national tournament.

"If we win the first game, we'll win it all," second baseman Skip Fite said.

"I think the winner of the first game will go all the way," relief pitcher Billy Tyler said.

"We've got to win the first one," rightfielder Craig Viers echoed. "If you lose the first one, you just have to play too many games."

Not a single Blazer predicted instant success. All seemed confident the team could hit with the best the tourney had to offer, however.

The biggest question mark seemed to be occasional defensive lapses which have gotten the team in trouble more times than one.

In Saturday's first game, New Haven meets Shipensburg (Pa.) State at noon.

After the VSC-Eckerd game, Southern Illinois of Edwardsville takes on the University of Missouri at St. Louis at 6 p.m. At 8:45 p.m., Delta (Miss.) State tangles with the University of California at Riverside.

Second round action begins Sunday at noon.

# Eckerd scratches out 2-1 victory

by Hal Pilger

The usually potent Eckerd College offense managed only three hits, but two of them were opposite-field home runs as the No. 1-ranked Tritons outlasted Valdosta State, 2-1, Saturday in the second game of the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II World Series at Lanphier Park.

The Tritons (32-7) of St. Petersburg, Fla., carried a .339 team batting average into the contest and didn't get their third hit until Joe Westmoreland singled to center in the eighth inning.

But the Blazers (45-15) of Valdosta, Ga., brought a .318 team mark to the park and had only four hits, including an infield single and a double that caromed off the third-base bag.

The difference was Joe LeFebvre, a left-handed hitter who ripped a first-inning homer over the right-field fence, and Steve Balboni, a right-handed hitter who bombed a seventh-inning homer over the left-field fence.

Both shots were first-pitch deliveries from starter and loser Steve McDiffitt, who suffered his first loss against 10 triumphs.

The winner was sophomore Kerry Freedman (12-1), who in addition to allowing four hits gave up eight walks and uncorked a pair of wild pitches — one of which sent home Valdosta's only run in the fifth inning after an hour delay because of rain.

But Freedman had it when he needed it, striking out 10 Blazers and escaping bases-loaded jams in the eighth and ninth innings unscathed.

"That's his kind of ball game," Eckerd Coach Bill Livesey said of his young right-hander. He walked the bases loaded in Miami and then struck out the

side. You go with what brung you here," he quipped, "and he brung us here. He'll strand 14 men."

Valdosta didn't strand 14, but the Blazers did leave eight men on base by failing to get the big hit, especially in the late going.

"Lack of the key hit," sighed Valdosta Coach Tom Thomas. "But I think the two pitchers just did an outstanding job. Both teams came in as two of the best-hitting teams in the East, and both were completely shut down, except for their two home runs.

"I think that's an indication of just how much power both guys have who hit the ball. And I think it's an indication of how much speed was on the ball. It may have been over the outside part of the plate, but they (Eckerd) weren't pulling anything off him (McDiffitt) all day."

Livesey noted his young team, which started one senior, three juniors and six sophomores (including the designated hitter), was tight playing in its first World Series.

"But we've got no excuses," Livesey added. "That's the lowest run total I can remember this season. We've been averaging about 9.7 runs per game. We scored 15, six and 11 in the (South Atlantic) regional.

"We're supposed to be the No. 1 school in the state in academics, but we didn't show it today. It seemed like school was out, because we didn't learn anything.

"He (McDiffitt) pitched a very intelligent game, but we enabled him to

pitch an intelligent game. We didn't make the adjustments. The two boys (LeFebvre and Balboni) did; they went to the opposite field. And we had a hit to center. Going to the opposite field and to center is the only way to hit an off-speed, breaking-ball pitcher.

"We had three players adjust, and six who took the day off. But we did play defense."

Eckerd, which committed no errors to three for Valdosta, came up with the fielding gem of the game with the bases full of Blazers in the eighth.

Valdosta's Billy Fortenberry cracked a double that hit the center-field fence on one hop. Freedman retired the next two batters, but got back in hot water by walking Bill Petty and Skip Fite. Then he got Craig Viers to pop up on the first pitch.

The ball drifted foul and headed for the stands, but Eckerd third baseman Randy Kwist, a sophomore as is LeFebvre and Balboni, raced to the fence in front of his team's dugout and reached over the rail to grab the ball before it could land among his teammates.

Freedman walked Cecil Whitehead, a .388 hitter at the start of the game who had singled his last time up, to begin the ninth. A wild pitch put Whitehead at second. But Freedman fanned the next two Blazers before walking two to fill the sacks. The hurler then forced pinch-hitter Ken Smith to tap back to the mound to end the threat and the game.

LeFebvre's first-inning blast held up

for Eckerd until the top of the fifth. With a thunderstorm rushing toward the park, Sal Amadeo lined a ball off the third-base bag, and he pulled into second with a leadoff double when left-fielder Pefe Eagleson slipped on the turf, which had been dampened by earlier rainfall.

Bruce Folwer's sacrifice bunt pushed Amadeo to third, but with a two-ball, one-strike count on Fortenberry, play was halted as the storm hit, and the field was covered. About an hour later, Fortenberry fanned, but not before a wild pitch had sent Amadeo home with the tying tally. Freedman then ended the inning by striking out Keith Griffin.

Balboni's game-winning blast over the 340-foot sign in left was his 19th homer of the season. LeFebvre's blast was his seventh.

VALDOSTA (1)					ECKERD (2)				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
D'm'man dh	2	0	0	0	K'wood ss	4	0	0	0
Petty ph, dh	0	0	0	0	W'land rf	4	0	1	0
Fite 2b	1	0	1	0	LeFebvre cf	4	1	1	1
Viers 1b	4	0	0	0	Balboni 1b	3	1	1	1
W'head c	3	0	1	0	H'wich dh	3	0	0	0
Amadeo cf	4	1	1	0	K'wist 3b	3	0	0	0
Fowler rf	2	0	0	0	E'son lf	3	0	0	0
Alv'z pr	0	0	0	0	Mirro c	3	0	0	0
F'berry lf	3	0	1	0	M'Greavy 2b	3	0	0	0
Maini pr	0	0	0	0	Totals	30	2	3	2
Griffin	3	0	0	0					
Tyler ph	0	0	0	0					
Shuman ss	3	0	0	0					
Smith ph	1	0	0	0					
Totals	26	1	4	0					

Valdosta 000 010 000 — 1  
Eckerd 100 000 10x — 2  
E — Shuman, Fortenberry, Griffin; DP  
— Eckerd 2; LOB — Valdosta 8, Eckerd 4; 2B — Amadeo, Fortenberry; HR — LeFebvre, Balboni; SB — Whitehead, Eagleson; SH — Fowler, Fite.

IP H R ER BB SO  
McDiffitt (L 10-1) 8 3 2 2 0 5  
Freedman (W 12-1) 9 4 1 1 8 10  
WP — Freedman 2  
U — P-Pachhofer; B-Galaher, Gent, Oliver. T-3:20 A-500



# Hitting Lets Blazers Down In 2-1 Loss

By MIKE CHASON  
SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — The old joke goes that the undertaker is the last guy to let you down.

Before Saturday, Valdosta (Ga.) State's Blazers figured their hitting would be the last thing to let them down.

But in the NCAA Division II National Baseball tournament here Saturday, the joke was on the Blazers.

Valdosta State left the bases loaded two times and managed but four hits enroute to a 2-1 loss to Eckerd College in the first round of the double elimination tournament.

The now 45-15 Blazers battle Shippensburg (Pa.) State in a noon game today in the loser's bracket. Shippensburg lost a 6-1 decision to New Haven, Conn., in another first round game Saturday.

In night action, the University of Missouri at St. Louis met Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, and Delta (Miss.) State tangled with the University of California at Riverside.

Batting .318 as a team, not hitting the ball seemed to be the least of the Blazers' worries as they prepared to face the Tritons from St. Petersburg, Fla.

But on a rainy, overcast afternoon at Lamphier Park

## The Valdosta Daily Times

### SPORTS

Sunday, May 29, 1976 — 16-A —

here, a lack of hitting proved to be the biggest worry of all.

Eckerd, rated the number one team in the country, didn't swing the bat the way head coach Bill Livesey wanted either. But the Tritons' power boys came through against the VSC pitcher, Steve McDiffitt.

McDiffitt, now 10-1, pitched an almost flawless three-hitter. However, two of those hits were long, opposite field home runs by Joe LeFebvre and Steve Balboni.

LeFebvre's line shot zipped out of the park at the 335-foot mark in left field in the first inning.

Balboni, leading the nation in homers with 24, lofted a McDiffitt fastball over the right center fence into an oak tree 345 feet away in the seventh inning.

That drive proved to be the game winner in a contest delayed 67 minutes by rain.

The delay came in the VSC

fifth with centerfielder Sal Amadeo standing on third as a result of a single, the only Triton error, and a sacrifice.

With only one out and Billy Fortenberry at the plate, spectacular streaks of lightning and loud crashes of thunder sent the sparse crowd scurrying under the grandstand and the teams off the field.

The interruption came at a time when Eckerd pitcher Kerry Freedman, now 13-1, seemed to be losing his control and McDiffitt seemed to be finding the groove.

"I didn't feel as strong when I came back," McDiffitt said, "I thought the delay would hurt both pitchers, but as it turned out, it didn't hurt either one of us."

Freedman looked to be hurting when he threw a wild pitch into the dirt to score Amadeo. But he then

proceeded to strike out Fortenberry and Keith Griffin for two of his nine strikeouts in the game.

The sophomore right-hander still had trouble getting the ball over the plate, walking eight Blazers on the day.

"That's just the way he pitches," Livesey explained. "He can do that and still beat you." Livesey, who verbally chastised his players throughout the game for not hitting the ball, gave McDiffitt some credit as well.

"He pitched an intelligent ballgame," Livesey said. "But we enabled him to do that. We didn't play intelligently at all. We had two guys who figured him out, and those two hit home runs."

"But I don't want to discredit him. I can't remember when we've been held to less hits and less runs."

Eckerd was the leading scoring team in the nation this year with an average of 9.7 runs a game. The 32-7 Tritons are to meet New Haven at 6 p.m. today.

For Blazer coach Tommy Thomas, losing the first game in a national tournament is nothing new. In both the NAIA tournament in 1973 and this same tournament in 1974, his team lost the first game.

But even being rated as the number four team in the country is not going to help VSC in the slow climb through the losers' bracket.

"I always believe we can win a ballgame," Thomas said, "and I believe we can win tomorrow. But I'm also cognizant of the fact we can lose."

"I'm disappointed, but I'm sure I'm not as disappointed with our hitting as coach Livesey is with his."

"It was just a game between two good pitchers. McDiffitt pitched a whale of a game, but you have to give credit to their home run hitters, too."

Thomas' team was still in

the game through the final out in the ninth. In fact, the Blazers loaded the bases in the eighth and the ninth with two out.

"I had a great deal of confidence we could at least tie it up," Thomas said. "I was very anticipatory of someone getting a hit."

In the eighth, Craig Viers was the man on the spot. Batting in the third slot, Viers was third on the team with a .362 average coming into the game.

### Blazer Box

VSC	ab	r	h	bi	EC	ab	r	h	bi
Dmsan dh	2	0	0	0	Kwood ss	4	0	0	0
Petty dh	0	0	0	0	Wstld rf	4	0	1	0
Fite 2b	1	0	1	0	Lbrve cf	4	1	1	1
Viers rf	4	0	0	0	Balbnl lb	3	1	1	1
Whead c	3	0	1	0	Hwch dh	3	0	0	0
Amdeo cf	4	1	1	0	Kwist 3b	3	0	0	0
Fowler lf	2	0	0	0	Eagsh lf	3	0	0	0
Fbery lf	3	0	1	0	Miro c	3	0	0	0
Purdy lf	0	0	0	0	Mgrvy 2b	3	0	0	0
Grfin 3b	3	0	0	0	Fremn p	0	0	0	0
Tyler ph	0	0	0	0					
Shman ss	3	0	0	0					
Smith ph	1	0	0	0					
McDiff p	0	0	0	0					

TOTALS	26	1	4	0	000	010	000	1-4-3
VSC								
Eckerd					100	000	100	2-3-1
E — Shuman, Fortenberry, Griffin, Eagleson; DP — EC 2; LOB — VSC 7, Eckerd 4.								
2B — Fortenberry; HR — LeFebvre, Balboni; SB — Whitehead, Eagleson; S — Fowler, Fite.								
					lp	h	r	er
Freedman (W, 13-1)	9	4	1	0	8	9		
McDiffitt (L, 10-1)	8	3	2	2	0	5		
WP — Freedman 2.								

But he fouled away the first pitch, and Eckerd third baseman Randy Kwist leaned over the fence and gloved the ball for the final out.

In the ninth, VSC again put runners at every bag with two outs. This time, freshman Ken Smith had the chance to be the hero.

But instead of a run-scoring single, Smith dribbled a weak hopper back to the mound. Freedman knew his work was finally done.

The most exciting and controversial play of the day occurred in the sixth inning. It began when Bill Petty took David DeMersseman's place as designated hitter. DeMersseman, a .329 free-swinging, swung at two bad pitches and struck out his first two times up.

Petty replaced him and promptly drew a walk in the

sixth. He then tried to go to third on Skip Fite's sacrifice, but got called out by the third base umpire instead.

Not a fan in the stands agreed with the call, but no amount of arguing by Thomas and assistant coach Dave Waples could change the decision.

Waples was particularly upset.

"I told the guy we traveled a thousand miles to get here and then some idiot blows a call like that," Waples said after the game.

"I told him he blew it. And then he turns to Tommy and says, 'I may have blown it.' That really got to me."

Petty was even more sure he was safe.

"I didn't think he (Kwist) was even near me," Petty said. "He was crawling on the ground like a worm."

# Valdosta ousts Shippensburg 2-1

by Jim Wildrick

In the first do-or-die situation in the 1977 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division II World Series, Cecil Whitehead did and Shippensburg (Pa.) State died.

Whitehead, the clean-up batter for Valdosta (Ga.) State, delivered a two-out run-scoring single to break up a 1-1 tie and end a 13-inning marathon at Lanphier Park that lasted 3 hours and 12 minutes.

Valdosta, 46-15 over-all and 1-1 in tourney action, will play in today's 2:45 p.m. contest. Shippensburg suffered its second tourney loss and bowed out with a 32-11 record.

For 12 innings, neither team could score. In the top of the 13th, Mike Pokopec's double brought Shippensburg's Mike Elsesser all the way in from first with the go-ahead run.

Pinch-hitter Bobby Tyler began Valdosta's rally in the bottom of the 13th with a single to left. He moved to second after an out as Sal Amadeo stroked a single. Skip Fite then dumped a perfect bunt down the third base line, loading the bases.

It looked like Shippensburg might escape with a victory when Craig Viers hit a nubber in front of the plate.

Raider catcher Herb Leslie scooped up the ball and touched home for the force out, then tried for a double play at first.

But the throw was into the dirt and Viers and first baseman J. Paul O'Connor collided. By the time the ball was retrieved, the tying run had scored and Fite was standing on third. White head then sent a shot over second base off tough-luck loser Steve Schaaf, a sophomore who went the distance and tasted defeat for the first time this season in seven decisions.

What was Whitehead's reaction in the on-deck circle when he saw Viers' weak tap?

"I was wondering if I was going to get a chance to bat," replied the Valdosta catcher, who said his objective was to

"just get the bat on the ball."

Of Schaaf, who did not allow an earned run, Whitehead said, "He was pretty tough. He kept the ball down and away. Considering the number of innings he pitched, he did a heck of a job."

Shippensburg Coach Art Fairchild visited the mound in the 13th, but left Schaaf in.

"I think he wanted me to pitch as long as I could," said Schaaf. "I might have been able to finish the inning and maybe go one more, but I don't know. I usually lose four or five pounds when I pitch, but I probably lost seven or more today. It was pretty hot out there."

Schaaf's assessment of his fatal pitch to Whitehead?

"It was a high slider. I knew I didn't bend over enough when I threw it," he said. "It moved a little, but it came in about belt high. I charted their (Valdosta's) game with Eckerd yesterday and they seemed to have trouble with curves and sliders, so that's mainly what I threw."

Valdosta batted .320 as a team during the regular season, but the Blazers are 17 for 73 (.232) in two games here—which has Coach Tommy Thomas wondering where the offense has gone.

"I've never been so disappointed in our hitting," said Thomas. "You can say we're facing good pitchers, but

we've hit good pitchers all year. We hit guys like Larry Jones of Florida State—guys like that who are real prospects.

"But on the other hand, I never expected our pitching to hold up the way it has. Our offense is what got us here. I guess if there's one thing you learn about national tournaments, it's to expect the unexpected."

"Talk to Bill Livesey (Eckerd coach) and he'll tell you about that. He would have given you 100 to one odds his team would get more than three hits last night (in a 2-1 victory over Valdosta). These tournaments just bring out the unexpected."

Jimmy Wall started for the Blazers, worked 10 innings and gave up just six hits and no runs. He got out of jams in

the third and fourth innings by picking runners off and was backed by double plays in the first and third.

Chuck Beale followed Wall to the mound and was charged with the Raider run. Richard Sullivan replaced Beale in the 13th and was the beneficiary of the Blazer comeback. After facing only one batter and throwing just four pitches, Sullivan was credited with his eighth victory against three losses.

Despite the lack of offense, Thomas admitted he liked his team's chances with Whitehead at bat and the winning run 90 feet away.

"He's our best hitter," said the coach. "I think he was a unanimous choice as our most valuable player. If I could have picked someone to bat in that spot, it would have been him."

## World Series data

### STANDINGS

	W	L	Pct.
Eckerd	2	0	1.000
Calif.-Riverside	2	0	1.000
Mo.-St. Louis	1	1	.500
New Haven	1	1	.500
Valdosta St.	1	1	.500
Delta St.	1	1	.500
X-SIU-Edwardsville	0	2	.000
X-Shippensburg St.	0	2	.000
X-Eliminated			

### SUNDAY'S RESULTS

Valdosta St. 2, Shippensburg St. 1 (13 innings)
Delta St. 5, SIU-Edwardsville 4
Eckerd 14, New Haven 2
Calif.-Riverside 12, Mo.-St. Louis 0

### TODAY'S GAMES

Noon — Delta St. vs. New Haven
2:45 p.m. — Valdosta St. vs. Mo. St. Louis
7:30 — Eckerd vs. Calif.-Riverside

Shippensburg (1)	Valdosta (2)
ab r h bi	ab r h bi
Eses ss 4 1 2 0	Amadeo cf 6 1 2 0
Frain 2b 5 0 1 0	Fite 2b 5 1 2 0
George 3b 5 0 0 0	Viers rf 6 0 2 0
Pokopec rf 6 0 2 1	Whitehd c 6 0 1 1
O'Conn lb 6 0 1 0	Smith dh 5 0 2 0
Leslie c 4 0 0 0	Fowler lb 4 0 1 0
Hoffac cf 4 0 0 0	Forten lf 5 0 0 0
Kramer dh 2 0 0 0	Griffin 3b 3 0 0 0
Schaaf p 3 0 1 0	Petty ph 1 0 0 0
Hemerly lf 5 0 1 0	Shuman ss 5 0 2 0
	Maini 3b 0 0 0 0
	Tyler ph 1 0 1 0
	Alvarez pr 0 0 0 0
Totals 45 18 1	Totals 47 21 3
Shippensburg 000 000 000 000 1-1	
Valdosta 000 000 000 000 2-2	
E — Shuman, Hoffacker, Fite, Leslie;	
DP — Valdosta 2, Shippensburg 2; LOB	
— Shippensburg 10, Valdosta 9; 2B —	
Fite, Smith, Pokopec; SB — Fite; SH —	
Fowler.	
ip h r er bb so	
Schaaf (L, 4-1) 12 2/3 13 2 0 5 5	
Wall 10 6 0 0 4 2	
Beale 2 2/3 2 1 1 1 2	
Sullivan (W, 3-3) 1/3 0 0 0 0 0	
Wall pitched to 1 batter in 11th. U —	
Olson, Newman, Lash, Jones; T —	
3:12; A — 681.	

# Blazers Finally Creep Past Shippensburg

By MIKE CHASON

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — It took four years and 13 innings to do it, but Valdosta (Ga.) State College has finally won a game in the NCAA Division II national baseball tournament.

Still not showing the powerful batting punch that was their trademark all year long, the now 46-15 Blazers crept past Shippensburg (Pa.) State 2-1 in 13 innings here Sunday.

Valdosta State lost its first two games in its only other appearance in this double elimination tourney in 1974. It also dropped a 2-1 decision to number one ranked Eckerd (Fla.) College Saturday.

And for three hours and 10 minutes at Lamphier Park here Sunday, it looked as if the Blazers were about to keep their streak intact.

But a clutch two-out single by sophomore catcher Cecil Whitehead scored Skip Fite with the winning run and vaulted the Blazers into a 2:45 p.m. (CDT) game today against the University of Missouri at St. Louis.

The University of California at Riverside bumped USM-St. Louis 12-0 Sunday in one of two winners' bracket games. In the other, Eckerd bombed New Haven (Conn.) 14-2.

In the other losers' bracket game, Delta (Miss.) State tamed Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville 5-4. Shippensburg and SIU-Edwardsville became the first casualties of the eight-team tournament.

In today's other games, Delta State was to take on New Haven at noon and Eckerd was to battle U. Cal.-Riverside at 7:30 p.m. in a contest of unbeaten.

In a somewhat remarkable pitching performance by Shippensburg's sophomore right-hander Steve Shapp, Valdosta State was held scoreless for 12 straight innings in a relatively quiet game on a muggy Sunday afternoon.

The reason for the stillness was that Blazer freshman Jimmy Wall was doing an equally respectable job of silencing the Raider bats.

Wall was finally lifted by VSC head coach Tommy Thomas in the 11th after he had scattered six hits and walked the first batter of the inning.

Shippensburg coach Arthur Fairchild, who tips the scales at well over 300 pounds, never yanked Shapp. That might have been one of the keys to the game.

"I would have lifted him if I didn't have confidence in him," Fairchild explained as he waddled around in front of his dugout after the game. "He was undefeated (6-0), and I thought he could do it."

Shapp admitted he was tired in the final innings.

"I wasn't sure I'd still be in there in the 13th," Shapp said. "I thought I could still throw, but I was a little tired. That's the most I've ever thrown in my life."

Shapp was still two innings away from the all-time tournament record of 15 innings pitched by Tom Badcock of Springfield College against Florida Southern in 1970.

"I usually lose about four or five pounds during a game, but I figure I lost about seven during this one," Shapp said.

"It was the worst loss I've ever had to take."

Valdosta State kept knocking on the door in almost every inning, but it took a crucial error to open that door for Whitehead's heroics in the 13th.

The now 32-11 Raiders had picked up the only run of the game in the top of the 13th when cleanup man Mike Pokopec slashed an opposite field double down the left field line to score Mike Elsessor.

Thomas promptly put the hook to reliever Chuck Beale and brought on Richard Sullivan to get the final out.

In the bottom of the 13th, VSC was faced with a now or never situation.

"Before this tournament, we would have been confident of scoring," rightfielder Craig Viers said. "But the way we've been hitting the ball, we just weren't sure."

Thomas, who might have gained some inspiration and wisdom from a visit to Abraham Lincoln's tomb Saturday, inserted Billy Tyler as a pinch hitter to lead off the 13th.

Tyler, who was at a local nightspot until around midnight Saturday, lashed a single to left field. Scott Alvarez came off the bench to run for Tyler.

## The Valdosta Daily Times

### SPORTS

Monday, May 30, 1977 - 8 -

A single by centerfielder Sal Amadeo and a perfect bunt by Fite loaded the bases with one out. Viers came up and hit a six-inch dead duck which looked like a sure double play.

Shippensburg catcher Herb Leslie stepped on the plate to force out Alvarez but then threw wild in an effort to catch Viers.

When Viers crashed into the Raider first baseman and the ball rolled foul, Amadeo dashed home with the tying run.

"I just saw the ball rolling around, and I went on my own," Amadeo said. "Craig was running on the wrong side of the foul line so if the ball had hit him he would have been out. I'm glad it didn't."

So was a merry little band of VSC followers when Whitehead cracked Shapp's second pitch into centerfield to score Fite. Whitehead, who batted a team-leading .388 during the season, was 0-5 in the game until that moment.

"I was thinking I was due," Whitehead said. "He threw me a curve ball, so I should have been ready for it. That's all he threw me all day."

With the hit, Whitehead broke the all-time VSC runs-batted-in record for a season. Gene Felts set the record with 50 in 1972. Whitehead now has 51.

By the time Whitehead reached first base, he was mobbed by several teammates while Shapp just hung his head in disgust. The only other reaction came from Raider shortstop Mike Elsessor, who flung his glove toward the dugout.

"If I had to pick one man to be up at bat in that situation, it would have been Cecil," Thomas said. "He's our best hitter day in and day out."

"I still can not believe our hitting has not come around. We faced good pitchers, but there is no way you can tell me that either one of them is any better than several we faced during the season."

"At the same time, our pitching has been much better than I ever thought it would be. Wall did a good job for us, and Beale is always effective for about one time through the batting order."

Wall started the game with stomach pains because he hadn't eaten breakfast.

"It was really hurting there one time," the Jacksonville Fla., left hander said. "But the more I pitched the stronger I got. I felt like I could have thrown some more, but he's the coach."

"I really think he pulled me at about the right time."

SS	abr	h	bi	VSC	abr	h	bi
Elsess	4	1	2	Amadeo	6	1	2
Frain	5	0	1	Fite	2	5	1
George	5	0	0	Viers	5	0	2
Pokop	6	0	2	Whith	6	0	1
O'Conr	6	0	1	Smith	5	0	2
Leslie	4	0	0	Fowler	4	0	1
Hofckr	5	0	0	Frtbr	5	0	0
Krmer	3	0	0	Griff	3	0	0
Shapp	2	0	1	Petty	1	0	0
Hemly	5	0	1	Maini	3	0	0
TOTALS	45	1	8	Tyler	1	0	1

Shippensburg	000	000	000	000	1-1	8-2
Valdosta St.	000	000	000	000	2-2	13-2
E — Shuman, Hoffacker, Fite, Leslie; DP						
— SS 2, VSC 2; LOB — SS 10, VSC 9.						
2B — Fite, Smith, Pokop, SB — Fite; S						
— Fowler.						

Shapp (L, 6-1)	ip	h	r	er	bb	so
Wall	12	2	3	13	2	2
Beale	10	6	0	4	2	
Sullivan (W, 8-3)	2	3	2	1	1	2
	1	3	0	0	0	0

## NCAA Scoreboard

### FIRST ROUND

New Haven 6, Shippensburg 1  
Eckerd 2, Valdosta State 1  
Missouri-St. Louis 9, SIU-Edwardsville 5  
U-Cal-Riverside 8, Delta State 2

### SECOND ROUND

Valdosta State 2, Shippensburg 1  
Delta State 5, SIU-Edwardsville 4  
Eckerd 14, New Haven 2  
U-Cal-Riverside 12, Mo.-St. Louis 0

### THIRD ROUND

Delta State vs New Haven  
Valdosta St. vs Mo.-St. Louis  
Eckerd vs U-Cal-Riverside



—AP Laserphoto

*Eckerd's Pete Eagleson Slides Safely Into Second As Ball Gets Past Bart Shuman*



—AP Laserphoto

*VSC's Cecil Whitehead (4) Is Tagged Out At Home Plate By Fred Jascher*

## by Jim Wildrick

"I never hit one in Little League, high school or anywhere else," said the 5-foot-11, 165-pound sophomore shortstop. "I never even thought about hitting one here. I knew it would get over the fence."

Thomas chose senior left-hander Bill Petty to start against the Rivermen, but the southpaw with a 7-2 record did not last long. He went just

Sullivan was used as a starter most of the season.

The Rivermen gave the Georgians a helping hand with three errors—all of which came on pickoff attempts at first base. All three runners eventually scored.

UMSL (4)		Valdosta (11)	
	ab r h bi	ab r h bi	ab r h bi
Roady db	5 0 1 1	Amate db	2 2 1 1
Bone 2b	4 2 1 1	Fide 2b	2 2 1 1
Tobias cf	3 0 0 0	Viers r	5 1 1 1
Winkel 1b	4 1 1 1	Whitend c	4 2 2 2
Benoist 3b	4 0 1 0	Smith db	5 1 3 3
Lockett r	3 0 0 0	Fowler 1b	2 1 1 1
O'Leary if	3 0 1 1	Forsten 1b	4 0 0 0
Janick c	4 1 2 0	Griffin 3b	3 1 2 2
Floures ph.c	2 0 0 0	Skuman ss	3 1 2 2
Karras pr	0 0 0 0		
Totals	34 4 7 4	Totals	311 52 10
		210	300 008-4
		113	103 008-11
Valdosta			
E — Oelkers, Griffin 2, Brown, Win-			
kelmann: DP — UMSL 1; LOB —			
UMSL 7, Valdosta 8; 2B — Mann; 3B —			
Whitehead; HR — Bone, Shuman,			
Smith; SB — Bone, Tobias; SN — Grif-			
fin; SF — Pite.			

# Shuman Homer Lights Fuse In VSC Victory

By MIKE CHASON  
SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Bart Shuman grew up loving the game of baseball, but on a 95-degree Memorial Day afternoon, he grew to love it just a little more.

The 5-foot-11, 165-pound Valdosta, (Ga.) State College shortstop smashed the first home run of his life here Monday to light the fuse in an 11-4 Blazer explosion over the University of Missouri at St. Louis.

The win catapulted the now 47-15 VSC team into the semi-final round of the NCAA Division II World Series at Lamphier Park here against one of the pre-tourney favorites.

At 8:45 p.m. (CDT), tonight, the Blazers take on the University of California at Riverside in a do or die game for both. Riverside lost an 8-2 decision to number one Eckerd (Fla.) Monday night.

In the only other game Monday, Delta (Miss.) State eliminated third-ranked New Haven (Conn.) 5-3. Delta State, formerly known only for its national championship women's basketball teams, meets Eckerd at 6 p.m. tonight in the other semifinal.

Only Eckerd remained undefeated in the double-elimination tournament. The Tritons got two more towering home runs from first baseman Steve Balboni Monday night.

The first team All-America selection now has 25 homers for the year and four for the tournament.

But Shuman was perhaps even prouder of his round tripper than the Eckerd slugger will ever be.

"I was just trying to hit it

up the middle," Shuman said. "That's the first home run I've ever hit in Little League or anything."

"I never even hit one in practice."

Shuman had only three extra base hits and a .268 batting average going into the tournament.

Valdosta State designated hitter Ken Smith has hit quite a few homers in practice and before the big freshman's career is over, he's going to have quite a total in regulation games too.

Smith, from Cairo, Ga., clouted a tape measure job over the left-centerfield fence at about the 390-foot mark in the sixth inning.

Smith's third home run of the season came with teammates Skip Fite and Cecil Whitehead aboard. He was greeted with the same wild enthusiasm which accompanied every Balzer home run, but for sheer emotion, he was no match for Shuman.

The little shortstop followed his 330-foot poke every inch of the way over the right field fence. Just as he rounded first base, he saw it was over and leaped three feet in the air with both fists raised in triumph.

Shuman's parents, who made the long trip from Monticello, Fla., had tears in their eyes before their son ever made it to home plate.

VSC head coach Tommy Thomas wasn't crying but he admits he never imagined that kind of power from the ninth man in his batting order.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I ever dream Bart would hit a home run," Thomas said. "But this game

was exactly typical of the way we have been playing all year."

After hitting .318 as a team coming into this tournament, Thomas wondered where his offense had gone after losing a 2-1 game to Eckerd Saturday and nipping Shippensburg (Pa.) State College 2-1 Sunday in 13 innings.

But the Blazers are to need at least that same 12-hit, two-homer attack tonight against Riverside, rated second in the nation.

"To be absolutely honest, I think Riverside is a better ball club than we are," Thomas said. "I also think Eckerd is a little better than we are. I think we're about even with Delta State."

VSC assistant coach Dave Waples interrupted to add he thought the Blazers were better than Delta State.

"I'm not saying we're not going to beat Riverside," Thomas said. "These guys (the Blazers) are winners. They may not play great baseball all the time but they'll find some way to beat you."

It appeared the route the Blazers were going to take to defeat the Rivermen from St. Louis was just to out-hit them.

The now 30-13 St. Louis club shaved three hits and two runs off VSC starting pitcher Bill Petty in the first inning.

After a solo homer by second baseman Bobby Bone in the second, Petty was pointed to the shade. Richard Sullivan came on in relief.

Sullivan, who won Sunday's game despite pitching to only one batter, gave up three hits and one run the rest of the way.

"When I started, I felt good," Sullivan, now 9-3, said. "I was tired at the end but I wasn't worried about finishing. I knew we had someone like Chuck Beale who could come in and finish if I couldn't."

Sullivan, who says he's

been having trouble getting strikeouts this year, didn't have any problems Monday. He fanned eight batters and walked only one.

The St. Louis pitching staff couldn't cope with the Blazer bats or VSC athletic director Billy Grant.

Sitting directly above the VSC dugout, Grant was in a perfect position to razz the Rivermen pitchers.

And he did.

In fact, his constant chatter helped provoke two wild pickoff throws allowing Blazer runners to advance from first to third.

VSC scored a run in both the first two innings but went ahead for good in the third when Whitehead scored Fite and Craig Viers on a long triple to centerfield.

Three innings later, Shuman and Smith resorted to the long ball and the Rivermen never recovered.

St. Louis head coach Jim Nix didn't believe it was a case of running out of pitching.

"No, I think we had enough pitchers," he said. "They just didn't come through for us. When you walk people and give up home runs there's not much your defense can do about it."

## Blazer Box

VSC	abr	h	b	l	MSL	abr	h	b	l
Amdeo cf	3	2	1	0	Ready dh	5	0	1	1
Fite 2b	2	2	1	1	Bone 2b	4	2	1	1
Viers rf	5	1	1	1	Tobias cf	3	0	0	0
Whead c	4	2	2	2	Wiklmm 1b	4	1	1	1
Smith dh	5	1	3	3	Bensl 3b	4	0	1	0
Fowlr 1b	2	1	1	0	Loket rf	3	0	0	0
Frtbr lf	4	0	0	0	O'Lry lf	3	0	1	1
Grfin 3b	3	1	1	0	Mann ss	4	1	2	0
Shumn ss	3	1	2	3	Jaser c	2	0	0	0
Petty p	0	0	0	0	Flors c	2	0	0	0
Sulvan p	0	0	0	0	Okers p	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	31	11	12	10	Brown p	0	0	0	0
					Tibbles p	0	0	0	0
					TOTALS	34	4	7	4

Mo. St. Louis 210 100 000—4-7-3  
Valdosta State 113 105 000—11-12-2  
E — Okers, Winklemann, Brown,  
Griffin 2; DP — MSL 1, VSC 1, LOB — MSL  
7, VSC 8.

2B — Mann; 3B — Whitehead; HR —  
Bone, Shuman, Smith; SB — Bone, Tobias;  
S — Griffin; SF — Fite.

ip h r er bb so  
Okers (L, 3-2) 21.3 45 35 0  
Brown 31.3 66 43 1  
Tibbles 21.3 20 02 0  
Petty 12.3 43 32 0  
Sullivan (W, 9-3) 71.3 31 18  
MBP — Tobias by Sullivan; PB —  
Jascher.



# Riverside Tops VSC In Semifinal Round

By MIKE CHASON  
SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — When it came time to fight, Valdosta (Ga.) State College's Blazers were quick to respond.

When it came time to close the door on the University of California at Riverside Highlanders, the Blazers didn't respond quick enough.

Valdosta State let a ninth inning lead trickle through its unclenched fists here Tuesday night and lost an 8-7 decision to the second-ranked Riverside club as a result.

The loss was the second for the now 47-16 Blazers in the NCAA Division II Baseball World Series.

Riverside, now 41-19, advances to a 7:30 p.m. (CDT) game tonight against Delta (Miss.) State.

The Statesmen from Cleveland, Miss., pulled one of the shockers of the double elimination tournament when they bumped number-one ranked Eckerd (Fla.) College 8-6 in the only other game Tuesday.

By virtue of being the last team to get a loss, Eckerd gains a spot in Thursday's 7:30 p.m. final game against the Delta-Riverside winner.

VSC was only three outs away from a shot at playing in that game.

Leading 7-6 into the bottom of the ninth, the VSC pitching staff was faced with its

biggest hurdle of the tournament but this time the Blazers didn't clear the jump.

Instead, the Highlanders climbed on VSC's fourth and fifth relievers for two runs and the victory. Those pitchers, Jimmy Wall and Richard Sullivan, had both turned in outstanding mound work in other tournament games.

But as the clock struck midnight, the Blazers knew they had finally struck out.

In the top of the eighth, the Blazers didn't strike out at all. However, they were swinging their fists instead of their bats.

Craig Viers, one of the mildest-mannered members of the team off the field, triggered the bench-clearing melee when he took a swing at Riverside catcher Doug McCulloch.

Viers had just been thrown out at home plate and had crashed into McCulloch in the process. When Viers started walking back toward the dugout, McCulloch pushed him slightly with his arm.

The VSC junior right-fielder didn't hesitate at all. He turned around and took a wild, left-handed poke at the catcher.

In seconds, the home plate area was filled with the blue uniforms of the Highlanders and the bright red-clad Blazers.



**CRAIG VIERS**  
Ejected From Game

It took eight minutes to restore order and both Viers and McCulloch were ejected.

Earlier in the week, Viers was named a first team All-America selection.

"He pushed me and I just went crazy," Viers said. "He had said something to me earlier. I would have liked to have stayed in and played that other couple of innings but I guess I would do the same thing again."

The fight marked one of several appearances VSC Head Coach Tommy Thomas



**TOMMY THOMAS**  
47-16 Finish

and assistant Dave Waples made on the field during the three-hour contest.

In the sixth, Riverside's first team All-America pick, Nate Quarles, hit a dribbler toward VSC first baseman Bruce Fowler. Fowler picked up the ball just inside fair territory and swiped at the speedy Quarles going by.

"I hit him right on the leg," Fowler said. "It wasn't a real hard shot but it wasn't soft either."

Whatever kind of tag it was, it didn't satisfy the first base umpire. He said Quarles was safe.

The Highlanders went on to score three runs in the inning

off Blazer starting pitcher Steve McDiffitt.

"He (the umpire) said he didn't see," Thomas said. "But I'm not blaming the umpires for losing the game."

"We had some real chances to knock in runs and didn't do it."

VSC left 11 men stranded on the bases including all three bags filled in the sixth. In the seventh, VSC loaded the sacks with no outs. The Blazers got only one run out of the situation when Fowler hit into a double play.

Ironically, Fowler had three hits in his other four trips to the plate.

Leftfielder Billy Fortenberry also had three hits and made a spectacular grab of a sinking liner in the third inning.

But games are made up of good times and bad times, and Fortenberry had his bad times too. He slipped down in the eighth and allowed a routine single to get by him.

The tying run scored as a result. In the ninth, he was thrown out at home plate.

"We blew it," the always outspoken Waples said. "We could have won it but we blew it. I still believe we're as good as any team in this tournament."

McDiffitt, who pitched his final game in a VSC uniform, agreed with Waples. He admitted his arm hadn't fully recovered from a tough 2-1 loss to Eckerd Saturday.

"I was getting pretty tired out there," McDiffitt said. "I

# The Valdosta Daily Times

## SPORTS

Wed., June 1, 1977 — 11 —

felt all right to start with but I just got weak."

McDiffitt had never pitched with only two days rest before. He was given the starting nod when he told Thomas his arm had never felt any better than it did Monday.

Bill Petty relieved McDiffitt for one batter in the seventh before giving way to Chuck Beale.

The Highlanders left the bases loaded in that frame and only a great running catch by Sal Amadeo on a line shot to center field saved VSC from falling far behind.

Amadeo singled in Fowler with the go ahead run in the top of the ninth and left the future in the arms of the VSC pitchers.

Wall, who pitched to the final batter in the eighth, walked the first man up in the ninth. On a 3-2 count, his

change-up pitch floated over the plate for what he thought was a sure third strike.

But it wasn't.

"That made the difference in the game, I guarantee you," Wall said.

Sullivan, now 9-4, came in and gave up a single to Quarles.

"After that first guy got on, I turned to Leroy (Ken Purdy) and said I didn't like the way it looked," Amadeo said.

It got worse.

With the bases loaded, and only one out, pinch-hitter Eric Show hit a fire ball right back at Sullivan. It bounced off his glove into left field and Quarles bounded home with the winning run.

"It was wild and woolly, wasn't it?" Riverside Head Coach Jack Smitheran said. "I think it was just a matter of who was up last."

Thomas is now picking Eckerd to win it all but Smitheran believes his team isn't out of it.

"I think we can win it," he said. "We have to play tomorrow but I'd rather play than sit around."

And undoubtedly, so would Valdosta State.

### Blazer Box

VSC	abr	h	bi	UCR	abr	h	bi
Amde. cf	4	0	1	Frbs. lf	5	0	1
Fite 2b	4	2	1	Fnsco. 2b	3	0	0
Viers rf	3	1	1	Gnziz. 2b	1	0	0
Purdy rf	0	0	0	Crsly. 3b	4	1	2
Whld. c	3	1	1	Gris. rf	4	2	1
Smith dh	4	0	0	Gfrb. lb	4	1	1
Fwlr. lb	5	2	3	Wilms. ph	1	0	0
Ftnbry. lf	3	0	3	Lbrtch. ss	4	1	2
Grfn. 3b	2	0	0	Hmrdz. dh	3	1	0
Maini 3b-ss	1	0	0	Karp ph	0	0	0
Shmn. ss	4	0	1	McClh. c	2	1	1
Tyler ph	1	0	0	Trntt. c	1	0	0
Alvz. 3b	0	1	0	Show ph	1	0	1
McDiff. p	0	0	0	Sayers cf	2	1	0
Petty p	0	0	0	Fdry. p	0	0	0
Beale p	0	0	0	Csll. p	0	0	0
Wall p	0	0	0	Glaump	0	0	0
Silvn. p	0	0	0				

TOTALS 34 7 11 4

Valid. State 010 011 121—7-11-2

UC—Rvrsde. 020 003 012—8-8-2

E — Francisco. Fowler, Whitehead,

Lubratichs: DP — UCR 2; LOB — VSC 11,

UCR 10.

2B — Fortenberry, McCulloch, Gelfarb,

Carsley, Forbus; 3B — Lubratich; SB —

Fite, McCulloch, Lubratich; S — Amadeo,

Alvarez.

ip h r er bb so

McDiff. LR 6 2 3 5 5 4 4 5

Petty 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

Beale 1 1 1 1 1 1 0

Wall 1 3 2 1 1 1 0

Silvn. (L, 9.4) 1 3 2 1 1 2 0

Fodrey 5 1 3 6 3 2 3 2

Csll. 2 3 0 1 1 3 0

Glaum (W, 10-4) 3 5 3 3 4 1

HBP — Quarles by McDiffitt; WP —

Fodrey, McDiffitt, Cassell, Wall, Sullivan.



Valdosta State's Cecil Whitehead slides home safely under the watchful eyes of plate umpire Larry Olson as Missouri-St. Louis pitcher Bruce Oelkers awaits a late throw Monday at Lannier Park. With Whitehead

at third, Oelkers uncorked a wild pitch that produced the third run in Valdosta's three-run third-inning rally. The Blazers went on to score an 11-4 victory. (Staff photo by Dick Binetsch)



# Thomas Was Only Quiet One In Room 318

Midnight had come and gone by two hours, and the conversation was still flowing freely in room 318 at the Downtowner Motel in Springfield, Ill.

Sprawled on the two beds, sitting in one of the two clothes-covered chairs or just pacing the floor endlessly were at one time or another Valdosta State College baseball coach Tommy Thomas, his assistant Dave Waples, Thomas' parents, VSC athletic director Billy Grant and this reporter. A few players and a couple of their fathers trickled in and out, pausing only long enough to add their comments to the single topic of conversation.

That subject was VSC's 8-7 loss to California-Riverside in the NCAA Division II World Series. The eliminating defeat took place just up the street as the clock struck 12 at a now dark Lanphier Park.

As is the case with every game, there wasn't a person in the room who didn't have an opinion on how the Blazers might have won it. From the umpires to a lack of clutch hitting, every base was touched upon. Waples jokingly placed the entire blame on Thomas since he lost the coin flip for the right to be the home team the day before. Riverside trailed 7-6 going into the bottom of the ninth, but scored two runs to win it.

Riverside whipped Delta (Miss.) State 5-3 the next night to advance to the final round against number one rated Eckerd (Fla.) College. In that championship game, Riverside grabbed a 4-1 win and the national title.

And VSC was only three outs away from knocking the California team out of the tournament Tuesday night.

But it just wasn't to be.

That's one of the explanations Thomas gave for the loss and as vague as it sounds, it's one that's hard to disagree with.

Never has it been more evident than in this tournament just how important breaks are in baseball. Valdosta State lost two one-run games and in the Riverside contest as well as a 2-1 loss to Eckerd, the right breaks could have given the Blazers victories.

Never was it shown more clearly than against Eckerd when Craig Viers came up with two outs and the bases loaded. A .362 hitter, no VSC follower would have been surprised if Viers had singled in two runs. But he hit a foul ball which the third baseman caught by leaning way over the fence. If the ball had been six inches further foul, Viers might have come through.

With two men on in the second inning of the Riverside game, VSC shortstop Bart Shuman hit an opposite field line drive to left. If the Riverside leftfielder had been playing

the lefthanded-hitting Shuman two steps farther toward center, he never would have caught the ball.

But he wasn't.

But there were breaks the other way too. VSC centerfielder Sal Amadeo caught a screamer which had double written all over it against Riverside. Two men were on at the time. Leftfielder Billy Fortenberry made a diving grab of another ball which might have been an inside the park homer if he had let it get by him.

"Over the course of a season, the breaks will usually even out," Thomas said. "But in a short series like this, a couple of things go against you, and you lose."

Valdosta State left too many men on the bases in both losses. A hit looks impressive in a box score, but that run batted in may be the most important statistic of all. As Thomas knows only too well, the Blazers had their chances to beat Eckerd and Riverside.

Coming up with a clutch single would have made the umpire factor much less noticeable.

When a coach or a team talks about umpires being bad, most people who didn't see the game usually write off the complaints as sour grapes. Undoubtedly, many will do the same when somebody says the umps weren't too good in Springfield.

But in this case, it's not just sour grapes... it's the truth.

The eight best Division II baseball teams in the nation played under the less than watchful eyes of second-class umpires. They weren't consistent behind the plate, and they missed obvious calls on the basepaths.

Against Eckerd, VSC's Bill Petty slid into third base far ahead of the tag. He was called out. Against Riverside, first baseman Bruce Fowler tagged out a runner who passed right by him going down the line. He was called safe.

Thomas is not the kind of coach who stays on umpires' backs. But in this tournament, he spent more time jawing with the men in blue than he did giving signs to his players.

The umpires didn't take either of the games away from the Blazers. But they did change the momentum and when a team loses two games by one run each, momentum plays an awfully important role.

But the umpires didn't lose the games, the Blazers did.

And of course, there was the fight.

More than anything else, everybody wants to hear about the fight. Maybe it's the savage beast which beats deep in the breast-

bone of all of us. As baseball rhubarbs go, it was a good one.

Viers didn't really start it. He was pushed by the Riverside catcher and didn't take time to talk over the situation. He just started swinging. Both teams were on the field in seconds. A Riverside assistant coach took one of

the worst beatings. There wasn't a Blazer with a scratch on him.

Fighting is not part of baseball, and there's no way one can condone what Viers did. By the same token, there's no way one can justify the Riverside third baseman standing in Viers' way when he was trying to tag up on the same play. Viers had to push him out of the way with both hands to see the catch. The umpire says he never saw any interference.

The bitter disappointment of losing the game, the fight, the poor umpiring and the need to be in so much conflict the entire tournament left Thomas feeling utterly dejected in room 318 in the pre-dawn hours Wednesday.

While everyone went over the game again and again, Thomas calmly made plane reservations and packed his bags. He moved about the room talking only when he was spoken to.

The usually calm, mild-mannered VSC head coach later explained he felt his team had not represented Valdosta State the way it ought to be represented. He was worried about what kind of image the Blazers would leave with the tournament committee and the people of Springfield.

Hearing that his team's brawl was the first fight ever in the national tournament didn't help his feelings any. It was only natural Thomas would have these kind of thoughts because that's the kind of guy he is.

But a couple of weeks from now, it's going to finally hit him that his 1977 Blazers were the fourth best Division II baseball team in the entire United States.

That's one way Valdosta State has never been represented before.

## The Men in Red: A Team

by Larry Ricketson

Last Sunday I witnessed, along with a great many other Blazer fans, one of the finest games that I have had the pleasure to watch at Blazer Field. The final game of the Regional tournament between the Blazers and the West Georgia Braves was truly the game of the year. What other label could one possibly put on it? Everything that the two teams had worked for was now riding on the outcome of a single game. It was winner take all time, meaning the victor of the game would represent the South Atlantic Region at the National Tournament in Springfield, Illinois. The true test of a champion is its ability to overcome its own mistakes. The final game was a classic example. Trailing by a 1-0 score after Sal Amadeo parked a Bill Taylor fastball over the left field fence, the Braves got two 'gift' runs in the sixth on two Blazer errors to take a lead they held going into the bottom of the ninth. Skip Fite led off the last chance for Valdosta and drew a walk from reliever Brad Campbell. This brought Craig Viers, the tournament's leading RBI man, to the plate and Viers responded with a two-run homer that cleared the right field fence only six feet fair. Valdosta had finally nailed down the chance to attend Nationals. It would be hard to describe the scene that took place on Blazer Field as the ball disappeared over the fence. Man, it was beautiful! People jumping around, screaming, yelling, going crazy! And who could blame them? The Blazers had had to defeat the same teams **three** times to advance, and now they were there. The team was going. Team. That's the big point to make at this time. Team. That common word that everyone uses so much and takes for granted so often. People, that's the name of the game. The 1977 Blazers were the most unified **team** of baseball players that I have had the pleasure to have known. One could not praise this team and coaches Tommy Thomas and Dave Waples enough. No matter what one says in praise, there is always something else that could be added. I have never enjoyed anything as much as doing the play-by-play broadcasts for WVVS during the season, because you somehow felt that the Blazers would come out on top. I won't attempt to name the outstanding Blazers of this year, because that would consist of the entire roster. Every man on the team did his job when he was called upon, and he did it to the best of his ability. That's what makes up a team. That's what makes a champion. Blazers, you are a champion in every aspect. Congratulations.

# NCAA Tourney Had Its Moments

By MIKE CHASON

Some impressions left over from the NCAA Division II national tournament:

- The 10-foot high green wall which surrounded Lanphier Park. It looked much shorter than that when Eckerd first baseman Steve Balboni powered five home runs in five games over it.

- Blazer pitcher Steve McDiffitt missing the plane from Valdosta because of a classic case of oversleeping. He caught a later flight and then rented a car in St. Louis for a 95-mile drive to Springfield. Two days later, he pitched a three-hitter against Eckerd. It was the best job done on the Triton hitters all year.

- The lack of air conditioning at the Downtowner Motel for the first two nights. It's just as hot in Springfield as it is in Valdosta.

- Watching the other teams admire the VSC batgirls. The Blazers were the only club that featured the sun-tanned beauties.

- Seeing Blazer shortstop Bart Shuman hit his first home run ever. After he rounded first base, he leaped so high he could be dunking with Dr. J. with ease. Shuman's parents had tears in their eyes after the 330-foot shot.

- Hearing Shuman and freshman Ken Smith giving their first interviews with out-of-state newspapermen after both hit home runs against Missouri-St. Louis.

- Seeing the Shippensburg coach waddle out to the pitcher's mound. He must have weighed close to 350 pounds. It was said he lived at a local restaurant where a

\$4.50 all-you-can-eat smorgasbord was served every night.

- Watching Eckerd coach Bill Livesey yell at his players for not hitting the ball against McDiffitt.

- Seeing the relief pitchers warm up in the bullpens down the sidelines just like in the major leagues. They looked so alone out there during night games.

- Feeling sorry for VSC pitcher Richard Sullivan when he threw a strike on what was supposed to be an intentional pass to a Riverside batter. It's a sure bet catcher Cecil Whitehead won't forget it either.

- Just being around VSC assistant coach Dave Waples.

- Hearing Waples' sarcastic comments after VSC head coach Tommy Thomas lost the flip for the right to be the home team in the Riverside game. Waples was sure he could have won it.

- Valdosta State showing up for the first game in the national tournament only minutes before it started. Thomas had miscalculated the time, and the Blazers had time for only a short infield workout.

- Seeing the Blazer pitchers gallop in from the bullpen for the fight against Riverside.

- Watching Craig Viers land a looping left hand on the side of the head of Riverside pitcher Steve Glaum. Glaum was later named co-most outstanding player of the tournament.

- Hearing the Shippensburg players express wonderment when Viers was named a first team All-America choice.

- Just being around Minnesota Twins' scout Ellis Clary.

- Watching the endless card games which baseball players are addicted to.

- Getting the word that VSC's Billy Tyler was supposed to do an Elvis imitation at a local night spot Saturday. He never got the chance, but he did come up with a clutch pinch hit single the next day.

- Hearing Tyler lead VSC supporters in cheers from his strategic spot in the dugout.

- Standing in the dugout with the Blazers while rain poured down for an hour during the Eckerd game. The thunder and lightning made it an uncomfortable position to be in.

- Riding the red Blazer bus, nicknamed the "Red Dog", to the Friday night banquet which featured Chicago Cubs' front office man, Bob Kennedy.

- Talking with Ernie Banks at the tournament. Banks probably signed more autographs on more programs, hot dog wrappers, and at least one kid's arm than ever seemed possible in two hours.

- Hearing VSC athletic director Billy Grant get on a Missouri-St. Louis pitcher so bad, the kid actually gave Grant a grin while he was on the mound. Grant could have been a heckuva heckler.

- Watching Thomas stand alone near his team's dugout after Riverside eliminated the Blazers. The steady beat of the automatic sprinklers provided the only interruption to Thomas' thoughts of what might have been.

# Viers Is Named All-American; 3 Other Blazers On 2nd Team

By MIKE CHASON  
SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Junior rightfielder Craig Viers has become the second Valdosta (Ga.) State College baseball player in history to be named an NCAA Division II first team All-America selection.

Viers, a Crown Point, Ind. native, adds his name to a list initiated by former VSC centerfielder Sam Bowen in 1974.

Bowen is now playing in the Boston Red Sox minor league organization.

Gene Felts, another VSC outfielder, was named to the NAIA first team in both 1972-73.

This year's team was announced during the second round of the NCAA Division II world series here Sunday. The team is sponsored by the Worth Sports Co.

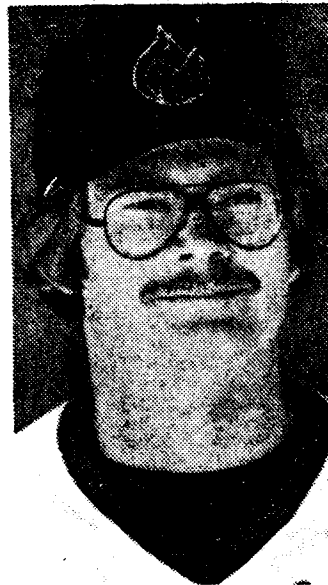
Viers hit the ball at a .362 clip during the regular season, South Atlantic Conference Tournament and the South Atlantic Regional Tournament.

He was named most valuable player of the regional after batting over .500 for the five-game series and hitting a dramatic ninth-inning home run to send the Blazers to the national tournament here.

For the first time ever, VSC also had three players named to the second team.

Senior secondbaseman Skip Fite, senior pitcher Steve McDiffitt, and sophomore catcher Cecil Whitehead all made the second team.

Fite, from Douglasville, Ga., hit .364 during the year. He led the team in stolen bases with 26 and also broke VSC records for runs scored



**SKIP FITE**  
Most Runs, Hits

and most hits.

Whitehead led the team with a .388 average, including 10 home runs and 50 runs batted in. He is a former Valdosta High School standout.

McDiffitt was the top pitcher on the team with a 10-0 record. The New Martinsville, W. Va., right hander had a 2.29 earned run average.

Other first team selections included junior first baseman Dewey Minton of Bellarmine (Ill.) College, senior shortstop Steve Lubratic of the University of California at Riverside, senior third-



**CRAIG VIERS**  
Second In History

baseman Jeff Carsley of U-Cal, Riverside, and sophomore outfielder Joe LeFebvre of Eckerd (Fla.)

Also senior outfielder Nate Quarles of U-Cal-Riverside, sophomore catcher Pat Murphy of New Haven (Conn.), senior pitcher Dale Reis of U-Cal-Riverside, sophomore pitcher Kerry Freedman of Eckerd and sophomore designated hitter Steve Balboni of Eckerd.

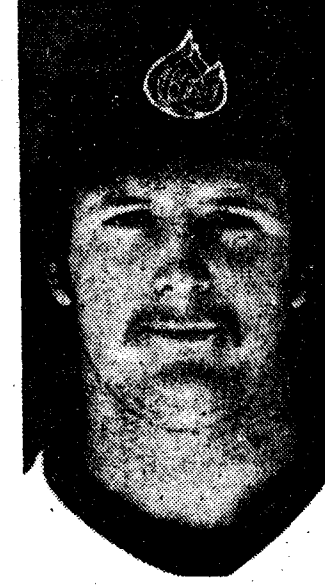
South Atlantic Conference member West Georgia had two players on the second team, first baseman Dan Logan and shortstop Barry Evans.



**CECIL WHITEHEAD**  
Home Run Leader

Other second team choices included third baseman Mark Mennemeier of Southwest Missouri, outfielder Bubba McBrain of Delta (Miss.) State, outfielder Jeff Gilbert of Cal-State-Northridge, outfielder Sammy Davis of Jacksonville (Ala.) State, catcher Claude Crauso of Tampa (Fla.) and pitcher Tom Michalczyk of New Haven.

Third team selections included first baseman Bryan Rodgers of Delta State, second baseman Wood Key of Rollins (Fla.), shortstop Tom Waring of Delta State, third baseman Keith George of



**STEVE McDIFFITT**  
Top Pitcher

Shippensburg (Pa.) State, outfielder Dennis Webb of Northwest Mo., and outfielder Bruce Windisch of New York Tech.

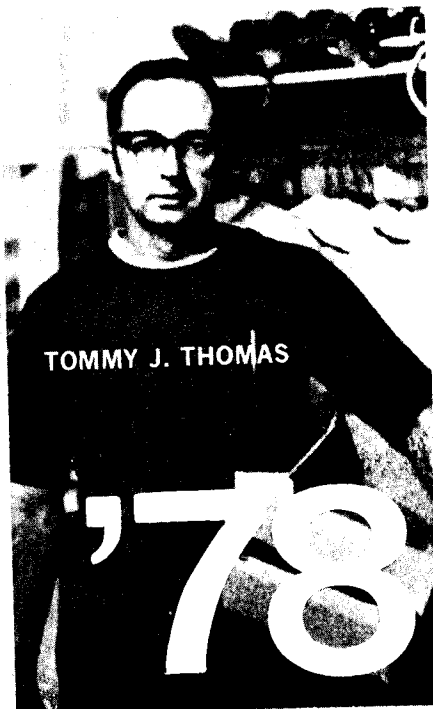
Also, outfielder Jim Winkleman of the University of Missouri at St. Louis, catcher John Crawford of Delta State, pitcher Tom Damiter of Shippensburg, pitcher Dennis Olson of Missouri at St. Louis and designated hitter Pete Labrasca of California State (Pa.).

The designated hitters on the team did not necessarily have to bat in that spot during the season.



— Times Staff Photo.

## Tommy Thomas: Lives Up To Image



**TOMMY THOMAS, Head Coach**  
A former Valdosta State College baseball star himself, Thomas took over the head coaching reins of his alma mater in 1968. During his 10 year tenure, the Valdosta native has compiled an impressive 313-153 record, including eight trips to post-season tournament play.

Thomas was named Coach-of-the-Year in the NAIA Area V in 1969 and again in the NCAA South Region in 1974 and 1977. He has the distinction of being the only coach in college history to guide his team to the NAIA World Series one year (1973) and then follow that by taking his team to the NCAA Division II World Series the next. Thomas received his BS degree in physical education from Valdosta State in 1962 and the MST degree from Georgia Southern in 1967.



Tommy Thomas



VALDOSTA STATE  
1978 Baseball  
SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE
February 26	(2) Clemson	Valdosta
March 3	Rose-Hulman	Valdosta
March 4	Rose-Hulman	Valdosta
March 5	West Virginia	Valdosta
March 6	Morris Harvey	Valdosta
March 7	Morris Harvey	Valdosta
March 8	Morris Harvey	Valdosta
March 11	St. Francis	Valdosta
March 12	St. Francis	Valdosta
March 13	St. Francis	Valdosta
March 14	St. Francis	Valdosta
March 18	Armstrong State	Valdosta
March 19	(2) Armstrong State	Valdosta
March 20	St. Xavier	Valdosta
March 21	St. Xavier	Valdosta
March 21	Tennessee	Valdosta
March 22	St. Xavier	Valdosta
March 22	Tennessee	Valdosta
March 23	Ohio Univ.	Valdosta
March 24	Ohio Univ.	Valdosta
March 25	Ohio Univ.	Valdosta

RIVERSIDE NATIONAL BASEBALL TOURNAMENT  
at Sports Complex & UCalif-Riverside Field

March 27	Washington State	Riverside, Calif.
March 28	Stanford	Riverside, Calif.
March 29	California	Riverside, Calif.
March 29	UCalif-Riverside	Riverside, Calif.
March 31	Maine	Riverside, Calif.
March 31	Oral Roberts	Riverside, Calif.
April 1	Oregon State	Riverside, Calif.

April 4	(2) Albany State	Albany, Ga.
April 5	Mercer	Macon, Ga.
April 7	West Georgia	Carrollton, Ga.
April 8	(2) West Georgia	Carrollton, Ga.
April 9	(2) Georgia Southern	Valdosta
April 11	Georgia Southwestern	Valdosta
April 13	Florida State	Valdosta
April 15	Florida	Gainesville, Fla.
April 16	(2) Albany State	Valdosta
April 17	Florida State	Tallahassee, Fla.
April 18	Florida State	Valdosta
April 21	Columbus	Valdosta
April 22	(2) Columbus	Valdosta
April 26	Georgia Southwestern	Americus, Ga.
April 28	Augusta	Valdosta
April 29	(2) Augusta	Valdosta
April 30	Florida State	Tallahassee, Fla.

May 2	Mercer	Valdosta
May 5-6-7	SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT	----

# VALDOSTA STATE

1978 Baseball

## ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	CLASS	B-T	JUNIOR COLLEGE	HOMETOWN
13	Ken Smith	1B	Soph.	R-R	----	Cairo, Ga.
7	Frank Gonzalez	2B	Jr.	R-R	Miami-Dade Center	Hialeah, Fla.
12	Keith Maini	3B	Sr.	R-R	Broward (Fla.)	Hollywood, Fla.
9	Bart Shuman	SS	Jr.	L-R	----	Monticello, Fla.
27	David DeMersseman	DH	Jr.	R-R	----	Valdosta, Ga.
19	Keith Griffin	3B	Sr.	R-R	Middle Georgia	Athens, Ga.
23	Scott Alvarez	UTL.	Soph.	R-R	----	Leesburg, Ga.
30	Craig Viers	LF	Sr.	L-R	----	Crown Point, Ind.
1	Sal Amadeo	CF	Jr.	R-R	Broward (Fla.)	Hollywood, Fla.
26	Bruce Fowler	RF	Jr.	S-L	ABAC	Columbus, Ind.
46	Tom Roszell	OF	Frosh	L-R	----	Harrison, Ohio
4	Cecil Whitehead	C	Jr.	R-R	----	Valdosta, Ga.
5	Larry Burns	C	Frosh	R-R	----	Hapeville, Ga.
21	Tim Harris	C	Jr.	R-R	ABAC	Leesburg, Ga.
17	Jimmy Wall	P	Soph.	R-L	----	Jacksonville, Fla.
22	David Raffensberger	P	Frosh	L-L	----	Ft. Pierce, Fla.
24	Mike Raines	P	Soph.	R-R	----	Shellman, Ga.
29	Bill Ranne	P	Sr.	R-R	Broward (Fla.)	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
34	Ronnie Lundell	P	Jr.	R-R	South Georgia	Reidsville, Ga.
35	Manny Gomes	P	Jr.	L-L	Edison (Fla.)	Edgewood, Md.
37	Rick Gorey	P	Jr.	R-R	Valencia (Fla.)	Harper Woods, Mich.
39	Lawrence Clarrington	P	Sr.	R-L	----	Perry, Ga.
43	Tim Carroll	P	Jr.	R-R	Brevard (Fla.)	Merritt Island, Fla.
44	Pat Kelley	P	Jr.	R-R	ABAC	Decatur, Ga.
54	Rick Mitchell	P	Frosh	R-R	----	Sarasota, Fla.



Ken Smith, who will play 1B, in 1978







