

Cadets sneak past Camden, 9-7

BY CHRIS FERNSLER

OF THE TRIBUNE & GEORGIAN STAFF

Brandon Mell was just another unproven sophomore.

He was way down the roster and quite inconspicuous. If you looked for awhile you could see No. 38 right next to his name.

On the field — when Mell did get on the field — he was a linebacker. He wasn't a star, nor a starter. He was a part of the background. He wasn't particularly noticeable and certainly not flashy.

But all that changed last Friday night at Chris Gilman Stadium. Mell, the little known linebacker, stepped out of the shadows and onto center stage. His fame was soon to be won with his foot and not his tackling prowess.

They made the plays in the fourth quarter, and we didn't. They earned it.

Jeff Herron

Head football coach

Mell, a player who had never kicked a field goal in his varsity football life, took a step forward. Filling in for Savannah Benedictine's starting placekicker (John Prozio), who was suspended last week, Mell gave the Cadets a stunning come-from-behind victory over Camden County with a 35-yard field goal with 9.5 seconds left in the Region 3-AAAAA football game.

That game-winning kick lifted Benedictine past Camden

County 9-7. That fourth-quarter shove also left the Wildcats all nicked up. The Cadets were showing no scars.

They got their transfusion of confidence, courtesy of Mell.

"Brandon has a lot of heart. A lot of this is good fortune, but our kids never quit. It's just desire and getting after it," said Tom Brackett, the head coach of a 4-1 Benedictine football team. "I feel good for these kids."

And Camden County Head Coach Jeff Herron feels bad for his players. They won every conceivable statistical category in the game except the most important one — points scored.

The Wildcats never could finish off the Cadets. They had their chances and their yards — 161 rushing. Benedictine had 134 yards on the ground despite

the slick, mushy and wet conditions at a rainy Chris Gilman Stadium.

Seven of the Cadets' eight first downs came after halftime. All nine of Benedictine's points were scored in the final quarter. That impressed the Wildcats, but it didn't make them happy.

"They made the plays in the fourth quarter, and we didn't. They earned it," Herron said of the region win at Kingsland. "We had a chance to put the game away. We moved the ball and moved the ball, but [almost] every time we had a mistake. We could have won. We're extremely down."

There are many reasons why Camden County did lose again at home. The Wildcats

See WILDCATS, page 2B ◊

Wildcats: Win slips through team's hands

■ continued from page 1B

have dropped two of three games at Chris Gilman Stadium this year. They are 2-2 overall and nearly as flat as that record.

The Wildcats managed just nine first downs against Benedictine. The Cadets had even less with eight, but they also got 70 yards on nine carries from senior halfback Brooks Ziegler.

Lamar Owens, Benedictine's junior quarterback, set no offensive records. But he did gain 56 yards on nine carries. One of those runs, a 12-yarder, got the Cadets on the scoreboard with 6:07 left in the game.

Mull's PAT failed to tie the game, but by the end of the fourth quarter he would be a football hero, thanks to his accurate right foot. Mull didn't give up and neither did the Cadets.

They got a late defensive stop and one big pass completion from Owens in the closing seconds. Then with 9.5 ticks still on the clock Mull kicked his game-winning 35-yard field goal.

Benedictine, the team with only eight first downs and 163 yards of total offense, ran off the field with a win while Camden County staggered off the field with a loss. Robert Matthews, the Wildcats' receivers coach, did not at all like what Camden County caught.

"It hurts, but sometimes this is the way it goes. I guess. Any-

thing can happen," said Matthews.

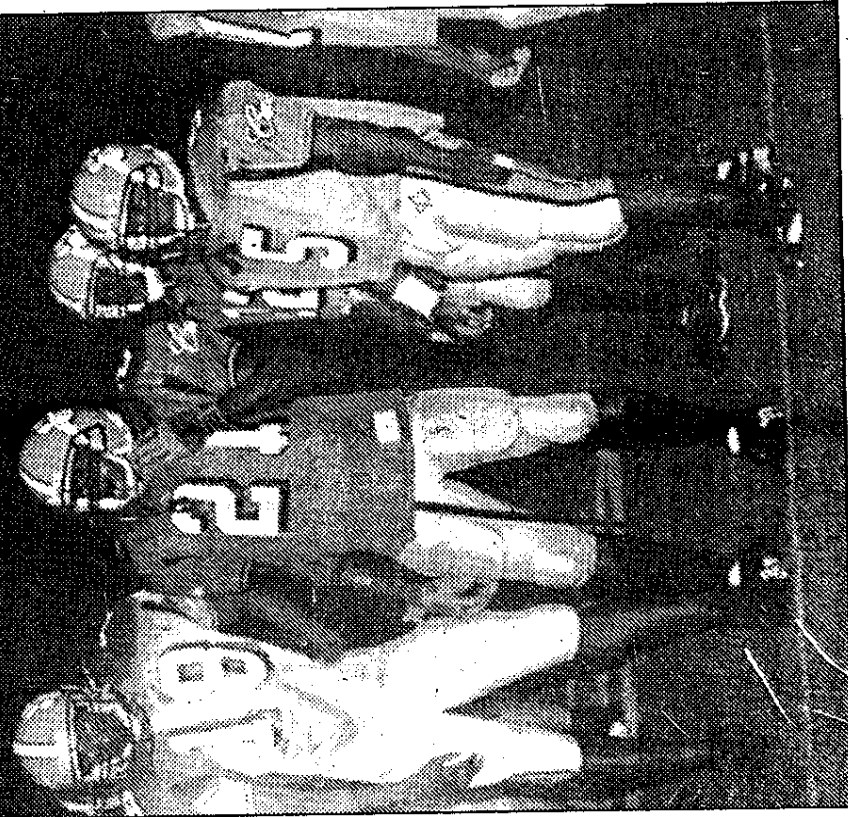
Even just seven points from the Camden County wing-T offense. Junior fullback Rafael Campbell scored the Wildcats' first, last and only touchdown of the game with a 1-yard run up the middle in the second quarter. Jerol Drawdy knocked through the PAT for Camden County's seventh point.

But as the Wildcats found out seven points is not enough to beat the Savannah Benedictine Cadets. Camden County lost the game and had no one — not Marcus Singletary, Jeremy Bacon or senior fullback Keon Weston — rush for more than 53 yards.

Junior quarterback Dane Best (1-for-4 passing for 14 yards) tried his best, too, but Benedictine still left with the inferior statistics and the superior effort.

Defensive deeds — Luck shined on the Cadets on a cloudy, rainy night in Kingsland. Benedictine won despite its nine points, eight first downs and the mud on the bottom of its shoes. Win or lose, Camden County's defense made it a tough, dirty and tiresome night in the trenches, however.

Getting physical and staying that way were Wildcat defensive ends T.J. Martinez and Damian Green, and senior tackle Derrick



CAMDEN FOOTBALL PLAYERS (from left) Jimaine Griffin, Greg Woods, Quentin Roman and Kevon Hutchinson couldn't get too excited about last Friday night's results at Chris Gilman Stadium. The Wildcats lost their second straight home game. (Tribune & Georgian photo/Chris Fernsler)

Melton. Camden County safety Brian Crum and junior cornerback B.J. Fields had some big hits, too.

Crum, a 6-foot-2, 230-pounder, also intercepted a Cadets pass in the second quarter.

Grid schedule — Camden County and Crum will play a string of three away games beginning this Friday night. The first of those contests will be a game against the Glynn Acad-

emy Red Terrors. That region scuffle will start at 8 p.m. in Glynn County Stadium at Brunswick.

During October, Camden County also has away games scheduled against Savannah Beach High (Saturday, Oct. 14) and Windsor Forest (Saturday, Oct. 21). Both of those games will kick off at 8 p.m. in Savannah.

Wednesday, October 4, 2000

TALE OF THE GRIDIRON TAPE

Final Score:

Savannah Benedictine 9
Camden County 7

First Downs:

Wildcats 9
Cadets 8

Total Offense:

Benedictine 163 yards
 134 rushing and 29 passing
Camden County 190 yards
 161 rushing and 29 passing

Rushing:

Cadets

Brooks Ziegler, 9-70 yards
 Lamar Owens, 9-56 yards
 Travis West, 4-4 yards

Wildcats

Keon Weston, 8-53 yards
 Jeremy Bacon, 9-51 yards
 Marcus Singletary, 8-23 yards
 Dane Best, 7-7 yards

Passing:

Benedictine

Lamar Owens, 3-12, 29 yards
 one interception

Camden County

Dane Best, 1-4, 14 yards
 Corey Duncan, 1-1, 15 yards

Penalties:

Cadets 7-40 yards
Wildcats 8-70 yards

Next CCHS Game: This Friday against Glynn Academy in Brunswick. The region matchup will get under way at 8 p.m. at Glynn County Stadium.