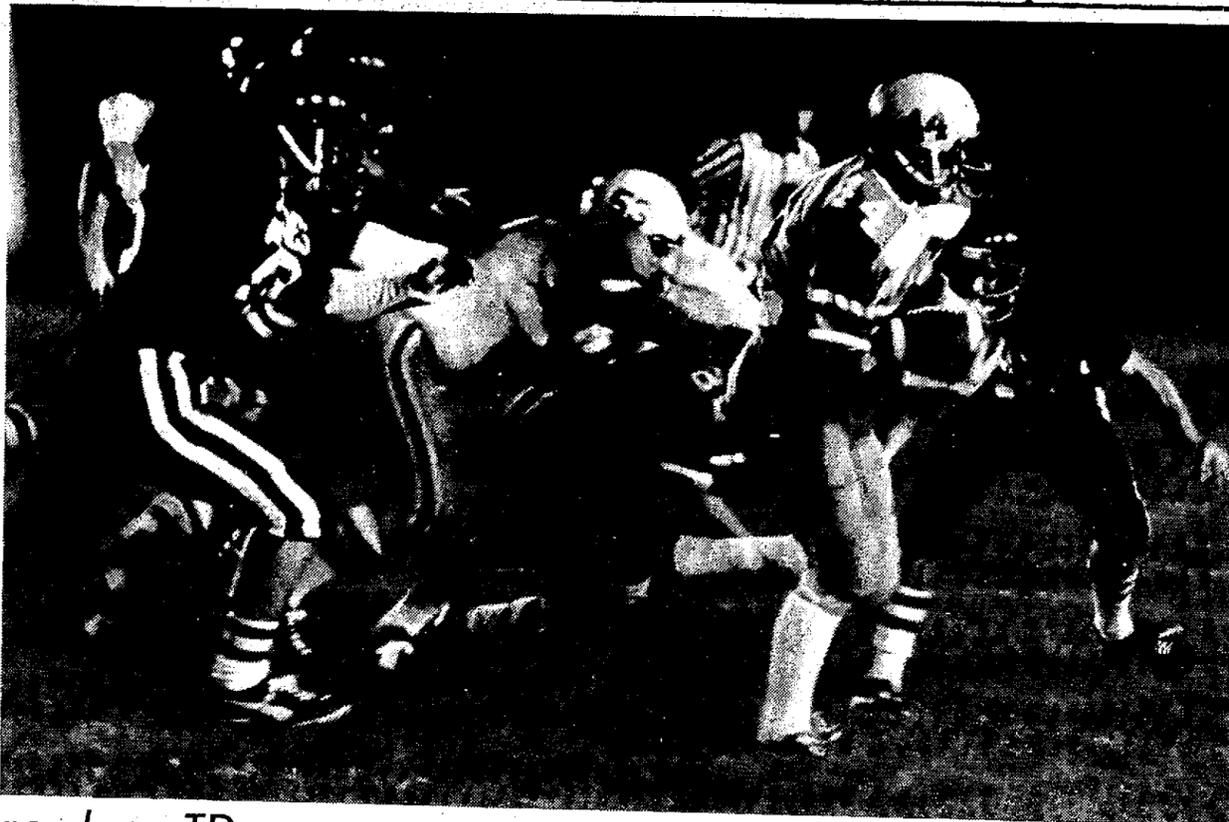


## Taylor carries the ball

Sun Valley running back Rick Taylor (44) picks up four yards on first-quarter play against visiting St. James. St. James shut out the Vanguards, 8-0, in the first game for both teams.



## DiGiacomo scores lone TD

# St. James shuts out Sun Valley

By GENE GOMOLKA  
Daily Times Staff Writer

ASTON — After 20 minutes of action in Friday night's game, St. James High fans were convinced the 1977 Bulldogs could run, pass and play defense.

The only question remaining was: could they score? The Jims—at that point in the action against host Sun Valley—had rolled up 168 yards rushing and 22 yards passings in 38 plays. Still, the score was 0-0.

One play later, at 3:57 of the second period, the Bulldogs' Guy DiGiacomo settled the question about scoring. The 5-8, 175-pound junior found open space around his right tackle and ran in a one-yard touchdown that eventually proved to be the game's only score as St. James won, 8-0.

"We had the usual first-game jitters," explained St. James coach Joe Logue. "We can stand some of those mistakes in a preseason game like this. But, if we do these same things later, it's going to cost us."

Logue referred to 60 yards lost

in the first-half alone as the Jims were called for two clips, one holding and three illegal motion penalties that stymied two other scoring opportunities.

"When you run as many plays as we did in the first half (54) you should have more than one touchdown," Logue continued. "Most teams will average 65 plays a game. We had our chances but..."

Sun Valley also suffered in this, the first game of the season for both teams. The Vanguards fumbled seven times, recovering three, and lost the ball twice on interceptions.

"We beat ourselves," said Sun Valley coach Bob Fithian. "We couldn't get rolling in the first half. We didn't do anything different in the second half. No adjustments."

"We just yelled at them a little more."

Although St. James held a whopping statistical advantage in the first half (261-92), the Vanguards got their game together after intermission, outjuggling the Jims, 138 yards to 50.

And, it took some last second-heroinics by the Jims secondary to preserve the victory.

With just two seconds left in the game, Sun Valley quarterback Mike Bocella uncorked a long pass to Rick Taylor from the Vanguards' 33-yard line. Taylor caught the ball in a crowd at the St. James one-yard line where he was first hit by the Jims' Mike Nusspickel and wrestled to the ground by defensive standout, sophomore Dan Keenan as the game ended.

"We came that close," Fithian said, separating his palms. "One foot and we would have tied."

The Vanguards would have attempted a two-point conversion to offset St. James' PAT on a pass from junior quarterback Chris Kozak to John Nicholas following DiGiacomo's second-quarter score.

"Even though we made a game of it in the second half, I'm not satisfied," Fithian said. "We did see some good individual work out there but we didn't play as a team. We haven't begun to jell."

Despite the mental errors, St.

James showed it had the offensive material that could bring the Jims another winning season.

DiGiacomo, who played only on the kickoff and punt return teams last season, gained 99 yards rushing on 26 carries. Nicholas, a 5-11, 175-pound fullback, gained 89 yards (15 plays) in the first half alone and finished with 104 yards after just five carries in the second half.

DiGiacomo, the Mr. Outside of the St. James running combination, credited his pulling guards Mark Baldino and Joe Fortunato for their play-breaking blocks. Nicholas, who takes most of his runs up the middle, got help from his tackles Jim Kereszi and Jim Jarusinski.

Kozak, a 5-11, 180-pound junior in his first starting role, went 4-for-9 and 40 yards as the Jims stayed on the ground. Bocella, a 6-0, 170-pound lefthander, looked good calling the Vanguards signals but was intercepted twice by Keenan.

John Billingsley set up the St. James touchdown when he recovered a fumble at midfield with

7:49 remaining in the second quarter.

Kozak threw two passes to Bill Tobin for 18 yards in the 50-yard scoring drive. Tobin's second catch for 10 yards at the Vanguards' five-yard line paved the way for a four-yard charge by Nicholas before DiGiacomo took it in one play later.

"We know we made a lot of mistakes," DiGiacomo said. "Those penalties kept hurting us. But, we'll put it all together. We'll do better in the league."

Sun Valley's Jeff Owsley, who was stopped for no gain in his only first-half carry, rushed for 46 yards in 10 attempts after intermission.

Bocella, who completed 3-of-6 passes for 55 yards in the first half, added 4-for-7 and 67 yards in the final two quarters.

"I think Mike did a fine job in his first varsity game," Fithian noted.

St. James	0	8	0	0	-	8
Sun Valley	0	0	0	0	-	0
SJ—	DiGiacomo	1	run			

(Nicholas pass from Kozak).

## Keenan keys Jims' defense

By GENE GOMOLKA  
Daily Times Staff Writer

ASTON— Last season didn't go the way Dan Keenan planned.

Keenan, a 5-10 sophomore defensive back, who intercepted two passes and preserved St. James High's 8-0 win over Sun Valley Friday night with a bear-hug tackle at his own one-yard line, hoped to get his scholastic career started in 1976.

He did get to play in a couple of the Jim's freshman games before he was hurt. By the time his injury healed, he realized it was too late to go back. So he reported to the Norwood Boys Club 75-pound team instead.

There weren't very many people in the stands Friday who knew that Keenan had returned. Keenan wore the Bulldogs' jersey No. 41. That jersey belongs to Andrew Warrington, a senior defensive back who broke his wrist in practice this week.

KEENAN, listed as an 'extra' in the program, proved he belonged on the varsity with heads-up defensive play.

In the second period, he made a diving interception of a Mike Bocella pass at his own eight-yard line after teammate Mike Nusspickel tipped the ball. Midway through the fourth period, Keenan hauled in another interception at the Jims' 39-yard line.

But, Keenan's biggest play in his first varsity game was still to come.

With two seconds left in the game, the Vanguards called for a deep pass when they reached the St. James 33-yard line. Bocella spotted Rick Taylor streaking toward the goal posts and let fly.

Taylor turned to catch the ball at the one-yard line. Before he could spin around, Taylor was first hit by Nusspickel.

"I wasn't anywhere near the ball," Keenan said. "I came over after he made the catch and Mike made the first hit."

At which time Keenan wrestled Taylor to the ground as the game ended.

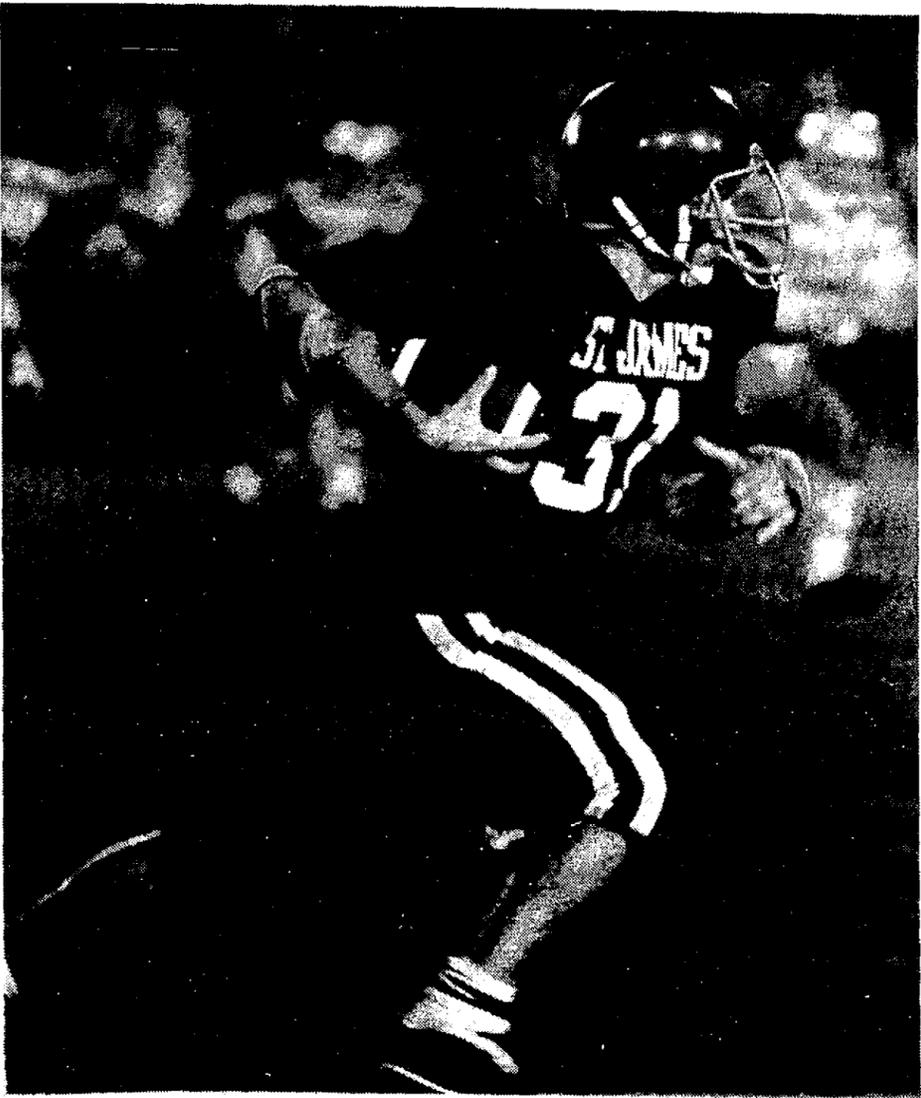
ST. JAMES assistant coach Bob Nugent explained his defensive strategy.

"We weren't in an all-out 'prevent' defense," he said. "I've been burned too many times with that. We sent our middle guy (Nusspickel) deeper than usual with the linebackers going outside to stop the short pass."

"There were enough of our guys under the ball to catch it. But, they were afraid to be too aggressive and go for the ball. Nusspickel and Keenan did a good job making the stop."

The St. James bench emptied as the winners swarmed around Keenan.

This season didn't start the way Keenan planned it either. But, he likes the difference one year has made.



St. James' John Nicholas looks for running room

# MN wins 8-6

By BOB FRANKLIN  
Daily Times Staff Writer

MARPLE — Marple Newtown High School's Tigers out-gained West Chester East 215 to 80 in total offense and Jock Peterson added another 116 yards on three nifty punt returns here Friday night in the season opener for both teams.

But despite MN's obvious superiority, the Tigers settled for a narrow 8-6 victory.

One drive of 67 yards ended with a fumble on East's 10 in the second period and another march of 39 yards stopped on East's 5 when the clock ran out to end the first half.

"I'm pleased with the way we moved the ball, but not with the fact that we only got one score," said winning coach Bob Kenig.

"Our defense deserves a lot of credit. It showed me a lot tonight," said Kenig, who watched his Tigers hold East to three first downs, including only one in the second half.

MN collected 14 first downs. Despite the one-sided statistics, MN might have had to settle for a tie had it not been for an illegal procedure penalty against East following the Tigers' third quarter touchdown on a five-yard run by Tim Lambert.

The Tigers were set to have Scott Lehman try to kick the extra point, but East jumped off-sides before the play got underway and Kenig changed the call to have Peterson run the option.

Peterson rolled to his left, cut sharply, ran out of the arms of one tackler and stepped into the end zone for what proved to be the winning points.

East got back into the game early in the fourth period when cornerback Herb Jackson scooped up a fumble and sprinted 52 yards to a touchdown.

Jackson got his chance when a close-range pitchback from Peterson to Ed Mirra was not controlled by Mirra.

East went for two points on the conversion, but a hard-rushed Mike Graglia pass fell incomplete.

Peterson gained 94 yards on 14 carries, which added to his 116 on punt returns, gave him a 210 tab for the evening.

Peterson, who was down during his first crack at running MN's newly-installed Delaware Wing T offense, says he loves it.

"We ran the veer last season and I didn't get to carry the ball as much as I would have liked. I like the Wing T much better because the opening for the quarterback to carry the ball comes up more often."

"At least it (QB opening) was there tonight. I think their defense stayed confused all night," said Peterson.

The Tigers' touchdown drive covered 70 yards in 10 plays with Kurt Worley accounting for 34 of it on four carries.

Peterson made the money play when he picked up nine yards for a first on the 23 when it was third-and-4.

He then stepped off another 11 yards for a first down on the 12.

Mirra banged to the 6, Worley picked up a yard and Lambert took it the final five, showing great upper body strength as he carried two tacklers into the end zone with him, even though he was standing straight up when almost stopped at the 2.

NOTEABLE — Worley gained 62 yards in eight carries, Lambert logged 52 yards in 13 assignments...MN's pass rush was superb, forcing 6-4 QB Graglia to unload eight incompletions. Graglia was sacked twice — once for nine yards by Lehman and Gil Maze and another time for seven yards by Lehman...Graglia completed two passes for a total of 16 yards.

Peterson threw four times and completed none...Headlinesman Jack Ruffino says the lack of penalties was very unusual for an opening game. MN was penalized twice for 10 yards, East drew 364 yards on four infractions...Joe Wenner delivered a crushing block to get Peterson loose on one of his punt returns (for 30 yards) in the second period. Peterson's other returns were for 23 and 53 yards...MN's next game is at home next Saturday (10:30 a.m.) against one-time Thanksgiving Day rival Springfield.

EAST 0 0 0 6—6

MARPLE 0 0 8 0—8

M — Lambert 5 run (Peterson run)

E — Jackson 52 run with fumble (pass failed)