

WPCC Gridders Halt East Carolina Streak

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GREENVILLE — In 1970, the North Carolina Club Football Association was in its first year of existence and East Carolina University shared the association championship.

After that, the Pirates refused to share the title, winning in 1971, 1972 and 1973 and they lost only one game at home during that four-year span.

Now they can make that two. The Pioneers of Western Piedmont Community College blanked the Pirates, 15-0, here Saturday.

It was a clear, hot day when the Pirates kicked off and things got a lot warmer before it was over. East Carolina uses a single wing offense and was unable to move the ball against the Pioneers' 4-3 rover defense.

The Pioneers began the second period, staying on the ground with their own offense, behind the running of Gary Rutherford, Frank Gardin, Steve Watson and Gene Kirby and drove to the Pirate five. On a fourth-and-goal situation, Jerry McCurry attempted a field goal but it was blocked.

That was the only scoring threat either team made during the first half. The Pioneer defense held East Carolina

without a first down in the first two quarters. Western Piedmont's players had 125 yards rushing and seven first downs themselves.

After a severe thunderstorm during halftime, The Pioneers found the way to the goal line. Safety Frank Gardin took the second-half kickoff on his 15 yard line, followed a wedge of blockers to the middle of the field and then spotted an opening and cut left. He got a key block from Larry Edmundson and went in the full 85 yards to give Western Piedmont a 6-0 lead.

The Pirates were unable to move the ball and Western Piedmont took over on its 30 yard line later in the quarter. Behind the passing of quarterback Larry Banner and the receiving of Gene Kirby and Jack Hyatt, the Pioneers went on the march again. They were stopped at the seven and again McCurry lined up for a field goal try. This one, from 25 yards, was successful, giving Western Piedmont a 9-0 advantage.

East Carolina's offense picked up a little in the fourth period until a costly fumble took the Pirates right out of the game.

East Carolina kept the ball for seven plays and then tried to

sweep around left end, but the runner was hit and he fumbled. Western Piedmont's Ken Powell scooped up the ball and dashed 60 yards for a touchdown. That made it 15-0.

The East Carolina offense continued to pick up yardage, but again Western Piedmont came up with the big play. With five minutes left in the game, the Pirates attempted a field goal from the 20, but it was blocked by 6-5 tackle Mike Burr and recovered by Columbus Carpenter and returned to the Pioneer 40.

Under the direction of Sam Wiseman, Western Piedmont move the ball down to the 30 before time ran out.

The defensive unit of the Pioneers got a major portion of credit for the victory. Joe Jackson, Donald Caldwell, Steve Smith, David Pritchard did most of the work in the line with Ted Mull and linebackers Ken Mathis, Kirby Jarrett, Limmie Smith, Allen Jugar and Bob Hiceman lending considerable support. East Carolina had 87 yards rushing in the game and no pass completions.

Leaders in the defensive backfield were Carpenter, Bobby Rhodes, Powell and Jeff Abel.