

June 4, 2013

Jefferson County Board of Education  
VanHoose Education Center  
3332 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40218

RE: Name of Seneca High School Ron Cain Stadium

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to show my support in naming Seneca High School's football stadium in honor of Ron Cain. Mr. Cain was devoted to Seneca and the students. His loyalty and dedication will never be forgotten.

Sincerely,



Michelle L. Dillard, Principal  
Seneca High School



Mr. Bob Dearmond  
Assistant Principal, Seneca High School  
3510 Goldsmith Lane  
Louisville, Kentucky 40218

May 28, 2013

Dear Mr. Dearmond,

As the Councilperson representing Seneca High School and the surrounding area, it is with great enthusiasm that I join with others supporting the naming of Seneca's stadium after Coach Ron Cain.

The "Ron Cain Stadium" has been and will be a central space for our community and one offering the pride of the past with the promise of the future. Coach Cain's role in the early success of the Seneca football program is remembered by many leaving a very impressive seven year record of 61-10-1.

Such an honor is afforded to few persons. Those who have shown leadership and guidance to the youth of our community are worthy of this tribute. Coach Cain earned and deserves this honor and tribute.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent T. Ackerson".

BRENT T. ACKERSON  
26<sup>th</sup> District Councilperson  
Louisville-Jefferson county Metro  
601 W. Jefferson Street, Room 317  
Louisville, Kentucky 40202  
502-574-1126

**Seneca High School**

3510 Goldsmith Lane  
Louisville, Kentucky 40220  
(502) 485-8323



July 8, 2013

JCPS Board of Education  
3332 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40218

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to formally apply for the naming of Seneca High School athletic stadium to "Ron Cain Stadium". I have enclosed all the letters and information needed for your consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scott Ricks", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Scott Ricks-Athletic Director  
Seneca High School

**Seneca High School**

3510 Goldsmith Lane  
Louisville, Kentucky 40220  
(502) 485-8323



July 8, 2013

Jefferson County Board of Education  
VanHoose Education Center  
3332 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40218

RE: Naming of Seneca High School athletic stadium

Dear Board Members,

As a member of Seneca's School Based Decision Making Advisory, we support and approve the naming of Seneca High School's athletic stadium to "Ron Cain Stadium". Mr. Cain was devoted to Seneca and the students. His loyalty and dedication will never be forgotten.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Heather Jones", written in a cursive style.

Heather Jones, SBDM Advisor

**Seneca High School**

3510 Goldsmith Lane

Louisville, Kentucky 40220

(502) 485-8333



JCPS Board of Education

3332 Newburg Rd

Louisville, KY 40218

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Seneca Past and Present, the Seneca High School alumni association, we would like to express our support of Seneca's request to name the school athletic stadium "Ron Cain Stadium".

Ron Cain came to Seneca from Waggener high school in 1963 and stayed until 1969. He made an indelible imprint on Seneca High School athletics for years to come. He was the first Jefferson County coach to win a Class AAA State Championship. Never having a losing season, over 50% of his players went on to play at some collegiate level.

We believe that naming our football field after such an influential man in Seneca athletics is the least we can do to show our appreciation for what he did for Seneca athletes. The list of his accomplishments is long and the list of those athletes that played under him and respected and appreciated him is even longer. Let us honor him by naming our athletic stadium "Ron Cain Stadium".

Seneca Forever!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Grover Sales".

Grover Sales- President

Seneca Past and Present, Inc.

**Seneca High School**

3510 Goldsmith Lane  
Louisville, Kentucky 40220  
(502) 485-8323



July 8, 2013

JCPS Board of Education  
3332 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40218

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Seneca High School PTSA, we support the request of Seneca High School to name the stadium after former coach, Ron Cain.

Coach Cain was huge part of Seneca athletics and naming the stadium "Ron Cain Stadium" would be a great way of honoring the beloved coach. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kennetha Kelly".

Kennetha Kelly  
Seneca PTSA President

## The Making of a Champion by Phil Thompson '66

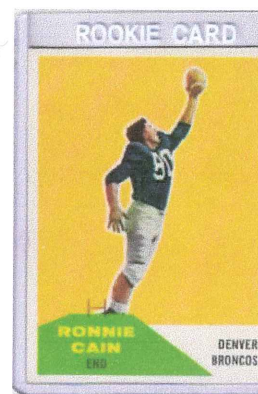
I would like to tell you a great story (with facts) about the *other* state championship team...the Mighty Redskins football team of 1965 and their Coach, Ron Cain, who captured the AAA Championship in the "big boy" division, the AAA, where all the largest high schools in KY were grouped (i.e.; all Jefferson Co & City of Louisville schools) plus the perennially great all male Parochial schools such as St X, Trinity and Flaget. Everyone else in KY was AA or A. At that point in time, Seneca was the largest high school in KY with well over 2,000 students.

From the first day Seneca rang a homeroom bell in 1957 until 1964, in athletics, the school was known as a basketball school. Everyone remembers the great teams Seneca and Coach Mulhcahy had and the back-to-back State Championships of '63 and '64 and the many talented players that wore the Red & Gold, with Mike Redd and Wes Unseld being the best-of-the-best.

### The Coach

In 1962, a year before the zenith of Seneca's basketball glory, an unknown 24 year old young man and aspiring football coach accepted the dream job of his life as Head Coach at Seneca High School. No one saw it coming, but the day Ronnie Cain walked through the red front doors of Seneca marked the beginning of a subtle, yet profound shift in Seneca's athletic future and its identity throughout the state.

Growing up in Appalachia was tough and Ronnie Cain was a tougher than most. An all around athlete at Cumberland HS (1951-55), he was a fantastic football player who led the state in scoring twice and was a two-time All-State selection, back when the fierce "mountain teams" of the late 50's and early 60's ruled. He was also a standout at UK where he played end (#80 in photo) and in 1960 was drafted by the Denver Broncos of the newly formed AFL. The description on the back of his rookie card lists him as 6'1" 215 lbs and describes him as "big, strong and fast". Ronnie Cain was all that and much, more... but the greatest of his many attributes was his determination and toughness.



After being traded to another AFL team, Ronnie Cain decided it was time to start pursuing the next great thing he wanted to do in his life...become a successful football coach. He had already accomplished his greatest feat when he had won the heart of the beautiful Phyllis Hall, who had grown up just down the road in Whitesburg. He had first seen Phyllis when she was only 15 and a Drum Majorette in a parade, and he yelled out to her; "Hey girl, I'm going to marry you one day!" Well, when Ronnie Cain decided to

do something, he did it...so after the Miss Kentucky Pageant where Phyllis was the runner-up, they were married.

Since the "big time" in Kentucky high school football was the AAA, Ronnie and Phyllis moved to Louisville where he was hired as an Asst Coach at Waggener, who was beginning to assemble a very competitive level of talent in both football and basketball (just a two years later they represented the County schools in the 1963 AAA State Football Championship). Meanwhile Seneca was struggling not only to win games, but to just score a few TD's...even though they had good players from the same "talent pool" in Louisville's East End suburbs, where many WW II veterans and their wives had moved after the war to start families (whose kids would later be know as "Baby Boomers").

Since its inception, Seneca had never had a winning football season and in 1961, the year before Ronnie Cain took over, they had another dismal season winning only 3 games. The team had definitely developed a "losers mentality" while complacency defined its coaching staff. But when Ronnie accepted the Head Coaching job at 24 years old, he engineered and motivated a complete turn-around. In his very FIRST SEASON he took the same group of players that had been perpetual losers and turned them into District Champs.

It was 1962 and Seneca's football team, to the surprise of everyone (except Coach Cain), won 8 straight games and captured the East District title (destroying his ex-team Waggener in the process 33-6). The Redskins went on to play and lose to Valley in the County Championship game...and Valley went on to lose to City Champ, St Xavier 7-6. Seneca finished the season 9-1 and for the first time Seneca had a displayed a *defense* that could actually win games. Thus began the legend of Coach Ron Cain and his Mighty Redskins.

Even at such a young age, Coach Cain instinctively knew how to develop talent, put players in the right positions and above all, how to motivate teenage boys. The two seniors who led that 9-1 team and developed into Division I scholarship players, with Coach Cain's help, were Jim Swart (Kentucky) and Milt Miller (Virginia Tech). \*A non-football side-note worth disclosing; the star QB on that team was Jim Dent and he had a girlfriend named...Diane Sawyer. I digress.

Although Coach Cain considered his second season (1963) a "rebuilding" year, he proved that Seneca wasn't a flash-in-the-pan by posting a respectable 6-3 record. Again his team exhibited the "Cain trademark" of a strong defense (4 shutouts, allowing opponents an average of only one TD a game). We lost badly to Waggener in the middle of the season 33-6 (coughing up 5 fumbles in the game) and as mentioned above, Waggener went on to win the County title, but lost the AAA Championship to City Champ Male 23-7.

Most Jefferson Co coaches were used to that scenario...win the county title, possibly even go undefeated, but lose to the City Champ in *every* playoff...and lose badly in most cases. In fact, no County team had ever won a title game against a City team, and that's just the way it was. But that was about to change, because there was a new Coach in town!

Coaches will agree that beyond skill, playing defense in football is about desire, determination and toughness. What's amazing is that Ronnie Cain's *very first team* (remember the one he inherited with the loser's mentality?) totally reflected the personality of its coach by playing tough, hard-nosed defense throughout the season, holding 6 of its 10 opponents to a single touchdown or less. Coach always told me that he could win at any high school, at any level, if he had two things; (1) at least 4 boys who had legitimate talent, and (2) a team that would "run though a wall" for him. He proved that to be true numerous times when he won with teams that had less talent than the competition. Winning like that demonstrates desire and motivation...and it can take a person a long way in life.

After his second season, Coach Cain added two Asst Coaches by reaching into the Graduate Assistant coaching pool at UK to hire his Offensive Coordinator, Jerry Eisaman (a friend & ex-teammates at UK) and John Noon (UL) as Defensive Coordinator and Strength Coach charged with establishing Seneca's first legitimate weight training program. By assembling a young and dynamic staff that brought fresh and creative ideas, Cain was establishing a foundation on which to build Seneca's football future. He once told me; "Coach Eisaman calls the plays, Coach Noon builds the muscles...but I do the motivating."

Sometimes you see greatness like a blinding light and other times it sneaks up on you. Greatness in athletics isn't defined by doing something great once...it's when a player or coach can do great things consistently. The great period in Seneca football history began with a 24 year old, no-name rookie coach, just two years out of college. At the time, who could have fathomed the potential of this young man or if he might ever achieve greatness. But as it was throughout his coaching career spanning 40 years with 5 schools in 2 states, Ronnie Cain was a great coach and a great motivator...all he needed was a chance.

In 1964 Seneca's basketball team won its second straight State Championship which solidified them as a Kentucky legend with their back-to-back titles won on the shoulders the dominating All-American center, Wes Unseld.

If ever there was a challenge, it would be for a rookie coach to come into an established basketball school and take a "loser" football program and turn it into a *consistent* winner and eventually, a champion... especially when the basketball coach would not even allow any of his players to play football. (Coach Cain always dreamed about putting Wes Unseld, 6'7" 250 lbs, at tight end or defensive end). We did have Wes's younger brother Lou who was 6'5" 275 lbs and played nose tackle. Needless to say, not many opponents ran up the middle on this defense.

1964 was season three under Coach Cain and he always maintained THIS TEAM was his *best ever!* Led by a veteran group of 10 seniors and an extremely talented group of 9 juniors, Seneca rolled through the East District like a hot knife through butter, shutting out 6 of its 8 District opponents (a record for 30 years) and defensively only giving up an average of 5.5 pts per game (another AAA record).



The core of the 1964 Redskin defense

We only lost one game that year...a heartbreaker to Eastern 25-20, the eventual District and County Champion, who (you know the story) went on to lose badly to City Champ Male 27-0. We ended the '64 season at 7-1-1 (they actually allowed games to end in a tie back then...how dumb). But THIS teams defense was what Coach Cain had dreamed about and with the innovatively brilliant Coach Eisaman calling the plays (he later was an offensive coordinator at three Division I universities), Seneca's offense was beginning to assert itself by averaging over 27 pts a game.

The 10 senior leaders on the '64 team were; Will Seay (44), Reggie Ford (66), Ed Baldrige (10), Mike "Tank" Stephenson (77), Rusty Waddell (85), Louie "the horse" Decker (27) Les "Fireplug" Schott (23) and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> row where you can't see numbers are Terry McCormick, Rick "Meathead" Stoll and Doug Clifton.

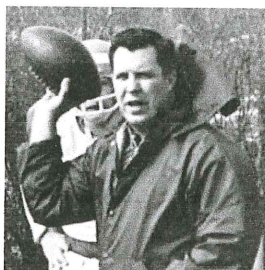


The Redskins of 1964 – Coach Cain thought they were his best ever

### The Championship Season

At the beginning of preseason practice in 1965, Ron Cain knew he was going to have an outstanding team, but he had no idea that *this* season, only his 4<sup>th</sup> year as a Head Coach, was going to produce the greatest football season in Seneca's long history...which covers a span of 54 years (1957 - 2011) to the day of this writing.

It was made obvious at the beginning of this article that it was to be mainly about the State Champion football team of 1965, which by the way, was the first Jefferson County team to accomplish that feat since Kentucky instituted a playoff system in 1959...and to this day, 52 years later, only one other County team has ever accomplished this feat (Butler did it twice in 1970 and 1979). But one could never, ever talk about that season, that team or anything else about the Era of Mighty Redskins football without first discussing its architect, Head Coach Ron Cain, who was rightfully inducted into the KY High School "Hall of Fame" in 2004.



Coach Cain in 1969



1965 AAA State Football Champions

Leading the 1965 team were 9 seniors and 7 juniors who, in addition to having size, speed and talent, all had been under Coach Cain's tutelage for three years. Top senior players were Phil Thompson #80 (E/WR) and Greg Karem #76 (T) both of whom made First Team All-State, the first Redskins to do so. Also, Ron Garrison #42 (FB), Charlie Petry #22 (HB), Hilton Humphrey #20 (HB), Dean Williams #66 (NG), Dwight Allen #74 (T) and the irascible Garnett Schott (#12), our 5'5" 145 lb QB who shared play-calling duties with junior Bob Jackson (#10), a 6'2" 210 lb moose who also played DE. Combining the talent with a great coaching staff, the Mighty Redskins were locked and loaded for the 1965 season. (Note: before the season Coach Cain had added two more excellent Asst Coaches, Al "Zippy" Zampino (from UK) to coach ends and Bob "Big Boy" Gabhart (from WKU) as line coach.

Something not many people know about this season was that before it began, we scrimmaged three teams, Manual and Shawnee (two top City teams) and Valley, a West District rival who would later challenge us during the season. Here's a quick lowdown on the results (in scrimmages there is no kicking game, teams rotate playing offense/defense for a pre-determined time and TD's are counted as 1 point). Coaches were the refs and fighting was legal...or at least they let it go awhile before stepping in. We dominated Manual 5-1 (30-6) at their stadium (in 1966, the following year, Manual won the State Championship themselves). We beat Shawnee in a short scrimmage 3-1 (18-6) at Camp Pia Mingo near Fort Knox and we destroyed Valley at our home field 8-0 (48-0). With those scrimmages under our belts and the season ready to start, everyone connected with the team felt that something very special was coming together.

It was the mid-1960's and it was *old school* times...and Ron Cain was a *hands-on* coach, the kind you don't see today. He loved playing QB on the scout team against the first team defense...and he was damn good at it. He also "physically interacted" with players during times when they needed to learn something (you may read between the lines). He was a hard man...tough, demanding and extremely scary when he was displeased, plus he had a booming voice! After a 2-3 hour practice we ran and ran and ran some more. "Puke on the run" was a standard comment heard. Another was "Get tough you East End sissies." I can say unequivocally that if you weren't 110% committed to giving it everything you had and more every time you stepped on the field, and if you didn't have the intense will to endure just about anything to be a member of his team, he would have gotten rid of you...and the decision would have been entirely yours (again read between the lines). Like I said, it was the mid-1960's and it was *old school* times.

The physical and emotional challenges of playing football under Coach Cain took its toll on our numbers. By the start of the season, after a week of 3-a-day practices at football camp in Ft Knox and three weeks of 2-a-days during preseason practice in the muggy heat of August, our squad was down to only 28 true varsity players. But what the heck, it didn't matter that much because we regularly only played 16 guys during a game, as five of us went "both ways" (i.e.; played offense and defense). So to look the part of a

powerhouse program associated with the largest school in the state, for games we dressed a lot of JV and freshmen players and would usually take the field with 50+ bodies.

The first four games of 1965 did nothing to disprove anyone's lofty expectations as we won big, outscoring our opponents 167 to 20. As we entered the 5<sup>th</sup> game against arch-rival Waggener, we were ranked as the #3 in the state. Whatever voodoo Waggener had on us in '63 (when we gave the game away with 5 fumbles), struck again...we had 5 fumbles against a very good Waggener squad and lost 26-6. We were 5-1 now and Coach was not a happy man.

We dropped out of the Top 10 the following week and Coach Cain, doing his best imitation of very angry Bear Bryant, collectively "ripped us a new one" for our careless play. We responded by dominating in our next two games and outscored the other teams 71 to 13. We were now 6-1 and faced our biggest challenge of the season...a showdown with our new neighboring high school, Thomas Jefferson.

## **The East District Title Game**

### **Seneca vs Thomas Jefferson**

Thomas Jefferson (or TJ) was opened in 1964 and took away half our black students and athletes from the Newburg area. This made TJ an immediate East District power to be reckoned with AND Seneca's biggest rival. With their first senior class in '65, TJ had marched through their first 7 games undefeated and boasted gaudy offensive numbers...just like us. With big, fast and super-talented seniors such as Nate Northington, Ron Gathright, Jim DeWalt, Al Johnson and Bob Redmond – it was a showdown that Seneca HAD TO WIN – a loss or a tie would give TJ the District title.

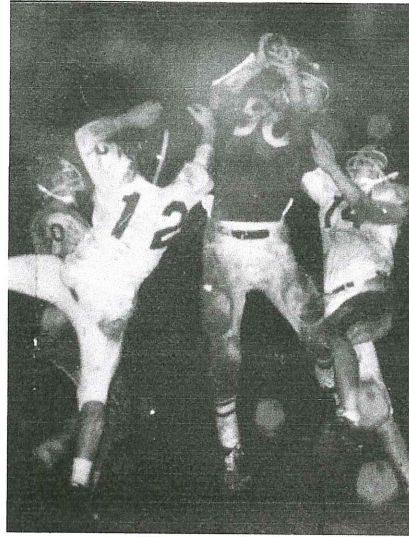
The 1965 Seneca / TJ football game is a CLASSIC...and is still considered by most as the greatest and most tension filled game Seneca ever played. It was a defensive battle where both teams slugged it out for four quarters and left the decision in doubt until the very end. We were so evenly matched that if we played each other 10 times, we would have probably split evenly. But Seneca had something TJ didn't have - a superior coaching staff and the motivation of Ron Cain...and to this day I believe that was the difference in the game.

At halftime it was 0-0 and TJ had just barely missed a 40 yd FG by Ron Gathright in Q2. The halftime locker room was filled with tension and Coach Cain, after making a few adjustments, was at his motivating best telling us a story about a man he loved who had died before he accomplished his dream. There wasn't a dry eye in the room when he finished and we came out for the second half inspired and fired-up. TJ scored late in Q3 after a time-consuming 14 play drive and missed the extra point because of tired legs from Gathright, their two-way player. Going into the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, TJ led 6-0.

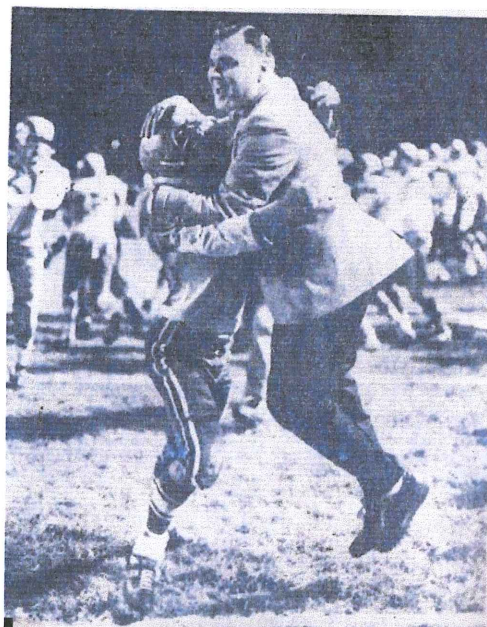
That was the score until late in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter when Seneca marched 62 yards for a TD with only 1:14 left in the game. The big play in that drive was an electrifying 38 yard pass off a double-reverse that gave us a first down on the 9 yard line. We had dominated most of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half running 39 offensive plays to TJ's 27. Now the game was tied 6-6...but we couldn't advance with a tie...we had to win!

Charlie Petry, our regular HB and extra point kicker and one of the players who played every down of the game, threw the kicking tee off the field twice yelling to the sideline that his legs were too tired to kick. Coach Cain threw it back on the field both times screaming for him to "kick the !%#\*!% ball". That discussion ended when the refs called us for "delay of game" and penalized us 5 yards, placing the ball on the 7 yard line. Kicking the extra point was not an option now...we had to run or pass.

Coaches Cain & Eisaman told our 5'5" QB, Garnett Schott, to just throw the ball high towards the left corner of the end zone and let All-State end Phil Thompson "go get it". As we lined up, TJ had 2 players in Thompson's face on the line of scrimmage and another DB on his side, but somehow, somehow he got to the corner. The ball was perfectly thrown to avoid an interception, but was high and looked as though it was going out of bounds. Thompson leaped in an attempt to make the catch with two TJ defenders draped on him.



That night there was an overflow crowd of 4,500 on Seneca's field, both stands were packed and fans were literally standing shoulder-to-shoulder, ten-deep around the track. With that many people crunched together and with football fields dust thick in the stadium lights, only a portion of the Seneca faithful actually saw the leap...or the catch...but everyone saw the refs arms shoot up in the air signaling a "good catch" and giving Seneca the lead 7-6. A huge roar when up and hundreds of Seneca fans poured out of the bleachers, scaled the fence and began jumping up and down with each other and Seneca players on the field while the celebration in the stands continued. When the refs finally cleared the field, Seneca needed only to kickoff (a dribbler on the ground of course) and make sure TJ didn't score in the last minute.



Staff Photo By Bud Kamenish

Seneca assistant coach Jerry Eisaman grabs quarterback Garnett Schott for a victory whirl after the Redskins downed Thomas Jefferson 7-6 last night at Seneca Field. Schott threw the pass for the extra point that proved to be the winning margin.

Extra Point Vital To Redskins' Title Hopes

# Late Seneca TD Nips Thomas Jeffe

By JIM BOLUS

Seneca came alive in the fourth quarter last night to defeat Thomas Jefferson 7-6 and hurdle its biggest obstacle to a County East District championship.

The Redskins, fighting for their lives, completely dominated play in the final 12 minutes of the game to knock the favored Patriots from the unbeaten ranks before an overflow crowd of 4,500 at Seneca's field.

The victory was highly important for Seneca because a tie would have given Thomas Jefferson the district title. The successful extra point clinaxed a courageous comeback for the Redskins, who scored their touchdown with just one minute, 14 seconds left in the hard-fighting scrum.

The conversion had to be tried from the seven-yard line after the Redskins were penalized five yards for delay of game.

But star end Phil Thompson made a good catch of a pass from Garnett Schott on the extra point and the Redskins had the victory.

As the district picture now stands, Seneca carries a 4-1 record in championship play with one game left on its schedule—against district foe Fern Creek next Thursday. If the Redskins beat Fern Creek, they will wrap up their first district title since 1962, the year Ron Cain took over as head coach at Seneca.

Thomas Jefferson has finished its district schedule with a 5-1 record. Should Seneca beat Fern Creek, Seneca and

Thomas Jefferson will tie under the Dickinson System—which decides district champions.

But since Seneca has now beaten Thomas Jefferson, the Redskins will get the title.

The game's complexion really changed during the second half.

Seneca ran 19 plays in its big fourth quarter, compared to eight for the Patriots. That was quite a reversal from the third period when Thomas Jefferson ran 18 of 21 plays. Fourteen of the Patriots' plays in the third quarter came in their touchdown march.

Thomas Jefferson received the second-half kickoff and consumed 7½ minutes in its scoring drive. Nat Northington, a fleet-running tailback, scored the touchdown on a five-yard run.

Ron Gathright tried the extra point kick and his boot sailed barely off to the left side. Incidentally, in the scoreless

first half, Gathright had a 40-yard field goal narrowly miss.

An electrifying 36-yard pass off a double reverse set up Seneca's touchdown. The play started on a pitchout to halfback Hilton Humphrey, who handed off to Charlie Petry coming back. Petry then gave the ball to Thompson, who threw a strike to the Redskins' other end Ronnie Rogers.

Rogers was tackled on the Thomas Jefferson nine-yard line with 2:45 left in the game. "It was the first time this season we've thrown the pass off the double reverse," said Cain.

But after three plays, the Redskins had managed just four yards and they faced a fourth-down and five-yard to go situation for the touchdown.

Reserve quarterback Bobby Jackson then dropped straight back and hit

Petry, a 163-pound senior halfback, a touchdown pass.

"Two plays before the touchdown," Cain explained. "Thomas Jefferson double coverage on Thompson. Next play, they triple-teamed me. I decided to go with our next receiver, Petry. I told Jackson not to touch anyone except Petry and to throw it in the numbers. It was a very pass, and Jackson executed it perfectly. I could have kissed him."

On the extra point, Thompson down-and-out pattern and outflow Thomas Jefferson defenders for

"Thompson really came through us," Cain said. "When you're playing for a tie, you want to win."

**T. JEFFERSON** ..... 6  
**SENeca** ..... 7  
Thomas Jefferson: Touchdown—Nat Northington; Seneca: Touchdown—Charlie Petry from Bobby Jackson; Conversion—Phil Thompson (pass from Garnett Schott).

## Statistics

	Seneca	T. Jeff
First downs	10	9
Net yards rushing	150	132
Passes	9-25	9-21
Yards passing	87	1
Penalties	0	1
Fumbles lost by	1	0
Yards lost by	3-15	0-0
Yards penalized	0	2-28
Points	7	6

Seneca's defense rose to the challenge and the game ended 7-6 and Seneca fans again poured over the fence to celebrate as the TJ players walked dejectedly off the field. Winning that monumental football game opened the door for us to play in the AAA State Championship game for the first time. The City Champ opponent would be Flaget, a powerful all boys Catholic school from Louisville's rough West End, who had already clinched the City Title by being undefeated in 10 games and having demolished Male, St X and Trinity in the process. They had a high scoring offensive machine led by First Team All-State QB, Oscar Brohm and FB Jim Mitchell and a big defense, averaging 230 lbs on the line with 200 lb linebackers. Obviously, they were ranked #1 in the state.

But before we could play for the state championship, we had to win our last game of the regular season against Fern Creek and then beat Valley, our cross-town rival who we had dominated 48-0 in the pre-season scrimmage. We took care of business early against Fern Creek building a 45-0 lead by halftime. Coach Cain, in an unprecedented move, took every starter out in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and we cruised to a 46-7 victory.

In a newspaper article the following week it seemed Valley football players had collectively developed amnesia because they were saying that our pre-season scrimmage had ended in a tie and they were looking forward to beating us in the County Championship game the following week. Without going into great detail, we shut their mouths with a 35-0 whipping. All who attended that game witnessed one of the greatest single game offensive performances by any football player in any era. Ron Garrison, our 6'0" 190 lb FB, ran over, around and through Valley's defense like you-know-what through a duck. When all was said and done, Ronald G (as we called him) had amassed 330 yards rushing on 20 carries and scored 5 TD's and 2 extra points (34 total pts). We kicked the only other point scored. Ron was amazing all year, but that night he was something extra special. We shut up and shut out the Valley Vikings and sent them back to the south end where they belonged.



Fullback Ron Garrison, end Phil Thompson & Coach Ron Cain (all with their "game faces" on) receive East District Championship trophy and the Sutcliff Trophy for the team with the Best Record in Jefferson Co

Over his first four years Coach Cain hadn't made many friends among other Jefferson Co coaches by regularly beating the pants off them...a couple of opposing coaches had even publicly accused him of running up the score. Well, they got their "payback" the night of the coaches meeting to pick the All-East District Team. After changing the meeting time and not informing any of Seneca's coaching staff, the poor loser coaches of the other teams completely ignored Seneca players for All-East District honors. Without that under-handed snub, Seneca would have dominated the squad with 5 players on the first team offense and another 4 on the first team defense...or 9 of the 22 positions. But as it was, not one Seneca player was selected.

### **The AAA State Championship Game Seneca vs Flaget**

The week before our AAA showdown with the Flaget Braves they were made a 23 point favorite. Ever Redskin player was insulted and collectively we said; "No way in hell that will ever happen!"

Playing the championship game the Fairgrounds Stadium (then UL's home field) was exciting and Seneca again brought the fans with the crowd estimated to be approximately 5,000. Flaget was, without a doubt, the biggest team we had faced all year and were some rugged West End guys. They scored first on a long pass from Oscar Brohm, but Bob Wixon came straight up the middle and blocked their extra point try...Flaget led 6-0. We came back with a decent drive to take the lead at 7-6. After a few exchanged punts, Flaget scored again with just a few seconds left in the 1<sup>st</sup> half to lead 12-7 at intermission. They tried to pass for the extra point, but it was broken up.

Our defense, just as it had all season, was playing great by holding Flaget's highly touted offense in check and their All-State QB to only one touchdown pass in the first half (they averaged over 30 points a game and Brohm had throw for 28 TD's). Coach Cain, as was his nature in close games, gave an unbelievably inspirational talk in the locker room that sent us out for the third quarter excited and confident.

Motivated by Coach Cain's talk, we dominated Q3 by running all but 3 minutes off the clock. In that great, time consuming drive, we went 68 yards in 13 plays. Three times we faced 3<sup>rd</sup> and long yardage, but passes from QB Garnett Schott to end Phil Thompson netted first downs in each situation. Flaget had "keyed" on our great running back, Ron Garrison, for the entire first half and had pretty much shut him down until we needed some tough yardage on this TD drive. The last pass to Thompson (see photo below) had given us a first down on Flaget's 21 yard line, Garrison carried the ball four straight times to the five, where we were able to score on a short rollout pass to Petry...and again, the lead was ours 13-12.

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THE SENTINEL

November 24, 1968

## Team Examines Strategy and Wins

The noise of the crowd died down slightly as the "roving reporters" of the *Sentinel* journeyed into the Seneca shower room to get the "on the field" impression of the game from the Redskin squad.

**Ron Garrison**—I've looked forward to this win for a long time. As a sophomore I knew Seneca could get that championship. We've worked hard and we certainly deserved to win. (Garrison said he never thought about defeating Gathright in the point race; he thought only of winning!)

**Phil Thompson** — When I go out for a pass, I always think "positive." I always thought I had a chance for all the passes thrown at me, but I must admit I was lucky on a few occasions. On defense, I blitzed the quarterback and this was pretty successful. They keyed on Garrison in the first half and when our passing failed, it gave them a great boost. The turning point of the game was when we hurt them at their own game, the pass.

**Dwight Allen**—The team that won this game wanted it the most! **Garnett Schott**—In the first half they keyed on Garrison and our passing failed. When our passing picked up, this helped free Garrison because they had to give more attention to the receivers. Thompson and his great catches opened the running game. On my second touchdown pass to Petry, I saw him and tried to hit him on the inner side, but as soon as I released the ball, I was hit and this threw the ball to the right of him. Late in the game we wanted to keep possession of the ball, so I had to throw with a third down and 13 yards to go. We also wanted to avoid punting, causing us to gamble. Unfortunately, my arm was hit as soon as I threw the ball.

**John Ivy**—We knew this was our year! We worked tooth-and-nail, and, incidentally, Humphrey's the greatest!

**Hiroshio Sherrell**—I knew we could win—if not from all our hard work, then our pride did it!

**Bobby Wison**—They (Flaget) hit as hard as Thomas Jefferson. They had one man, while we had a team. I blocked the first kick, and the second attempt was wide. Everyone did their part!

**Charlie Petry**—When I went in for the last touchdown, I saw the two Flaget players. Then I ran as fast as I could toward the sidelines to escape them. On the second TD I just lunged for the ball and hoped I could break up the attempt for the interception. I jumped to my right, stuck out my hands, and the ball just fell into my arms as I hit the ground. It was a real thrill!

**Charlie Williams** — When the



Photo by Gray

**Phil Thompson demonstrates his rating as Number 1 end in Kentucky High School football by this fantastic catch.**

## Redskins Rooters Give Game Views

The victory celebration in the Seneca gym after the game was a glorious sight to all Redskin eyes.

Symbols clashed, people cheered, joy, and the band cheered, "We're the first county team to ever beat a city team!"

**Corky Block, Cheerleader**, was the first one in the gym. As she danced about the floor and exclaimed over lost mum petals, Corky proclaimed, "It's the most beautiful experience ever! I love them all—the whole team—and I'm so sick because it's the last game."

**John Young** has his own little ditty to describe his emotions. "By Litkenhouse we may not rate, but as far as I'm concerned, Seneca is great!"

**Bill Hurley, Drum Major**, de-

**Mimi Lowry, Cheerleader**, just knew we could do it!

**Harris Rogers, Senior Class President**, stated that "we destroyed them mentally." Then the microphone screeched and Harris did too.

**Zack Randell** sputtered, "That was one H— of a game!"

**Don Graf** says this is the very best way to graduate.

**Mike Farmer** emphasized, "Speaking for the Alumni, it was fabulous!"

**Mrs. Petry** is proud of each and every one of the team. "I love them all, but it takes coaches as well as the boys to win a game. (That's what Charlie would want in there.)"

**Sharon Zeilman, Majorette**.

With 2:38 to go in the game and us facing another 3<sup>rd</sup> and long, Flaget intercepted a poorly thrown pass, giving them one more chance to score, but the Mighty Redskin defense rose up. We forced two incomplete passes, pressured Brohm to throw-away a pass and then, on the final play of the game, we slammed Brohm for an 8 yd loss. Seneca had won the game 13-12 and had out played the 23 point favorite in the most important aspect of the game...defense. We were the State Champions and the first County team to ever achieve such a triumph.

They always say that "defense wins championships" and I believe that to be true. A strong defense was Ron Cain's *signature* on this Seneca football team and every other team he coached. For years, outstanding defensive play was the "club" that we used to subdue and demoralize our opponents. It was defense that won the TJ game four weeks earlier, and it was defense that was the key to our win in the state championship game. As statistics showed, we totally dominated Flaget after the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, as they could only muster 18 offensive plays.

# WE WON

## THE SENTINEL

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### Seneca Trips Flaget

By Doug Haynes

Before several thousand stunned fans and a vast radio audience, the inspired Seneca Redskins defeated number one-ranked Flaget by a score of 13 to 12. Even more spectacular is the fact that we beat Flaget at their own game, passing.

By defeating Flaget for the AAA State title, Seneca became the first county school ever to win the tournament in its seven-year history. The Redskins came from behind to conquer the squad which was predicted to "roll over" the County Champions by 21 points.

**Braves Undefeated**

Previous to this game, the Braves were undefeated in ten

climbed on top, 7-6. Flaget scored their final touchdown with 33 seconds left in the ball. Once more the extra point kick failed and the edge was set!

**Petry Scores**

In the third quarter, with 4:21 left, the Redskins produced the winning TD on a brilliant pass reception in the end zone by Charlie Petry. He literally stole the ball from a Flaget player and "came home" with the winning points. The attempt at the extra point was wide to the right, but it proved unimportant, for the margin of victory was already made, 13-12.

The fourth quarter was simply a battle of defense versus defense.

by leading the Redskins to their first State title. John Ivy broke up a "broken bomb" that could have cost Seneca the trophy. Finally, the "Redskin routers" gave the team the support it right, by deserved!

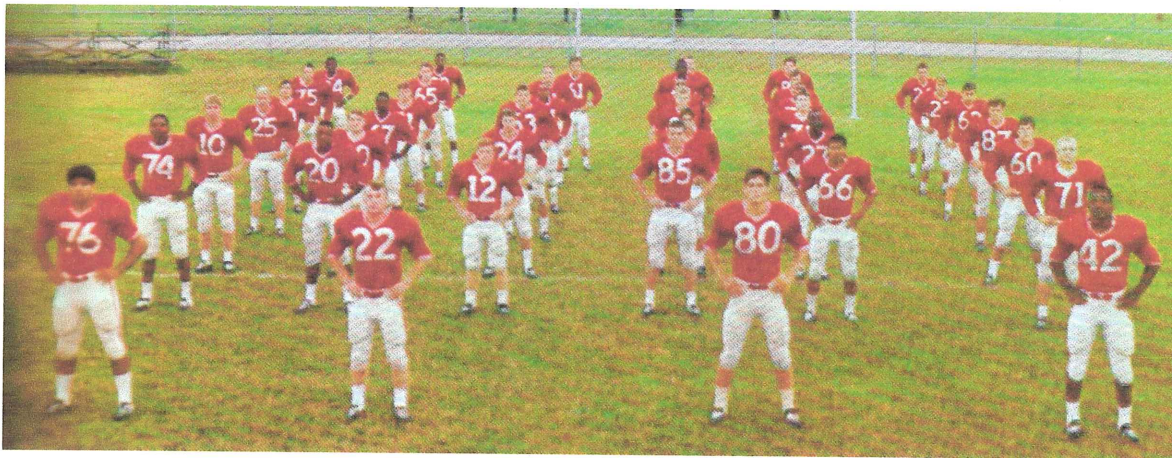
### Cain Praises Team

By Hank Ellington

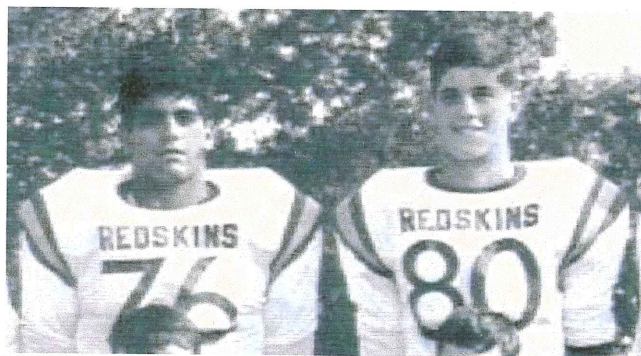
Prior to the game with Flaget, Coach Cain remarked that Seneca "can't face anybody with the potential of Oscar Brown." He later said: "Brown can throw long or short, and he's always a threat



received special recognition when Ron Cain remarked that he came through when it counted. He gave Scholtz a special tribute, saying that pound for pound, Scholtz was the toughest player he ever coached. Flaget defense keyed on Garrison.



Kentucky AAA State Champions



In 1965, Greg Kareem (76) and Phil Thompson (80) were selected to the **All-State First Team** - a same year, dual honor that's never been repeated in Seneca history. Phil was also named All-Southern and All-American by Scholastic Magazine, the only Seneca football player to ever receive that honor. Both players attended college on full athletic scholarships where they were three-year starters. Greg went to the Univ. of Louisville where he was also elected Captain of the team, while Phil went to the Univ. of Kentucky where he started for 3 years and was later drafted by the Detroit Lions.