

# **Bonser's game-winning FG helps him win honor**

*Richardson, Thomas, Ward also recognized by Touchdown Club*

**By Dennis Brunson**

Wilson Hall's Jackson Bonser received a mulligan – a do-over, if you will – in the Barons' football game with Laurence Manning on Friday. Needless to say, the junior placekicker made the most of his second chance.

After missing a 39-yard field goal that was nullified because LMA called a timeout just before the snap, Bonser nailed the second attempt with 3.1 seconds remaining to give the Barons a 31-28 victory at Spencer Field.

"I wanted to end it right there," Bonser said. "It went through at the right time."

Because he hit the kick when it mattered, Bonser has been named the SAFE Special Teams Player of the Week for the Sumter Touchdown Club presented by FTC.

The other three honorees are Crestwood wide receiver Jeremie Richardson as the Offensive Player of the Week, Lake City center Shemar Thomas as the Lineman of the Week and Williamsburg Academy linebacker Teague Ward as the Defensive Player of the Week.

The foursome will be honored at the club's weekly breakfast meeting on Friday at the Sumter County Recreation and Park's Jasmine Hall located at 155 Haynsworth Street. Breakfast will start at 7 a.m. with the meeting beginning at 7:15. The guest speaker will be Leighton Cubbage, who played on the 1969 Edmunds High School AAAA state championship team before going on to play at Clemson. He is a member of the Sumter Sports Hall of Fame.

**SPECIAL TEAMS PLAYER OF THE WEEK**

**JACKSON BONSER**

**WILSON HALL**

**PLACEKICKER/PUNTER**

**JUNIOR**

Wilson Hall head coach Adam Jarecki called a timeout with 9.9 seconds remaining after a running play left the Barons with a third down at the Swampcat 22-yard line. He wanted to give his team an opportunity for one more play in case something went wrong on the attempt.

On the kick that counted, it almost did.

“I was excited, confident when I went out there to kick,” said Bonser, who was also 4-for-4 on extra point attempts and averaged 28 yards on three punts. “The fans started getting loud and then there was a little high snap. (Holder) Clark (Kinney) made a great play, got it down and I followed through. It felt awesome to do that in front of everyone here.

“I did know (it was good) when I went through and hit it. “It wasn’t the best kick; it started tailing a little bit at the end, but I knew I made it.”

Jarecki said he knew Bonser had nailed the game winner when it left his foot.

“He hit it crisp,” Jarecki said. “You can tell off the foot whether a kicker gets it good. It's just incredible. It was a high snap, and Clark made a great play getting it. Jackson waited on that, for Clark to get set, and Jackson was as pretty as could be kicking through it.”

Bonser is 2-for-3 on field goals for the season, nailing a 30-yarder in the season-opening 17-10 win over Hilton Head Christian Academy. Jarecki said it’s nice to have that option available when a drive stalls.

“Having Bonser with that ability, it's such a weapon for us,” he said. “That gives us another chance to finish drives, to get points.”

## **OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE WEEK**

**JEREMIE RICHARDSON**

**CRESTWOOD**

**WIDE RECEIVER**

**JUNIOR**

Richardson hauled in five catches for 200 yards and two touchdowns in the Knights' 49-7 victory over Andrew Jackson High. His touchdowns went for 60 and 85 yards, respectively. Both came on slants that Richardson took to the house.

“When I saw it and I got the ball, I said, ‘I really can get this,’ so I did it,” he said.

Richardson, a junior, moved to wide receiver this season after the Knights lost their top three pass-catchers from last year. Head coach Roosevelt Nelson said Richardson is still in the process of transitioning but is progressing.

“Jeremie is a great athlete,” Nelson said. “He’s still green, learning the position. He’s been working hard throughout the summer and getting better each week. He has good hands, top-end speed, he’s elusive. The sky’s the limit.”

Richardson has emerged as the top target for 4-year starting quarterback Javion Martin. He has a team high 13 catches for 379 yards and four touchdowns. He’s just trying to improve every day.

“I do feel like I have big shoes to fill,” the 5-foot-11-inch, 165-pounder said. “I’ve been working hard to get better, grinding it out over the summer. I think the shoes are getting smaller and smaller as we develop as a team.”

**LINEMAN OF THE WEEK**  
**SHEMAR THOMAS**  
**LAKE CITY**  
**CENTER**  
**SENIOR**

Thomas graded out at 90 percent and helped the Panthers pick up 315 rushing yards in their 13-0 victory over Kingstree.

That was a major improvement for Lake City, which won its first game after losses to Laurence Manning 21-20 and West Florence 28-0.

Thomas, a 5-11, 390-pound senior, said he and his offensive linemates have been growing together as the season has progressed.

“We started to be together as a group, one as a unit,” said Thomas, who is in his first year at center after starting the previous two seasons at nose guard on defense. “We’ve worked hard in practice to become one as a unit. I had to step up and be a leader on the team.”

Acting Lake City head coach Jamison Estep said Thomas had a tremendous game.

“He didn’t have any knockdowns, but Shemar had some blocks where he was taking kids for rides five to 10 yards down the field,” Estep said. “We challenged the O line, that they weren’t as physical up front as they needed to be. They stepped up and accepted the challenge. They were a lot more physical than the previous two weeks.”

**DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE WEEK**  
**TEAGUE WARD**  
**WILLIAMSBURG ACADEMY**  
**LINEBACKER**  
**SENIOR**

Ward had 13 total tackles, four tackles for loss and one quarterback hurry in the Stallions' 20-18 victory over Florence Christian. Two of those tackles came with the Eagles on fourth down with one yard to go.

Ward said he was able to make the stops because he was pretty sure what was coming.

“I watch lot of film throughout the week, and I knew that they would run a fullback dive in that situation,” he said. “The fullback lined up tight to the quarterback and I went to him.

“I thought I played well. I read the hole well, but I could have had better lateral movement. I think I made up for that in other ways.”

Williamsburg head coach Tyler Boyd said his senior linebacker displayed his leadership on those plays.

“Those were two big plays for us,” Boyd said. “He made some big plays when we needed him to. He made big plays when we needed to get off the field.”

That got the offense on the field for the Stallions with Ward in the backfield seeing significant action for the first time. He rushed for 133 yards on 13 carries, caught two passes for 15 yards and finished with two total touchdowns.

“[He hadn’t touched it a whole lot because we wanted him healthy and we wanted to see what else we had,” Boyd said. “This was the most that we had run him and he made it count.”