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# SPORTS

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## Intros the only slow part of Vipers' night

Sunday, April 05, 2009  
Huntsville Times

As opening-curtain moments go, perhaps only Spinal Tap could relate to what happened Saturday night.

There were the requisite dimmed lights, intro music and faux smoke. Then came the announcement from the heavens, reverberating throughout the Von Braun Center.

And now, introducing your af2 champion Tennessee Valley Vipers ... No. 1 ... Demetrius Derico-ohhhhh!



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Only there was no Demetrius and certainly no Derico. After more than a few agonizing moments, the call rang out again.

No. 1 ... Demetrius Derico-ohhhhh!

Eventually, after several more awkward seconds, the defensive back from Alabama State emerged from the tunnel, carrying plenty of attitude along with him.

The rest of the Vipers soon followed suit, and then they proceeded to turn the pre-game pomp into an in-game romp against the visiting Quad City Steamwheelers. Almost from the moment the af2 championship banner was unfurled in the northeast corner of the VBC, Tennessee Valley took it upon itself to prove it deserved the extra attention, whipping Quad City 74-20 in front of an announced crowd of 3,935.

"Our main goal coming out was to play fast and physical," said defensive back Desmond Foster, whose interception was one of three turnovers the Vipers forced.

"Last week, we didn't do that."

Tennessee Valley was indeed feeling needy after last week's opening-game loss at Green Bay. The Vipers didn't get off to the best of starts Saturday - quarterback Kevin Eakin threw an interception in the end zone on the first possession - but after forcing a Steamwheelers three-and-out, they quickly went to work.

Touchdown catch by Bradly Chavez. Safety by defensive lineman Marcus White (who Vince Vaughn-ed in "Wedding Crashers" Quad City quarterback J.J. Rateerink). **Kickoff return for a touchdown by Christopher Bocage.** Four more Eakin touchdown passes.

Meanwhile, the Steamwheelers - not quite the hated Steamwheelers of years past, but still not very well-liked - were having trouble simply getting out of the end zone on kickoff returns. More than once, they looked like a grandpa trying to get out of the wave pool at Point Mallard on the Fourth of July.

Midway through the second quarter, Tennessee Valley got its second safety when Quad City bumbled a return. The Vipers scored on the second-half kickoff when the Steamwheelers fumbled coming out of the end zone.

**"We just did a lot of things right tonight that we didn't do the other night," Bocage said.**

Enough to deserve a curtain call at the end.

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