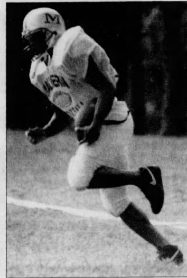


Friday, September 22, 1995



Derrick Downs is the thunder. He rumbled for more than 1,000 yards last season.

One brings lightning; the other, thunder

Malvern's rushing team of Booker and Downs creates a storm on offense.

By Steve Wartenberg
Business Correspondent

MALVERN — They've been playing football together since they were knee-high to a knee pad.

"We were 6 when we played together for the Colwyns Comets; our knee pads came down to here," said Derrick Downs, reaching down to the top of his ankle. Their helmets were nearly as big as they were.

"We learned how to play together," Toby Booker added.

The tiny twosome terrorized defenses as they took turns racing around the end or squaring through the middle of the line for long gains. From the start it was Derrick and Toby, Toby and Derrick leading the way to victory, a thread that has run through their entire athletic careers.

Today, the two are seniors and stars at Malvern Prep, one of the area's top teams. The similarities between the two are numerous. Downs grew up in Southwest Phila-



Toby Booker is the lightning. The faster of the two, he can line up as a receiver. His partner calls Booker "more outgoing. He's polite, nice to everyone, a real hard worker.

delphia, about a mile away from Booker, who grew up in Yeadon. The two families are close. Downs and Booker are about the same size. Both are speedy and shifty and start at halfback in the Priars' three-back offense and run together on the track team. They're together a lot, on and off the field.

They even came to Malvern together, before their freshman year.

"I heard about Malvern first and told Toby about it," Downs said. "We both took the entrance examination and passed and came here together. It was the first time we'd ever gone to school together, and it brought us together even more."

But there are some differences.

"I'm faster, but Derrick's quicker," Booker said.

Downs is a little stronger and more durable, and that's why he carries the ball more than Booker does. Last year, Downs ran for a little more than 1,000 yards, and Booker rushed for 600. Both are excellent receivers

For The Inquirer / JOHN FARMAN-KANES

out of the backfield, and Booker often lines up as a receiver.

"I'm better-looking," joked Downs, who is also a good student but has to take a back seat to Booker in that department.

In his round glasses, shirt and tie, Booker does indeed have the look of a scholar, and is a fixture in the library. He's an honor-roll student, takes advanced-placement courses, is a member of the National Honor Society, and has scored better than 1,100 on the SAT.

"But I'm taking them again and will do a lot better," promised Booker, who is eyeing an Ivy League education and plans to major in business or engineering. Downs is interested in communications and business.

Booker is the more outgoing of the two, although neither is the type to dominate a conversation. Modest would describe either one.

"Toby is more outgoing," Downs said. "He's polite, nice to everyone, a real hard worker."

See **FOOTBALL** on W5

1995 Booker and Downs article part 1

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Fri, Jan 29, 2021