

Raiders hard-pressed to beat North Gaston

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Special to the Gazette

The South Point Red Raiders fought off a scrappy North Gaston team to capture a 21-12 homecoming win at Lineberger Stadium Saturday night.

The Raiders of Jim Biggerstaff used a punishing ground attack led by Dennis Isles and Willie Cobb to score all of their points in the first half and run up a 21-6 halftime lead.

Isles scored a pair of touchdowns for South Point, both of which came in the second period. The speedy junior halfback led the Raiders in the rushing department, picking up 88 yards in 17 carries.

Cobb bulled his way for 79 yards in 13 totes and scored the initial South Point touchdown early in the first quarter.

The real star of the game, however, was North Gaston's Harvey Neely, who single-handedly brought the Wildcats back to threaten in the second half.

Neely gained 187 yards in the game on 19 carries and set up North Gaston's fourth-quarter touchdown.

The Wildcats moved 80 yards in 11 plays with Neely carrying for 72 of those in six carries, including runs of 30 and 26 yards.

The Red Raiders scored early in the first period following a Neely fumble on the opening kickoff at the North Gaston 26.

South Point then moved in for the score in six plays with Cobb going over from the two.

North Gaston came back on the following series to score in nine plays from 62 yards away. Mark Saunders, the Wildcats' junior quarterback, scampered around the right side on an option play to bring North Gaston to within one point of the Raiders at 7-6.

Saunders set the score up himself on a 19-yard run to South Point's 13 and on the next play took the ball in for the touchdown.

Saunders attempted to run for the two-point conversion on a fake placement try, but was caught short of the goal line.

The Raiders moved the ball 63 yards on the next series to the North Gaston three-yard line, but quarterback Donnie James was stopped at the two on a fourth-and-goal situation.

North Gaston had an opportunity to get out of the hole they had created by good defensive play when Neely fumbled after gaining 12 yards to the 17-yard line.

South Point capitalized on the mistake and only needed seven plays to take a 14-6 lead.

A James pass to Robert McCollough took the ball to the Wildcat one and Carl Middleton took the ball in on the next play for an apparent touchdown.

The play was called back for a motion infraction and Isles promptly scored on the next play from six yards out.

North Gaston began its threat late in the third period behind the running of Neely. The 80-yard drive, which finished in the fourth quarter, was capped off by a Saunders pass to Buddy Downam from

the five at the 11:36 mark in the final quarter.

With no choice but to try for the two-pointer, the Wildcats were set back by a delay of game penalty which sent them back to the eight yard-line.

Neely attempted to run for the conversion but got no farther than the three.

North Gaston executed a perfect onside kick, with Chuck Houser recovering the ball at the South Point 45.

After a Wildcat punt, the Red Raiders moved to the North Gaston five-yard line when Major Norwood recovered an Isles at the 3:41 mark.

Neely once again got the Wildcats out of the hole with a 66-yard jaunt to the South Point 27. But time had run out for North Gaston as the Wildcats had no way of even tying the game with a single touchdown.

The Red Raiders upped their season record to 5-1-1 overall and 5-1 in the

Southwest 3-A conference and hold at least a tie for second place.

The Wildcats dropped to 2-4-1 overall and 2-3-1 in conference play.

Sheila Wentz of McAdenville, a senior at South Point, was crowned homecoming queen in halftime ceremonies.

STATISTICS

	North Gaston	South Point
First Downs	10	18
Net Yards Rushing	248	208
Passes	27	5-7
Passing Yardage	24	63
Passes Intercepted by	1	0
Fumbles Lost	3	1
Punts	2-24	0-0
Yards Penalized	60	15

SCORE BY QUARTERS

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	T
North Gaston	6	0	0	6	12
South Point	7	14	0	0	21

SCORING SUMMARY

SP — Cobb, 2-yd. run (Lamkin kick)
 NG — Saunders, 13-yd. run (run failed)
 SP — Isles, 6-yd. run (Lamkin kick)
 SP — Isles, 2-yd. run (Lamkin kick)
 NG — Downam, 5-yd. pass from Saunders (run failed)



ISLES ON THE MOVE — South Point junior halfback Dennis Isles (23) moves behind a Red Raider blocker to pick up a short gain against a fired-up North Gaston team in South Point's homecoming game Saturday night at Belmont's Lineberger Stadium. Isles scored two of his team's touchdowns in a narrow 21-12 win over the Wildcats and picked up 88 yards in 17 carries. (Gazette photo by Larry Grayam)