

Red Raiders romp

South Point wins 29-7; advances to state semifinals

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WAYNESVILLE — A big red bomb exploded here Friday night.

The big red bomb was disguised as the South Point defense as the Red Raiders downed the Tuscola Mountaineers, 29-7, in the second round of the state 3-A playoffs.

The Raiders now advance into the semifinals of those playoffs. South Point, ranked number two in the state in the final Associated Press 3-A rankings, will play Hibriten, the 21-0 winners over Northwest Cabarrus, next Friday night in Lenoir.

"The defense played a super game," said Raider coach Jim Biggerstaff who saw his team run its record to 12-0. "We've got a lot of confidence in them."

The Raiders took control early, taking the opening kickoff and marching 74-yards for the first score.

On a fourth-and-15 play, senior quarterback Jeff Williams dropped back and fired a 26-yard touchdown pass to Todd Armstrong with 7:06 remaining in the opening period. Tim Parrish added the extra point and the bomb's fuse was ignited.

The story of the remainder of the first half was a combination of fine play by the Raiders' defense and costly mistakes on the part of the South Point offense.

Raider drives were stalled inside Mountaineer territory by penalties. The defense, on the other hand,

held the usually strong Tuscola rushing game, to 33 yard in the first half.

But Tuscola was not ready to quit yet, as the Mountaineers came out fired up in the second half. Reaching deep into their bag of offensive weapons, they pulled out an end-around which they used for a 72-yard apparent-touchdown run by Johnny Aldridge on the first play of the third period.

The bulk of the Mountaineer rushing yardage was gained on Aldridge's run and two similar plays at other points in the game. Without those three plays, the Mountaineers would have netted but 47 yards rushing on the evening.

A clipping penalty at the Raider 12 nullified the score and moved the ball back to the Raider 27. Before the night was through, Tuscola would return to the end-around play, and it was easily the most potent weapon in the Mountaineer arsenal for the night.

Five plays later, Tuscola scored. Dan Dyer powered over left tackle on a one-yard plunge. Aldridge added the point after and the game was knotted at 7-7.

It was at this point that the South Point defense, a bullwark of the team's success all season, took over. With Tuscola moving the ball, nose guard Jeff Hoyle pounced on a Cullins fumble at the Mountaineer 44.

Three plays later, June Jones raced around left end for 25 yards and the second Red Raider touchdown of the

evening. Following Parrish's conversion, the score stood at 14-7.

On the next Tuscola possession, Williams picked off a Cory Hill pass at the Raider 22, killing yet another Mountaineer drive. South Point could not move the ball, and the Red Raiders then punted away, with David Yount returning the punt deep into South Point territory. But still another clipping penalty, this one against the Mountaineers, called the play back and gave Tuscola the ball on their own seven-yard line.

Chip Gibson picked off another wayward Hill aerial and returned it to the Tuscola 18. Following a three-yard loss, Williams threw an alley-oop pass to his favorite receiver, Tim Rector, moving the ball to the Mountaineer two. Perry Fewell scored on the next play, going over right tackle. With 9:35 remaining, Parrish's third conversion made the score 21-7.

On the next play, Williams was forced to resort to the air in a desperate attempt to catch up. But the Red Raider defense was not about to let the Mountaineers steal their thunder, and Williams picked off his second Hill toss of the evening at the Raider 17. South Point again was unable to move the ball and punted it away.

On their own 40-yard line after the punt, and it was on this possession that the ticking

bomb finally exploded.

On the third play of the drive, Armstrong nabbed the Raider's fourth interception of the night and returned the ball down the right sideline 52 yards for a touchdown. When an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on a missed PAT by Parrish gave the Raiders another chance, Fewell tacked on the final two points with a run, giving South Point a 29-7 lead.

South Point had another scoring opportunity, but fumbled the ball away on the Mountaineer three.

"We cut them off cold on the ground," said Biggerstaff. "We have a good team, there are no individual stars."

It was a balanced rushing attack that netted 191 yards for the Raiders, with Jones leading the way with 72 yards on six carries. Perry Fewell added 62 yards on 12 attempts.

Williams, one of the top high school football players in the state and whose services are highly-sought by both the Clemson Tigers and the University of North Carolina Tar Heels, was held to only 15 yards rushing in nine attempts.

Tuscola's defensive effort against the senior-standout was one of the best of the season.

Last week, the Raiders edged Statesville, 8-7, when Williams hit Rector with a 41-yard scoring pass late in the fourth period. Williams then carried the ball in for the game-winning two-point conversion.

South Point	7	0	7	15	— 29
Tuscola	0	0	7	0	— 7

Scoring Summary

SP — Armstrong, 25-yd. pass from Williams (Parrish kick)
 T — Collins, 1-yd. run (Aldridge kick)
 SP — Jones, 25-yd. run (Parrish kick)
 SP — Fewell, 3-yd. run (Parrish kick)
 SP — Armstrong, 53-yd. return of intercepted pass (Fewell run)

	South Point	Tuscola
First Downs	11	11
Rushing	28-191	34-147
Passing	5-14-0	3-21-4
Yards Passing	55	91
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Punting	4-35.1	3-35.0
Yards Penalized	6-70	2-35

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

SOUTH POINT RUSHING — Williams 9-15; Fewell 13-62; Jones 6-71; Gibson 4-10; Tribble 1-12; Crawford 1-0

TUSCOLA RUSHING — Hill 4 for -22; Collins 7-14; Johnson 13-55; West 1 for -13; Aldridge 3-100

SOUTH POINT PASSING — Williams 5-13-0 for 55; Tribble 0-1-0 for 0

TUSCOLA PASSING — Hill 3-20-3 for 91; Messer 0-1-1 for 0

SOUTH POINT RECEIVING — Rector 2-36; Armstrong 2-41; Jones 1-4

TUSCOLA RECEIVING — West 1-51; Yount 1-20; Aldridge 2-12; Kirkpatrick 1-0