

Late score saves South Point

By DWIGHT FRADY
Special to The Gazette

The East Gaston Warriors looked well on their way to a victory over defending state 3-A champion South Point at Lineberger stadium Friday night. Then lightening struck as more than 5,000 fans watched.

East Gaston had the ball late in the game, third and two, on South Point's 39-yard line. Tailback Derek Spears was hit by linebacker Bryan Holland, the ball popped loose in the air, defensive back Carl Sims grabbed it at the South Point 44 and raced 56 yards for a touchdown with 2:58 remaining in the game.

With Tim Parrish's extra point, the Raiders held the lead, their only one of the night and won the game 17-14.

Statistics-wise East Gaston dominated the Southwestern 3-A Conference game, the first for both teams. Fullback Rob Belcher had a fantastic night for the Warriors, leading his team downfield for two touchdowns. Belcher gained 156 yards in 25 carries.

"We were very, very, fortunate to win this football game," said South Point's Coach Jim Biggerstaff, who claimed his 96th win in this his 12th season at the helm.

The first time they had the ball, the Warriors drove 50 yards in seven plays with Belcher gaining all of the yardage. The score came from the one at the 5:49 mark and Robert Kaylor's extra point was

good for a 7-0 Warrior lead.

A pass interception by Larry Tribble at the East Gaston 48 set up a field goal by Parrish. The Raiders picked up three first downs, the third one after Sims gained two yards to the seven and a face-mask penalty against the Warriors placed the ball on the four.

However the Raiders were penalized on a procedure call back to the nine. East Gaston stiffened, and Parrish booted a 31-yard field goal with 14 seconds left in the half, giving the Raiders what proved to be the winning points.

In the third period, both teams put on long scoring drives. With Belcher carrying the ball in nine of the 11 plays covering 73 yards, the hard-running fullback went over from 12 yards out at the 4:02 mark of the third period for a 14-3 East Gaston lead.

South Point promptly drove 70 yards in nine plays. The Raiders picked up three first downs and had a first-and-goal situation at the Warrior seven. After Larry Tribble gained to the five, quarterback Randy Richards' pass was incomplete.

But on third down the senior hit end Jerry Howell in the corner of the end zone. Howell made an outstanding catch on the play at the 1:08 mark. Parrish's extra point cut East Gaston's lead to 14-10.

East Gaston threatened again on its next possession. A 35-yard pass from Spears to Chris Baker carried the ball to the South Point 42. Two running plays picked up the first down for the

Warriors.

However, the Raiders held the Warriors to no after two running plays, and then a 15-yard penalty pushed East Gaston back to the Raider 49.

Then South Point moved from its 22 to the East Gaston 29 and picked up two first downs in the process. The big play was a 32-yard pass from Richards to Howell. East Gaston — with the aid of a 15-yard penalty against the Raiders — held and Larry Tribble punted to the Warrior 15.

From that point, and with time running out and the clock against the Raiders, East Gaston picked up two first downs on key third down plays.

The first came on an 11 yard run by Spears to the 30. Quarterback Tom Adams hit end Paul Harris at the South Point 47 for a first and ten. Three plays later came the air-borne fumble which Sims returned for 56 yards and a TD which shocked the huge crowd.

East Gaston made a last ditch attempt, but noseguard John Karr recovered a Spears fumble at the Raider 23 with four seconds left in the game.

The Warriors totaled 230 yards rushing compared to 93 for the Red Raiders, now 1-0 in the conference and 1-0-1 overall. The Warriors are now 0-2 overall and 0-1 in the league.

Other than Belcher's yardage, Spears had 34 yards in ten carries for the Warriors.

For South Point, Simms was the leading rusher with 41 yards on seven carries. In passing East Gaston had 93 yards, while the Raiders had 88.

East Gaston	7	0	7	0	14
South Point	0	3	7	7	17

Scoring Summary

- EG Helcher one run : Kaylor kick :
- SP Parrish 31 field goal
- EG Helcher 12 run : Kaylor kick :
- Sp Howell five pass from Richards
Parrish kick :
- SP Simms 36 yard fumble return : Parrish
kick :

	South Point	East Gaston
First Downs	10	13
Rushing	93	230
Passing	3-13-0	4-8-7
Yards Passing	96	93
Fumbles Lost	0	3
Punting	3-32-4	3-37-2
Yards Penalized	38	4-13