

North Gaston tops Raiders

By Dwight Frady

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DALLAS — North Gaston's Wildcats, using a strong ground attack, continued their impressive early-season play here Friday night by overcoming a 14-7 deficit in the second period and coming back for a 27-14 victory over South Point's Red Raiders.

The Wildcats ran their record to 2-0 in the Southwestern 3-A Conference and 3-2 overall. The Raiders are 0-2 in the league and 0-5 overall.

South Point took two early leads, going ahead 6-0 on a 5-yard touchdown run on fourth and three by tailback Keith Robbins at the 5:12 mark of the first period.

Robbins scored both of his team's touchdowns and had 158 yards rushing in 18 carries.

The Wildcats then took advantage of a Raider turnover, going 34 yards in six plays. Tommy Brown went the final 10 yards and Tracy Sanders kicked the first of his three extra points for a 7-6 Wildcat lead.

On the first scrimmage play after the ensuing kickoff, Robbins raced untouched on a 69-yard jaunt and ran for the two-point conversion for a 14-7 Raider margin with 9:57 left.

North Gaston, with fullback Ralph Hoke ripping off gains of 33

and 25 yards in the drive, moved 80 yards in seven plays with Hoke going over from the 1 at the 7:16 mark and it was 14-14. Hoke piled up 123 yards in 14 carries on the night.

Shortly before the half, quarterback Johnny McCraw of the Wildcats threw a 69-yard touchdown pass to James Littlejohn for a 20-14 North Gaston halftime lead. The ball bounced off a South Point defender's hands on that play right into the hands of Littlejohn.

South Point used 9:09 of the clock to start the second half but stalled on the Wildcat 23.

Coach Jim Biggerstaff of the Red Raiders said that was the turning point of the game, the Raiders failing on two passes to end that long drive.

The Wildcats then went 67 yards in 15 plays with Brown scoring from 9 yards out for the final touchdown of the game.

"We've come back in four of our five games this year and we've won three of those games," said North Gaston Coach Bob Patton. "That shows we've got some character. It's also giving me heart palpitations."

"South Point hit as well or better as any team we've played this year with the exception of the Ashbrook game."



Joe Swift/The Gazette

North Gaston's Ralph Hoke (33) breaks into the clear and picks up yardage for the Wildcats.

South Point 14

North Gaston 27

South Point	6	8	0	0	— 14
North Gaston	0	20	0	7	— 27

SP — Keith Robbins 5 run (kick failed)

NG — Tommy Brown 10 run (Tracy Sanders kick)

SP — Robbins 69 run (Robbins run)

NG — Ralph Hoke 1 run (Sanders kick)

NG — James Littlejohn 69 pass from Johnny McGraw (kick failed)

NG — Tommy Brown 9 run (Sanders kick)