

South Point snaps drought, pounds North Gaston, 34-7

By Eric Schurer

Gazette Sports Reporter

DALLAS — South Point's first win was too long in coming for coach Jim Biggerstaff. Bob Patton is still waiting for North Gaston's first win.

After more than a month's wait, the Red Raiders finally cracked the win column with a 34-7 win over the Wildcats in a battle of winless teams Friday night at Trudnak Field.

"It feels good to finally get that first one," Biggerstaff said. "We played a great second half. Maybe we can do it again in the next couple weeks and make it interesting. We still feel we have a shot at the playoffs."

While the Red Raiders, now 1-2 in the Southwestern 3-A Conference and 1-4-1 overall, still plan to make a run at one of three SWC 3-A playoff berths, the Wildcats' appear out of the race.

North Gaston is still winless on the season, 0-3 in conference, 0-6 overall and in the midst of an 11-game skid that reaches back to last season.

South Point's junior tailback tandem of Willie Strain and Jamie Boyd combined for 318 yards

rushing and all five touchdowns as the Red Raider ground game chewed up North Gaston's defense.

Strain scored three touchdowns and had 182 yards on 30 carries to improve on his 116.2 yard per game average. Boyd chipped in with the other two TDs and ran for 136 yards on just seven carries, by far his biggest game of the season.

"Willie and Jamie both had great nights, and the best thing about those two is that they're just juniors," Biggerstaff said.

Boyd, the lesser known of the duo, broke loose for scoring runs of 29 and 51 yards in the third quarter to break open what was a tight game at halftime. The Raiders held just a 14-7 lead at intermission, as mistakes cost them several scoring chances.

"We made the same mistakes in the first half that have been killing us all year," Biggerstaff said. "We had a kid running in the open field fumble the ball while he was heading for a touchdown."

"But in the second half we put it all together. We really played a great second half."

Despite the Raiders' second-half fireworks, it was North

Gaston's offense that added a touch of excitement in the first half.

After allowing South Point to waltz to a 14-0 lead early in the second quarter, the Wildcats used a surprise formation to strike back with their only score of the night.

Using their traditional offensive set, North Gaston managed just five yards in its first three possessions. But on its fourth, coach Patton sent out both Mike Patton and E.L. Clark and set them up in the backfield in a two-quarterback set in shotgun formation.

The move caught South Point by surprise and the Wildcats moved 58 yards for a touchdown, 48 of it in the air. Patton covered the final nine yards on a sprint out to pull within one touchdown.

But after intermission, the Raiders ground game geared up a notch and the two-quarterback set wasn't nearly as effective.

"We never suspected a shotgun formation, they caught us by surprise in the first half," Biggerstaff said. "We weren't ready for that at all. But at halftime we were able to make some adjustments



Dieter Melhorn/The Gazette

Please see RAIDERS/3C North Gaston's Mike Patton throws a pass under pressure.

RAIDERS

FROM 1C

that worked in the second half."

The Wildcats managed just 51 yards in total offense in the second half against the Red Raiders.

Boyd and Strain, meanwhile, were rolling up 234 second-half

yards, including touchdowns on South Point's first two possessions for a commanding 28-7 lead.

"We were just outmanned up front all night, and Strain and Boyd are two great running backs," said Clay Alexander, one of the Wildcats' defensive coaches.

South Point 34

North Gaston 7

South Point	7	7	14	6	—	34
North Gaston	0	7	0	0	—	7

SP — Willie Strain 7 run (Strain kick)

SP — Strain 12 run (Jamie Boyd kick)

NG — Mike Patton 9 run (E. L. Clark kick)

SP — Boyd 28 run (Strain kick)

SP — Boyd 51 run (Strain kick)

SP — Strain 14 run (kick failed)