

# Raiders' defense stops Burns for win

By Dean Lowman

Gazette Prep Editor

BELMONT — Gerard Hardy made the best of a bad situation and the South Point defense rewarded his effort, stopping an aerial show by Burns' Dixon Putnam to preserve a 21-14 Southwestern 3-A Conference football win Friday.

The decision assures the league-leading Red Raiders (5-0, 7-2) of a state playoff berth, and a victory next week at Shelby would give them the undisputed SWC championship.

"That feels great for these kids because I know how hard they worked over the summer," South Point coach Phil Tate said.

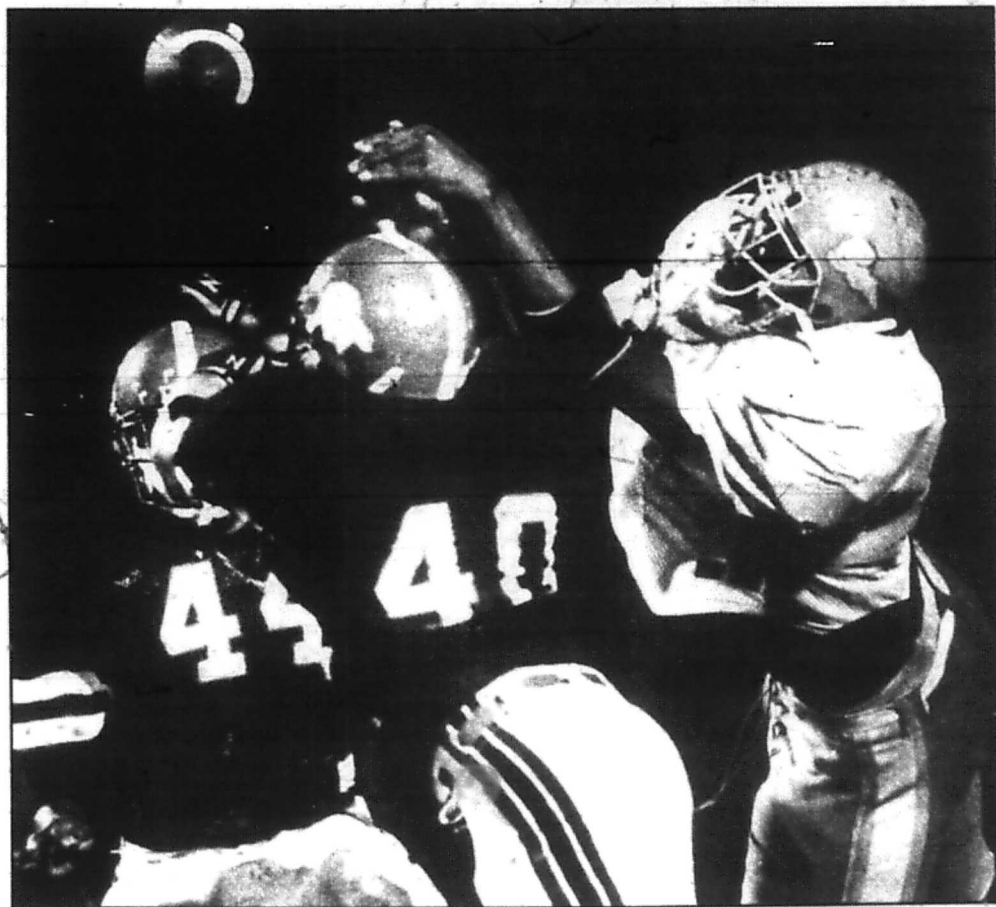
Hardy, who had given the Red Raiders the lead with a 45-yard touchdown run in the third quarter, answered a game-tying Burns touchdown with a 63-yard dash with 5:49 to play. Ryan Werner added the point after touchdown.

"We were supposed to run the option, but I had trouble pulling the ball back on the fake, so I decided to run it. I looked to my right and saw this huge hole," Hardy said.

The Red Raider defense then went to work. After stopping Burns on three plays on the Bulldogs' next possession, the Raiders found the pressure heavy again when T.O. Wilson fumbled the ball away at the Burns 44.

Putnam, who completed 18 of 35 passes for 247 yards, drove the Bulldogs to the Raiders' 14 with four completions.

But the Raider defense — which had earlier forced a Putnam fumble on fourth-and-goal



John Clark/The Gazette

T.O. Wilson (44) and Randy Brown (40) of South Point break up a pass Friday night.

from the 1 — thwarted the Bulldog quarterback again, breaking up one pass and forcing a pair of hurried overthrows in the final minute to clinch the win.

"That goal line stand was the key to the ballgame," Tate said.

Hardy finished with 119 yards on 10 carries for South Point, which had taken a 6-0 lead in the opening quarter on a 1-yard

run by Wilson.

Burns answered with a 15-yard Kenny Wray touchdown run and Greg Downs point after to take the lead in the second period, only to see Hardy's first run and Wilson's two-point conversion give the Raiders a 14-7 edge.

Burns then tied the score on Putnam's 13-yard touchdown toss to Rekae Clark.

Next Friday, South Point travels to Shelby for its season finale. Burns finished the regular season Friday, going (4-2, 6-4).

Burns	0 87 0 7 - 14
South Point	6 0 8 7 - 21
SP — T.O. Wilson 1 run (kick failed)	
B — Kenny Wray 15 run (Greg Downs kick)	
SP — Gerard Hardy 45 run (Wilson run)	
B — Rekae Clark 13 pass from Dixon Putnam (Downs kick)	
SP — Hardy 63 run (Ryan Werner kick)	