

Hardy leads Raiders past stingy Lincolnton

LINCOLNTON — Gerard Hardy darted and dashed through Lincolnton's defense Friday night, leading South Point to a season-opening 20-18 non-conference football win.

Hardy rushed for 139 yards and two scores, as well as passing for a 34-yard scoring strike to Randy Brown, to single-handedly down the Wolves.

"Gerard's Gerard," said South Point coach Phil Tate. "He's a super athlete and a super kid."

Hardy's heroics started on the opening play as he cut off tackle, then found clear sailing after he reached the 35, racing untouched 80 yards to give the Red Raiders a 6-0 edge.

A bit of strategy gave Hardy the chance for his later out-busts, however.

Trailing 10-6 in the third quarter with the ball at its own 11, the Red Raiders unleashed a quick kick. Randy Brown booted the ball 42 yards to get the Raiders out of trouble.

The move paid off moments later when Lincolnton, forced to punt, snapped the ball over Charles Briggs' head. Briggs chased the ball down, but was tackled for a 10-yard loss at the Lincolnton 43.

Two plays later, Hardy found a wide-open Brown at the goal line, drilling the touchdown pass. Kirk Crawford added the PAT, making it 13-10.

The next time Hardy

touched the ball, he raced 26 yards following a Lincolnton punt, with a late hit tacked on to move the ball to the Wolves' 12. One play later, Hardy broke four tackles, then danced into the end zone for a 15-yard TD burst.

Lincolnton cut the gap to 20-16 when, following a fumble recovery by Keith Poston, Briggs burst in for a 2-yard TD run. Briggs had earlier scored on a 6-yard jaunt, with Marco Arias adding a PAT and a 43-yard field goal.

South Point was backed into another corner in the closing minutes when Brown elected to lateral the ball out of the end zone instead of trying to punt from inside his 30, bringing Lincolnton within 20-18 with 1:45 left.

The Wolves would come no closer as, without any time outs, they ended up losing two yards in four plays before turning the ball over on downs at their own 48.

Daryl Easter carried 24 times for 92 yards to pace Lincolnton.

Dean Lowman

South Point	6	0	7	7	-	20
Lincolnton	0	10	0	8	-	18
SP — Gerard Hardy 80 run (kick failed)						
L — Marco Arias FG 43						
L — Charles Briggs 6 run (Arias kick)						
SP — Randy Brown 34 pass from Hardy (Kirk Crawford kick)						
SP — Hardy 15 run (Crawford kick)						
L — Briggs 2 run (run failed)						
L — Safety. South Point punter Brown lateral ball out of end zone						