

Williams leads South Point

QB accounts for all Raiders' TDs

By Mike Cearley

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DALLAS — Courtney Williams threw for two touchdowns and ran for a third as South Point won its Southwestern 3-A opener, 18-7, over North Gaston at Trudnak Stadium Friday night.

It was the third straight win for the Red Raiders, who opened the season with a pair of losses. North Gaston fell to 1-4.

The Wildcats kept the game close, and had a chance to take the lead in the fourth quarter when they faced a third-and-2 at the South Point 5. But a fumbled snap that the 'Cats recovered at the 16, coupled with a delay of game penalty, gave them a long fourth down at the 21.

Quarterback Justin Cloninger couldn't find an open receiver and South Point took over. The Raiders then marched 83 yards for their decisive touchdown as Williams hit David Kincaid from 23 yards with 1:34 left in the game.

"It's happened to us all year," said North Gaston coach Mike Somers of his team's failure to cash in on the scoring opportunity. "One of these days we'll get down there and know what to do."

"But you can't fault our kids. They played their hearts out. We knew we could play with them. We just have to learn to put people away when we get the chance."

Both teams struggled offensively and were plagued by penalties. North Gaston was flagged 10 times for 100 yards,

while South Point was penalized nine times for 85 yards. Twice the Raiders were called for roughing the North Gaston punter.

"It was a 'Nightmare on Elm Street,'" said South Point coach Phil Tate, who saw three key offensive players sidelined with injuries. "We made enough mistakes for five ballgames."

South Point's leading rusher Don Stowe left the game with a twisted ankle late in the third quarter. He finished the night with 86 yards.

Then fullback Carles Pettis came out with a twisted knee in the fourth quarter. Earlier in the game, guard Jason Jeffries suffered a sprained ankle.

After a scoreless first quarter, North Gaston took a 7-0 lead with 4:32 left in the first half. Cloninger hit William Hull with a quick screen pass that resulted in a 25-yard score. Hull had a big night offensively for the Wildcats, rushing for 99 yards on 25 carries. Robert Thomas kicked the extra point.

South Point answered with a long drive that ended with Williams hitting Jeff Jeffers with a 14-yard scoring toss. An 11-yard gain by Williams on third-and-11, and a 15-yard unsportsmanlike conduct call against North Gaston, helped set up the score.

The Raiders, who failed on all three conversion attempts, trailed 7-6 at halftime.

South Point	0	6	6	6	— 18
North Gaston	7	0	0	0	— 7

NG — William Hull 25 pass from Justin Cloninger (Robert Thomas kick)
 SP — Jeff Jeffries 14 pass from Courtney Williams (run failed)
 SP — Williams 3 run (run failed)
 SP — David Kincaid 23 pass from Williams (kick failed)