

# Red Raiders ride defense

By Steve Reed

Gazette Sports Reporter

ASHEVILLE — South Point's defense played its best game of the season and Marcus McCullough scored twice as the Red Raiders eliminated the state's No. 8 team 21-6 Friday at Cougar Stadium.

Asheville (8-3), which entered the game averaging more than 200 yards per game on the

S. Point	21
Asheville	6

ground, was held to 59 yards on 21 carries. Cougars quarterback DeNorris Burton did throw for for 155 yards, but he was intercepted three times to end key drives.

"When you can force a running team to pass, usually you've got them whipped," said South Point coach Phil Tate.

Conversely, the Red Raiders had success on the ground behind McCullough, who rushed for 113 yards on 21 carries.

"If we hadn't won tonight, there would have been a lot of guys who would have had to hang it up," said McCullough. "We didn't want that."

South Point (7-4) entered the game with a nothing-to-lose attitude and pulled out all the stops.

Tate even called for a fake punt on fourth-and-9 at the South Point 30 on the game's first drive. It worked as Courtney Williams rushed 18 yards for a first down. So did a fake extra point that turned into a key two-point conversion to give the Red Raiders an 8-0 lead.

But the trickery backfired on the Cougars.

Early in the second quarter, the Cougars attempted a quick-kick from their own 25. But South Point's David Kincaid rushed in and blocked the punt, sending the ball flying

deep into the backfield. McCullough picked it up and raced the final 10 yards for a 6-0 lead.

Place-kick holder Kyle Richardson then found Kincaid in the end zone with the two-point conversion off the fake extra point.

The Red Raiders drove 55 yards on seven plays for their next touchdown, highlighted by a 28-yard pass from Williams to Reggie McLean that brought the ball to the Cougars 9.

Three plays later, McCullough went over from the 2-yard line for the score with 4:02 left in the half. Williams's extra point gave the Red Raiders a 15-0 lead.

Asheville threatened at the end of the first half, driving to the South Point 30 before Micah Tribble intercepted Burton's Hail Mary pass.

Asheville never threatened in the second half, except for a 77-yard drive for a touchdown with 3:28 left in the game. Burton hit tight end Steve Gibson with a pair of key passes to keep the drive alive. Leland Williams went over from 1 yard out to close the gap to 15-6.

But on the key two-point conversion attempt, South Point's Don Stowe stepped in front of Burton's pass in the end zone.

Stowe's pickoff meant the Cougars would need two scores to win, and there simply wasn't enough time.

South Point recovered the ensuing onside kick and marched 50 yards for the touchdown. Wes Holder, whose 27-yard burst set up the score, completed the scoring with a 3-yard burst with 39 seconds left.

South Point	0	15	0	6	-	21
Asheville	0	0	0	6	-	6
SP — Marcus McCullough 15 blocked punt return (David Kincaid pass from Kyle Richardson)						
SP — McCullough 2 run (Courtney Williams kick)						
AS — Leland Williams 1 run (pass failed)						
SP — Wes Holder 2 run (kick blocked)						