

Red Raiders' Williams bowls over Jackets

By Mike Cearley
Gazette Correspondent

BELMONT — By the second half, the only thing Bessemer City's coaching staff could get excited about was the way the Yellow Jackets could take a hit.

Nothing else went right as South Point cruised to a 57-16 opening-night victory at Lineberger Stadium on Friday.

Even a squib kick to open the second half failed to work for the Jackets. South Point's Tony Williams scooped the ball and lateraled to Jeremy Jackson, whose hands Bessemer City wanted to keep the ball out of.

Jackson raced 55 yards for his fifth touchdown, the second on a kickoff return. In the first half Jackson, who spent last season backing up *Gazette* player of the year Koren Robinson, returned a kick 86 yards after he opened the scoring with a 13-yard run.

Jackson also scored on runs of 1 and 53 yards. His five scores tied a team record set by Courtney Williams in 1993.

Any questions as to how the Red Raiders would compensate for Robinson's departure to N.C. State were answered early by Jackson and Chris Stowe. The junior backfield duo accounted for South Point's first seven touchdowns.

Stowe squeezed out what life Bessemer City's defense had left when he escaped an apparent 10-yard loss and turned it into a 24-yard touchdown in the second quarter. Stowe's other touchdown came on defense when he recovered a Bessemer City fumble in the Jackets end zone.

No doubt the Jackets were victims of first-game jitters. Bessemer City fumbled deep in its own territory on the Jackets' first two possessions and South Point converted each time.

It took Jackson, who finished with 83 yards on seven carries, two rushes to find the end zone after the BC turnover.

Phillip Wright, who kicked six extra points, split the uprights with a 27-yard field goal after Bessemer City's second miscue.

Meanwhile, the Raiders played

like a seasoned team, scoring on four of their five first-half possessions.

"This is the result of a lot of hard work over the summer," said South Point coach John Devine. "Our guys worked hard and got stronger during the off season. We have more depth up front this year and we were able to keep a lot of fresh legs in the game.

"The offensive line set the tone and our backs did a great job."

The Yellow Jackets were playing without starting quarterback Torrell Partlow, who has been suspended for the first two games.

But coach Eric Nichols conceded that too many mistakes did his team in.

"We have the potential to be a good football team," said Nichols, "but we just made too many mistakes. And we got killed on special teams."

The Jackets fumbled seven times, threw an interception and was penalized 67 yards.

Still, Bessemer City managed 145 yards total offense with Darrin Sanders rushing for 49 yards and William Lucas gaining 45.

Bessemer City 8 0 0 8 — 16

South Point 24 13 20 0 — 57

First Quarter

SP — Jeremy Jackson 13 run (Phillip Wright kick)

SP — Wright 27 FG

SP — Jackson 1 run (Wright kick)

BC — William Lucas 5 run (Lucas run)

SP — Jackson 84 kickoff return (Wright kick)

Second Quarter

SP — Chris Stowe 24 run (Wright kick)

SP — Jackson 53 run (kick failed)

Third Quarter

SP — Jackson 55 kickoff return (kick failed)

SP — Stowe fumble recovery (Wright kick)

SP — Jerric Williams 14 run (Wright kick)

BC — Lucas 1 run (Zack Holmes run)

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