

Devon intervention

■ Lowery's late interception seals 38-31 double OT win

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BELMONT — It was a fitting end to a great game.

South Point's all-everything, Devon Lowery, picked off a Kannapolis A.L. Brown pass in the end zone and the Red Raiders survived the Wonders 38-31 in double overtime Friday night.

The South Point win sets up a rematch with the team that knocked them out of the playoffs a year ago as Jamestown Ragsdale beat Asheville Clyde Erwin 20-7. South Point will host Ragsdale next Friday at Lineberger Stadium at 7:30 p.m.

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Lincolnton falls short in Round 2.
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Friday's Red Raider-Wonder game was one that the estimated 12,000 fans in attendance will never forget.

South Point (11-0-1) fought back from several miscues, including two second-half fumbles and a botched punt snap to tie the game at 28 with 1:17 remaining in regulation. Rasharde Reid ran for a 19-yard score to force overtime.

With four downs to score from the 10, Brown (11-2) initially took control of the bell in the first overtime and had to settle for a 27-yard field goal. The Wonders' defense did a solid job containing South Point's powerful offense in



Dana Gardner/The Gazette

South Point quarterback Devon Lowery ran for 81 yards and a touchdown, but made his most important play on defense. Lowery, a defensive back in next month's Shrine Bowl, picked off a pass in double-overtime to seal a 38-31 Red Raiders win.

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the Raiders' possession and B.J. Richmond connected on his third field goal of the night to tie the game at 31.

South Point had the ball first in the second overtime and went to a heavy diet of Reid. The junior fullback ran for one yard on first down, minus one on second down and eight yards on third down to set up a fourth-and-goal from the 2-yard line.

That's when the Red Raider coaching staff made the gutsiest call of the 2000 season. Instead of settling for a field goal, John Devine, Mickey Lineberger and the Raider coaches decided to go for the touchdown.

"I looked at Coach Lineberger and I said, 'Can we get it?' He said, 'One hundred times out of 100!'" said Devine of the fourth down call.

Lowery earned the Raiders a yard on a penalty as he pulled the Wonder defense offside. On the next play, Lowery handed the ball to Reid and the powerful junior forced his way through the Brown line and into paydirt. With Richmond's point-after-touchdown, the South Point lead ballooned to seven.

On Brown's first offensive play of the second overtime, the Wonders went to a play-action set. Lowery watched Wonder quarterback Josh Lee, then stepped in front of a pass intended for Chris Carter. As he ran out-of-bounds to end the game, Lowery lifted one fist high into the air.

A split-second later, his teammates and even his coaches were jumping on him to celebrate.

Lowery, who ironically earned *The Gazette's* Offensive Player of the Year honors, credited his video game savvy with the game-winning interception.

"Me and my brother used to play video games and if it went to overtime, it was always a play-action pass," said the Shrine Bowl defensive back. "I saw the guy cross and I was right there on it."

The scene after the game was almost surreal. When the players lined up and shook hands at midfield, there were as many tears in the eyes of the Red Raider players as there were in the Brown players' eyes. The opposing players hugged each other through the whole line.

South Point's stellar defensive star, Ian Gibson, was one of the players that were not ashamed to show his emotion.

"When you give it everything you've got, it hits you like a ton of bricks," said Gibson, who dropped to his knees when Lowery made the interception. "When Devon intercepted it, I wanted to hug him, but I couldn't. I didn't have enough left."

It was just that kind of night.

B 0 7 7 14 3 0 — 31

SP 0 13 8 7 3 7 — 38

SP — B.J. Richmond 43 field goal

B — Chris Carter 16 pass from

Josh Lee (David Henry kick)

SP — Devon Lowery 1 run (Rich-

mond kick)

SP — Richmond 47 field goal

B — Eric Caldwell 4 run (Henry

kick)

SP — Rasharde Reid 29 run (Bri-

an McWhirter run)

B — Caldwell 11 pass from Lee

(Henry kick)

B — Caldwell 6 run (Henry kick)

SP — Reid 19 run (Richmond

kick)

B — Henry 27 field goal

SP — Richmond 27 field goal

SP — Reid 1 run (Richmond kick)