

Brown scores four touchdowns

South Point shakes off rust, rolls to round two



John Clark/The Gazette

South Point senior wingback Tyler Gorton blows past the East Henderson defense during Friday night's first-round 3A playoff game in Belmont. The Red Raiders' offense totaled 554 yards.

Devine attributes slow start to late-season blowouts

By RICHARD WALKER
Gazette Sports Reporter

BELMONT — South Point coach John Devine cautioned anyone who would listen that three season-ending blowouts might make his team rusty entering the playoffs.

The Red Raiders' slow start and unusually high penalty yardage Friday night may support Devine's claims, but after South Point's 54-14 victory over East Henderson, it was hard to believe the Red Raiders were rusty.

It's just that the bar has been set high for a team many see as a state championship squad.

"It's hard to go for three weeks and not have some rust. And today we were rusty," said Devine, whose 11-1 team will host Franklin at 7:30 Friday night in a 3A second-round game.

South Point was on its heels at the start. And some sloppiness by way of 11 penalties for 100 yards were equally frustrating.

However, after the Red Raiders scored on their first two possessions of the second half to take a 34-7 lead, most of the South Point fans at Lineberger Stadium spent the rest of the night wondering what was taking place down the road at Ashbrook.

"Our kids just wore them down," Devine said of the Red Raiders' relentless effort after East Henderson scored the game's first points.

South Point wore down the Eagles (4-8) with a variety of offensive and defensive weapons.

Quarterback Javar Williams and wingback Jamari Crawford shined brightest, though Joe Brown scored four touch-

SOUTH POINT 54
EAST HENDERSON 14

downs against a defense designed to snuff out his tackle-to-tackle inside running game.

Williams had 73 yards rushing and one touchdown and 119 yards passing and another score while handling the chores for all but one series of a 554-yard offensive attack.

Crawford added 147 yards rushing and one touchdown. And Brown had 83 hard-earned yards rushing on 11 carries, with four going for touchdowns.

Ivey Watson, Tyler Gorton and Josh Robinson also had standout offensive performances, while Brandon Reid, Brian Bradshaw, Jamie Tuttle and Randy Robinson sparked a defense that allowed 223 yards total offense.

"Our kids played hard," said Devine, whose team closed the regular season with easy victories over Berry Academy (76-6), North Gaston (52-7) and East Lincoln (62-7). "They just haven't had to play a full 48 minutes for three weeks. So we've got to get back into playing shape."

Whether it was rust or simply a hungry Eagles team, South Point was challenged early.

With East Henderson running a no-huddle offense on a drive that featured a fake punt conversion on fourth-and-11, the Eagles went ahead 7-0 with 7:11 to play after sophomore Michael Ingram's 3-yard run.

After an onside kick on the ensuing Eagles kickoff, South Point drove 46 yards in nine plays to tie the score, with Brown converting a fourth-

and-goal from the East Henderson 2 for his first score.

After fans oohed and ahhed with anxiety into the second quarter, the Red Raiders took the lead for good on Williams' 2-yard keeper with 7:22 left in the first half.

Crawford tallied South Point's final score of the opening half on a 48-yard run.

At halftime, Devine said he prodded his team to play better.

"Well, we just knew that we could play better," Devine said. "So we came out and set the tone after the kickoff. And we wanted to redeem ourselves on defense."

The Red Raiders were emphatically efficient on both counts, as they scored on four of their first five possessions of the second half while limiting East Henderson to two first downs and 28 yards before South Point reserves allowed the Eagles' final score with 1:19 to play.

"We just had a lot of mistakes early," Devine said. "Mistakes we've got to correct. We were better in September and October than we are now. And we better get better in a hurry."

EH	7	0	0	7	—	14
SP	7	13	20	14	—	54

EH — Michael Ingram 3 run (Marc Ward kick)

SP — Joe Brown 2 run (Andrew Rinehart kick)

SP — Javar Williams 2 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Jamari Crawford 48 run (Kick failed)

SP — Brown 5 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Ivey Watson 67 pass from Williams (Kick failed)

SP — Brown 46 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Brown 7 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Josh Robinson 62 run (Rinehart kick)

EH — Ingram 75 run (Ward kick)