



Benjamin Patton/The Gazette

East Gaston quarterback Stephen McQuage is sacked by South Point's Joe Hall during the Red Raiders' 16-7 win on Friday. The Red Raiders sacked McQuage five times and forced two turnovers in the game.

Dominating D

Raiders put clamps on rival Warriors in front of packed house

By **PHILLIP GARDNER**
Gazette Sports Reporter

BELMONT — When South Point lost its opener to Lincolnton in overtime, Red Raiders quarterback Tyler Lemons said the tight-game experience would pay dividends later in the season.

His theory proved accurate after the Red Raiders pulled out their second straight heartstopper Friday.

South Point put the clamps on Michael McDowell and East Gaston's versatile offense, and scored

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Stadium crowd estimated at 9,000, South Point (4-1, 1-0 Big South 3A/4A) sacked quarterback Stephan McQuage five times and forced two turnovers while holding the Warriors (3-2, 0-1) to 149 yards.

"We noticed the offense was hav-

ing trouble moving it, so we knew we had to step it up," said defensive lineman Joe Hall, who tallied six tackles, including two sacks and one tackle for a loss. "We just decided to go out there and play with heart."

Both teams played what some described as their best defensive games of the year. East Gaston limited South Point to 184 yards, sacked the quarterbacks three times and recovered two fumbles but couldn't

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get the ball in the end zone more than once.

"We played our hearts out. It's a shame we have to lose, though," said East Gaston linebacker Luke Traylor, who tallied nine tackles and a sack.

The second half was a stalemate until South Point fullback Stan Wilson sealed it with a 28-yard TD run with 51 seconds remaining.

"They could have just as easily beaten us by two touchdowns," South Point coach John Devine said. "Their defense played great. Their offense had their moments."

South Point won its 10th straight in the series, but East Gaston had plenty of chances to claim its first victory in Belmont since 1992.

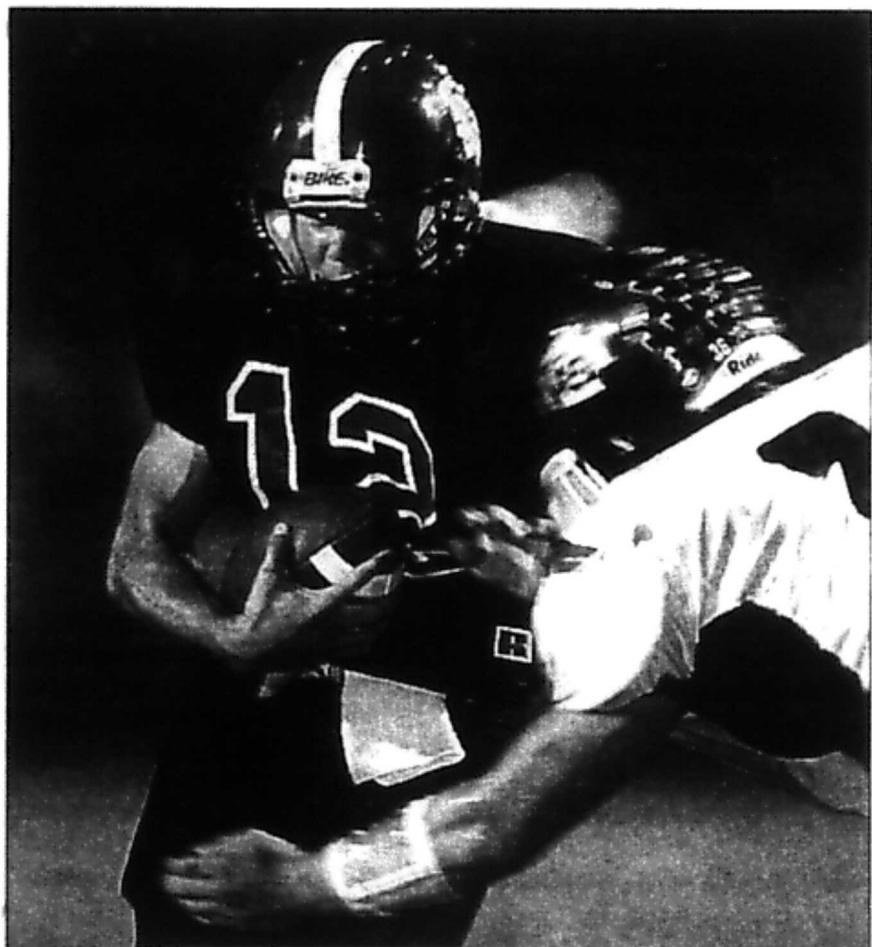
Down 9-7, the Warriors drove deep into South Point territory early in the fourth quarter before stalling at the 27. East Gaston turned the ball over on downs on McQuage's incomplete pass to Brandon Gagnon in the end zone.

The Warriors got the ball back two plays later when South Point quarterback Tyler Lemons fumbled on the Red Raiders' 33-yard line.

But East Gaston again turned the ball over on downs after a controversial call.

South Point was flagged for a late hit out of bounds after McQuage had scrambled for a negative gain on fourth-and-long. The officials initially awarded East Gaston a first down on the South Point 13, but Red Raiders coach John Devine called a timeout to contest the ruling.

The officials then gave South Point possession after realizing that the infraction was a dead-ball foul after East Gaston had



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South Point's Jason Baker is tackled by East Gaston's Luke Traylor during Friday's game.

already turned the ball over on downs.

East Gaston got another shot but Adam McLean's sack created a second-and-long with less than 2 1/2 minutes remaining and East Gaston couldn't advance the ball farther.

South Point fumbled the opening kickoff and East Gaston capitalized for an early 7-0 lead. The Warriors, who recovered the ball at the South Point 24, scored on fourth-and-3 on a 17-yard pass from McQuage to P.J. Hall.

South Point didn't answer until backup quarterback Jason Baker's 4-yard run completed a 52-yard drive at the 14:19 mark of the second quarter.

The extra-point kick was wide left and East Gaston led 7-6.

The Red Raiders took the lead for good on a 36-yard field goal by Matthew Mitchell late in the second quarter after Cameron McGlenn forced an East Gaston fumble on its own 23.

EG	7	0	0	0	-	7
SP	0	9	0	7	-	16

EG - P.J. Hall 17 pass from Stephan Mc-

Quage (Zack Cornwell kick)

SP - Jason Baker 4 run (kick failed)

SP - FG Matthew Mitchell 36

SP - Stan Wilson 28 run (Mitchell kick)

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