



Mike Hensdill/The Gazette

South Point's Cameron McGlenn can only watch as Ashbrook's Devin Harris catches a tipped ball out of the air on Monday night at South Point. Harris grabbed the ball and then raced 38 yards into the end zone to give the Green Wave a 14-6 first-half lead. It was Harris' only catch of the night, but it proved to be one of the game's biggest plays.

Storm Surge

Smash-mouth style pushes Wave past rival Red Raiders

By PHILLIP GARDNER

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BELMONT — A much-improved defense and smash-mouth football at its finest paved the way for Ashbrook's 20-6 win over South Point on Monday.

The Green Wave controlled time of possession at almost a 2-to-1 ratio and held South Point to season-low point and yardage totals at a rainy Lineberger Stadium to claim the early lead in the Big South 3A/4A Conference race.

Both teams scored on their opening possessions, but it was mostly Ashbrook after that as the Green Wave (4-4, 3-0) won its third straight game to claim sole possession of first place in

the Big South.

South Point (5-2, 2-1) dropped its first game since a double-overtime loss to Lincolnton in the opener and hindered its chances of winning a seventh straight conference title.

Ashbrook held possession for 30 minutes, 16 seconds while pounding out 221 yards on the ground and gaining an additional 125 yards with the occasional pass. That left only 17 minutes, 44 seconds for South Point, which managed only 164 yards of total offense.

"This was the big game that was going to decide a lot for the rest of conference play and we all knew we had to step up

See **Ashbrook**/Page 4C ►►



Photos by Mike Hensdill/The Gazette

South Point's Marcus Duckworth is wrapped up by Ashbrook's James Hope in the first half of their game in the rain on Monday evening in Belmont.

▼ Ashbrook

continued from Page 1C

and play like men tonight," Ashbrook senior linebacker Brandon Newton said.

Fullback Patrick Hall gained 86 yards on 19 carries, Jashawn Spencer added 65 yards on five carries and Josh Blake carried 10 times for 35 yards. As a team, the Green Wave averaged 4.8 yards per carry.

"We want to try and smash mouth it," Ashbrook coach Mike Briggs said. "We were bigger than they were and that's what we had to rely on. Just keep pounding the football. That's what we do best."

Ashbrook iced it with an 18-play, 67-yard drive in the second half that ate 10 minutes, 47 seconds off the clock. Brett Conner capped the series with a 29-yard field goal — his second of the night — for the final margin.

The monster drive featured two fourth-down conversions. The first came on a fake punt from the Ashbrook 30 when Conner found Leshawn Spencer for a 70-yard touchdown pass play that was called back by a penalty. The Green Wave still gained 43 yards on the play.

The next fourth-down conversion came on a broken play on fourth-and-8, when quarterback J.P. Snyder scrambled for an 11-yard gain to the South Point 24.

"They've got big strong kids and they do what they do well," South Point coach John



Ashbrook running back Antonio Surratt caught a 23-yard touchdown pass in the Green Wave's win on Monday.

Devine said. "They made plays, converted fourth downs, third downs, you name it. We didn't make a play. It'd seem like we'd have them in good position and let them out of the blocks."

After Antonio Surratt hauled in a 23-yard pass from J.P. Snyder on a fade route for a 6-0 Ashbrook lead on the opening possession, quarterback Tyler Lemons led South Point on a seven-play, 70-yard scoring drive to tie the game at 6. Lemons alone rushed for 62 yards on the drive, but the Red Raiders managed only 94 yards of offense the rest of the game.

"We talked all week that they're going to get their

yardage. Bend, but don't break, but be physical. And, I tell you, the boys were really resilient tonight. They just kept bringing it and bringing it," Briggs said.

Ashbrook took the lead for good on a 38-yard pass from Clay Patton to Devin Harris midway through the second quarter. Cameron McGlenn and Arrington Tribble nearly came away with the interception but tipped the ball right to Harris, who scooped it up at the 15 and ran untouched to the end zone.

The game was rescheduled from Friday night, when the area had received more than four inches of rain from the remnants of Tropical Storm Tammy over a two-day span. The field had a chance to dry a little over the weekend, but more rain fell Monday throughout the game.

Despite the wet conditions, neither team fumbled and Conner booted his first two field goals of the season, the first from 32 yards out.

A	6	11	0	3	-20
SP	6	0	0	0	-6

A — Antonio Surratt 23 pass from J.P. Snyder (kick failed)

SP — Tyler Lemons 36 run (kick failed)

A — Devin Harris 38 pass from Clay Patton (Josh Blake run)

A — FG Brett Conner 32

A — FG Conner 29



South Point quarterback Tyler Lemons, right, rushed for 92 yards but completed only two of 10 passes for 19 yards.

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