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South Point's Aaron Crumbley breaks into the open against Lincolnton Friday night. Crumbley ran for 191 yards.

# Red Raider scare

## South Point wins, puts the hurt on Lincolnton runners

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LINCOLNTON — South Point took an impressive 25-15 season-opening victory at Lincolnton High School Friday.

But the Wolves may have taken more than a simple beating on the scoreboard at Von Ray Harris Field, as three of Lincolnton's top running backs suffered injuries and didn't return to action.

The most serious injury appeared to be to Cedric Herndon, who was carried off on a stretcher with tingling sensations in his arms and legs as a precautionary measure after a 15-minute delay with 2½ minutes left in the game. Additionally, Wolves' offensive weapons Jonathan Ingram (dizziness) and C.J. Wilson (ribs) were shaken up and did not return to action.

Lincolnton coach Scott Cloninger was hopeful none of the injuries were serious enough to cause the players to miss future games, but added that each was replaced for precautionary measures.

Nonetheless, the late August contest had playoff intensity to it.

Or as South Point coach John Devine put it: "That was a good ol'

slobber-knocker football game."

South Point got the better of it statistically, outgaining Lincolnton 379 to 144 behind sophomore Aaron Crumbley, a junior varsity standout last season making his varsity debut. Crumbley finished with 191 yards on 19 carries.

"Our offensive tackles were doing a great job of getting their linebackers out of the way," Crumbley said of South Point's fullback dive play. "It was wide open."

South Point's offensive line included tackles Trevor Reeves, Phillip Rinehart and Daniel Gillelan, guards Daniel Biggerstaff and Will Gullledge, and center Greg Lancaster.

The middle running game was so wide open behind that group that

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without an illegal block penalty on an apparent 50-yard Crumley run early in the second quarter, the first-year runner would've eclipsed 200 yards in his debut.

Lincolnton coach Scott Cloninger said South Point's dominance in the interior line was what made that happen.

"They always have great athletes," Cloninger said of the Red Raiders. "But where South Point excels is on the lines. That's where they whipped us tonight."

In spite of that dominance, Lincolnton actually led 15-9 and felt it was much closer throughout the game.

"We had opportunities that we didn't take advantage of," Cloninger said. "But South Point just plays hard-nosed, Belmont football."

The Red Raiders appeared to have the Wolves (1-1) on their heels before Lincolnton made its comeback.

A 56-yard drive stalled at the Wolves 44 before a punt was covered at the Lincolnton 3 and South Point's Matt Dodge tackled Wolves quarterback Adam Thompson for a safety.

After Lincolnton's free kick, it took South Point only five plays to make it 9-0. Brandon Spencer did the hon-



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South Point's Chris Lane tries to break a tackle against Lincolnton.

ors with a 7-yard run followed by the first of two James Justice extra point kicks.

But Herndon breathed life into the Wolves by taking the ensuing kickoff 97 yards for a touchdown. And two possessions later, Lincolnton drove 69 yards in eight plays to take the lead. Wilson's 3-yard run

notched the touchdown, then Thompson took a high center snap and turned it into a two-point pass to Wilson for a 15-9 Wolves' lead with 6:52 left in the opening half.

Unfortunately for host Lincolnton, it would never score again as South Point closed the game with 16 unanswered

points.

A quick four-play, 61-yard drive capped by Jesse McGaha's 8-yard TD run tied the score at 15, then Justice booted a 34-yard field goal just before halftime to give South Point an 18-15 lead.

The Red Raiders made it 25-15 on their opening possession of the second half. Quarterback Desmond Lowery directed a nine-play, 82-yard drive that was capped by Spencer's brilliant, tackle-breaking 38-yard TD run to the right corner of the end zone with 3:48 to play.

The rest of the way, only Lincolnton's missed 35-yard field goal with 9:48 to play was a serious scoring threat.

Curtis McGill led Lincolnton's weary defense with 11 first-hit or solo tackles. Stan Wilson's five hits led South Point.

SP 9 9 7 0 - 25

L 7 8 0 0 - 15

First quarter

SP - Safety, Matt Dodge tackled Adam Thompson in end zone, 7:10

SP - Brandon Spencer 7 run (James Justice kick), 4:43

L - Cedric Herndon 97 kickoff return (John Gilleland kick), 4:29

Second quarter

L - C.J. Wilson 3 run (Wilson pass from Thompson), 6:52

SP - Jesse McGaha 8 run (Kick failed), 5:04

SP - FG Justice 34, 0:53

Third quarter

SP - Spencer 38 run (Justice kick), 3:48