



David Luoto/Special to The Gazette

Above, South Point quarterback Desmond Lowery talks with teammates during a timeout Friday night. Below, Lowery drops back for a rare pass. He finished the game with 127 rushing yards and three touchdowns.

# A Muddy Success

South Point takes charge in second half against Burns

BY RICHARD WALKER  
rwalker@gastongazette.com

BELMONT — There was lots of anxiety and concern in the stands on the home side of Lineberger Stadium at halftime of Friday's Burns at South Point high school football game.

Not only was the home team trailing by a touchdown, but the visiting Bulldogs had exhibited a ball control offense that kept the Red Raiders' usually potent offense off the rain-soaked field.

Yet, only a few yards away, in the South Point locker room, there was no worry.

"We just knew we had to stick to the game plan and execute better than we had," said Red Raiders senior offensive lineman Trevor Reeves.

Did South Point ever do that, as the Red Raiders turned a nailbiter into a 28-7 runaway victory that kept them unbeaten at 4-0.

If anything, Burns coach Ron Greene knew that his team left potential points on the field in a first half in which the Bulldogs outgained South Point 174 to 95.

"We didn't get the points we needed to get out of the drives and opportunities we had in the first half," said Greene, whose team fell to 1-3.

Those opportunities weren't as plentiful for the Bulldogs in the second half.

In truth, after reaching South Point territory three times in the opening half and having a touchdown called back by one of 10 penalties charged against Burns, the Bulldogs reached Red Raiders' territory only once in the second half.



More importantly for South Point, quarterback Desmond Lowery, fullback Aaron Crumbley and the Red Raiders' offensive line simply took control of the game.

South Point ran the football 30 times — not throwing even once — in a half in which it racked up 241 yards, 12 first downs and four touchdowns.

Lowery led the way with three scores and 127 yards in 18 carries. Crumbley tallied 128 yards and one score in 27 carries.

"We felt like we could move it because the defense was stepping up," said Reeves, joined on the Red Raiders' offensive front by Daniel Biggestaff, Daniel Gillelan, Greg Lancaster and Weston Lawing.

Lowery's tackle-breaking 44-yard run tallied South Point's first score and seemed to change the game's momentum. He later scored on a 3-yard run to cap a 91-yard drive that put the Red Raiders ahead for good and tallied on a 9-yarder to come a 26-yard drive after Matt Dodge recovered his second fumble of the game.

Crumbley's 2-yard run came with 3:18 to play.

The game was played in miserable conditions, as steady rain poured on the

players and field throughout the contest. It made some parts of the field very slippery and made ball security of the utmost importance. Each team dropped passes, but Burns lost two fumbles and South Point managed to hang on to the ball all night.

"It's just not fun," Red Raiders coach John Devine said. "It's a sloppy game and a slow-motion game. You've got to make extra sure of your footing. But I thought both teams played hard."

Burns was breaking in a new quarterback as Greene chose to start senior Keron Phelps after senior Tyler Gill had started the previous three games this season.

Phelps showed tremendous arm strength and elusiveness as a runner, finished with 226 yards total offense. He completed nine of 21 throws for 191 yards, including a 72-yard scoring strike to Donta Hopper on his first completion late in the first quarter.

"We've worked Keron Phelps in practice and thought he gave us a great chance with our passing game," Greene said. "I thought he did a great job."

Both teams had defensive standouts in the hard-hitting game. Burns was led by Julian Kee's 10 solo or first-hit tackles, including two for losses. Corey Smith added seven stops and Darrell Coates six.

Daniel Holmes led South Point with seven stops, including a sack, and a caused fumble.

B 7 0 0 0 - 7  
SP 0 0 21 7 - 28

First quarter

B — Donta Hopper 72 pass from Keron Phelps (Ethan Martin kick), 0:7

Third quarter

SP — Desmond Lowery 44 run (James Justice kick), 8:43

SP — Lowery 3 run (James Justice kick), 2:15

SP — Lowery 9 run (James Justice kick), 12:7

