

# Red Raiders trail early, then roll to win

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BELMONT — Believe it or not, there were moments of uneasiness at Lineberger Stadium for the partisan South Point High football fans.

Unfortunately for visiting Kings Mountain, those moments ended emphatically by the end of the first quarter on a night in which South Point set one school offensive record and came close to another.

After Kings Mountain drove 76 yards on the game's opening possession to take a 7-0 lead, South Point scored 55 consecutive points before cruising to the 55-20 opening round N.C. Class 3AA playoff victory.

The Red Raiders (11-1), unbeaten Big South 3A/4A Conference champions, advance to host another playoff game next week. South Point will host Northwest Cabarrus (10-2), a 51-20 winner over Burns in its first-round playoff game.

"We've come together and we're playing really well as a team," said South Point quarterback Desmond Lowery, who directed an offense that set a school record for rushing yardage (521) and fell just 10 yards shy of the school's all-time total offense record.

And while Lowery rushed for 247 yards, passed for 55 more and his handoffs and pitches helped Aaron Crumbley and Chris Lane to 125 and 79 yards, respectively, he knew exactly why the Red Raiders rolled up 576 yards total offense.

"It came from the offensive line blocking," Lowery said. "They blocked great tonight."

Their blocking helped South Point eclipse 500 yards rushing in a single game for the first time in school history — beating the previous record of 496 yards in 1999 against East Gaston.

Their total offense figure was 10 yards shy of the 586 yards set in that 1999 game against East Gaston and matched the 576 yards the Red Raiders had against Chase in 1972.

Everything worked efficiently and effectively in South Point's "Red Bone" offense in which Lowery has the choice of handing off to his fullback, keeping the ball himself or pitching to one of his wingbacks.

Lowery's calls to keep the football himself worked best of all, as he came close to breaking the county's record for yards rushing in a single game by a quarterback. He needed only 11 tries to pick up his 247 yards and he scored four touchdowns, including a 79-yard run for a touchdown on his last play of the game with 9:12 minutes left in the third quarter.

The total left him six yards shy of a county quarterback rushing record of 253 yards set by A.J. Blue earlier this season against Forestview.

For good measure, Lowery's only pass completion (in three attempts) went 55 yards for a touchdown to Chris Lane. Lane, Crumbley and Stan Wilson added touchdown runs and James Justice converted seven of eight extra points.

"We just ran into a good football team tonight," said Kings Mountain coach Greg Lloyd, whose first Mountaineers' team finished 5-7 overall. "They're good enough to win the championship."

Lloyd's Mountaineers actually started quickly, as quarterback Michael Roberts capped the opening drive with a 16-yard keeper for a touchdown with 8:44 left to play in the first quarter.

But South Point's defense would not allow Kings Mountain another first down until the final seconds of the opening half. And by then, the Red Raiders were ahead 41-7.

"They played hard and really kicked us in the teeth on that first drive," Devine said. "I don't know that we did anything different after that. I just think we played harder."

KM 7 0 0 13 — 20

SP 14 27 14 0 — 55

First quarter

KM — Michael Roberts 16 run (Alex Randall kick), 8:44

SP — Desmond Lowery 15 run (James Justice kick), 6:13

SP — Lowery 39 run (James Justice kick), 0:14

Second quarter

SP — Lowery 17 run (James Justice kick), 10:33

SP — Chris Lane 25 run (Kick blocked), 4:20

SP — Aaron Crumbley 53 run (James Justice kick), 1:53

SP — Lane 55 pass from Lowery (James Justice kick), 0:48

Third quarter

SP — Lowery 79 run (James Justice kick), 9:37

SP — Stan Wilson 28 run (James Justice kick), 0:38

Fourth quarter

KM — Roberts 3 run (Randall kick), 8:27

KM — Terrance Young 36 pass from Roberts (No attempt), 0:00