

SOUTH POINT 21, KINGS MOUNTAIN 14

Justice lays down the law

Senior leads late defensive stop

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BELMONT — Two weeks ago, the South Point defense couldn't come up with a big stop when it needed it.

That sure seems like a long time ago.

The Red Raiders showed how far they've progressed, putting up a critical defensive stand late in Thursday's 21-14 win over Kings Mountain.

The Mountaineers had reached the South Point 26 with about five minutes remaining before two big plays by James Justice backed them up to midfield and essentially sealed the outcome.

"In the first half we were kind of playing without any emotion," said Justice, a senior linebacker. "We just had to bring up the intensity level."

Justice brought down Joe Chambers for a 1-yard loss on first down after a false-start penalty. On the next play, Justice chased down quarterback Michael Roberts, who couldn't locate an open receiver. Roberts threw the ball away as Justice tackled him, and officials flagged him for intentional grounding.

Forced to punt, Kings Mountain (1-1) was unable to regain possession as South Point (2-1) hogged the ball for the final 4:01.

Although South Point pulled out the win, the nail-biter was nothing like the two meetings between these schools last year, when South Point won 53-3 in the regular season and 55-20 in the first round of the playoffs.

"We're not a program that's going to be built on moral victories, but it's nice to know that we're starting to compete with the solid programs," Kings Mountain coach Greg Lloyd said.

A 14-all halftime tie lasted until the fourth quarter when South Point staged a two-play 49-yard scoring drive to take the lead for good.

Josh Justice ran 18 yards on first down, and after a false-start penalty, Jesse McGaha took it the rest of the way. McGaha took a pitch from Desmond Lowery, ran left and picked up two key blocks down field from Justice and split end Chase Cowart to complete the 36-yard run.

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"We ran that before ... and I should have scored but I went inside," McGaha said. "Coach (Scott) Lee told me to go outside so I just went outside and I was wide open."

Kings Mountain led 14-7 on Tyrice Addison's fumble recovery in the end zone midway through the second quarter. South Point tied it at 14 on Lowery's 34-yard run with 1:52 left before halftime.

South Point produced 389 yards of offense, including 344 rushing, despite losing three fumbles. Lowery finished with 112 yards and a TD while fullback Aaron Crumbley added 110 yards and a TD. McGaha finished with 77 yards on just seven carries and Justice added 50.

Chambers ran for 148 yards on 24 carries and a TD for Kings Mountain, which had 277 yards of offense. Roberts ran for 44 yards and completed six of 14 passes for 85 yards but was intercepted twice.

KM 0 14 0 0 - 14
SP 7 7 0 7 - 21

First quarter

SP—Aaron Crumbley 2 run (James Justice kick), 1:24

Second quarter

KM—Joe Chambers 9 pass from Michael Roberts (Houston Lattimore kick), 8:28.

KM—Tyrice Addison fumble recovery in end zone (Lattimore kick), 4:44.

SP—Desmond Lowery 34 run (James Justice kick), 1:52.

Fourth quarter

SP—Jesse McGaha 36 run (James Justice kick), 8:28.

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Brad Coville/Special to The Gazette

Kings Mountain's Joe Chambers ran for 148 yards and a touchdown in Thursday's loss to South Point.



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