



John Clark/The Gazette

South Point quarterback Josh Justice (9) is brought down by a host of Lincolnton players during their game Friday night at Lincolnton.

Red Scare

South Point survives fiery Lincolnton Wolves in OT

By Richard Walker
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LINCOLNTON — For virtually all of Friday's South Point game at Lincolnton, the Red Raiders' struggled to establish running lanes for standout runner Aaron Crumbley.

That is until it mattered most.

Crumbley racked up 42 of his 73 yards rushing in the final five minutes of regulation and on the winning 10-yard touchdown run in overtime of a 21-14 South Point victory.

"You've just got to keep the wheels churning," Crumbley said of his late-game heroics.

Said South Point coach John Devine: "If you don't panic, good things can happen."

Good things happened multiple times for the Red Raiders (1-1) in the final five minutes.

Trailing 14-7 with Lincolnton attempting to convert a fourth-and-one at the South Point 25, Red Raiders defenders Roy Turner, Josh Allman and Clarence Taylor combined for the defensive stop.

Then South Point clicked off five first downs as time wound down, even getting a break when offensive lineman Jeffrey Lawing jumped on a fumble after a Red Raiders' first down run.

Inside the game

By the numbers: South Point 228 yards, Lincolnton 165 yards.

Getting defensive: South Point

— Maurice Falls nine tackles (1 QB sack), Clarence Taylor eight tackles, Rod Williams seven tackles, Travis Davie seven tackles, Tydre Crawford six tackles, Troy Leeper six tackles, Lincolnton — Michael Cunningham six tackles (interception return for TD, fumble caused, fumble recovery), Michael Dellinger seven tackles, Drake Henry five tackles (fumble caused).

Quoting: "I thought they were going to hold the ball there at the end. But we got the ball back and found a way to get seven points" — Aaron Crumbley, South Point running back on his team's drive that forced overtime.

Next week: South Point — hosts

Finally, South Point forced overtime in dramatic fashion — on Josh Justice's 20-yard scoring throw to Shane Merrill with 40 seconds to play in regulation.

Offensive "coach (Mickey) Lineberger's one of the best there is on that," Devine said. "He took a shot there and it

worked out well for us."

Justice then calmly booted the tying extra point to force overtime.

In the extra period, Crumbley gave South Point its winning margin with a 10-yard run up the middle on first down before the Red Raiders held on downs after Lincolnton reached the 5.

"I told the kids I was proud of them," said Wolves coach Scott Cloninger, whose team fell to 1-1. "They played through adversity, played extremely hard and competed against a good South Point team."

Lincolnton found out early in the week it would be without starting quarterback Brandon Wilson after he broke a hand in last week's 28-21 victory at East Rutherford. It meant Cloninger had to prepare sophomore Jalen Littlejohn and senior Tevin Avery to play the position that directs the Wolves' new spread offensive attack.

Lincolnton appeared on its way to a surprising victory behind a stellar defensive effort and ball-control offense.

But South Point found a way in the end to claim victory.

"Whenever we were called on to step up, we did it," Crumbley said. "The defense played their hearts out to keep us in the game. And we made enough plays there in the end to win it."

SP 70077-21
L 07700-14

First quarter
SP - Josh Justice 17 run
(Justice kick), 2:37

Second quarter
L - Johnathan Gidney 3 pass
from Tevin Avery (Kevin Miller
kick), 2:40

Third quarter
L - Michael Cunningham 67
interception return (Miller
kick), 1:27

Fourth quarter
SP - Shane Merritt 20 pass
from Justice (Justice kick),
0:40

Overtime
SP - Aaron Crumbley 10 run
(Justice kick)