



ABOVE: South Point's Ramon Costner carries the ball against Kannapolis on Friday. **RIGHT:** South Point's Scott McWhirter runs with the ball during his team's win over Kannapolis on Friday.

On to the next round

South Point knocks off Wonders, advances to second straight West final

By Phillip Gardner
pgardner@gastongazette.com

KANNAPOLIS — South Point's going back to the regional finals — and the Red Raiders don't plan on stopping there this time.

Three different players scored touchdowns and South Point held Kannapolis Brown to its lowest point total of the season in a 24-7 third-round state playoff victory Friday.

The seventh-seeded Red Raiders (12-2) advance to their second straight West final, where they will return to Lineberger Stadium next Friday to face No. 12 seed Anson County (10-4), a 34-32 winner over top-seeded Northern Guilford.

"I just want to get me a state ring before I go to college," said senior defensive lineman Maurice Falls, a key

>> See RAIDERS/Page 3B

Gazette photos by Benjamin Patton



VarsityNC
.COM

gastongazette.com

For more photos from Friday's game, check out VarsityNC.com and gastongazette.com

ON 3B
Lincolnton, East Lincoln fall on Friday.

Inside the game

Total yards — South Point 301 (266 rushing, 35 passing); Kannapolis Brown 192 (82 rushing, 110 passing)

Turnovers — South Point 1 (interception); Kannapolis Brown 1 (fumble)

Next week — South Point, the No. 7 seed in the 3AA West, plays host to No. 12 seed Anson County next week for the 3AA West championship.

Continued from Page 1B

contributor to South Point's stingy defensive effort Friday.

South Point will make its fourth state semifinal appearance since 2002. Last year, the Red Raiders were embarrassed 35-7 by eventual 3A state champion West Rowan in the fourth round. On this night, South Point was the one doing the embarrassing.

In a sign of things to come, the Red Raiders forced a fumble on the first play and the defense kept doing its thing the rest of the game. South Point held Kannapolis Brown's high-scoring offense far below its 362 average, though it yielded 192 yards. Brown's previous low scoring output came in a 13-10 loss to rival Concord.

Falls, Patrick Home, Carson Ginn and Roy Turner tallied sacks for the Red Raiders, who applied constant pressure in the backfield.

"The defense said (to the offensive players), 'We're going to keep it out of their hands, we're going to keep it in yours,' and we did it," Ginn said. "That was the game plan. We followed through."

In all fairness, Kannapolis Brown's leading rusher missed the game as Travis Riley suffered a concussion in last week's win against Asheville Erwin. The 6-foot, 205-pound junior had rushed for 1,754 yards and 30 TDs this season but did not dress out for Friday's game.

"Take away 32 touchdowns, it makes a big difference, but that's not an excuse," Kannapolis Brown coach Ron Massey said. "South Point beat us."

The Wonders offense looked lost at times without their workhorse. Falls recovered the opening-play fumble,



South Point's Josh Allman (32) and Jalen Porter (8) break up a pass intended for Kannapolis's Jaques Deese during South Point's win on Friday.

Benjamin Patton/
The Gazette

and Josh Justice scored just one snap later when he dashed up the middle on a 17-yard quarterback keeper.

Kannapolis (11-3) finally showed life on offense in the second quarter, scoring on a 10-play, 60-yard drive. Martel Campbell hit Xavier Stanback in the end zone for an 18-yard TD, tying the score at 7 with 6:21 remaining before halftime.

South Point answered with a 13-play 84-yard scoring drive, taking a 14-7 lead just before halftime on a 9-yard run by Scott McWhirter.

In a key stretch in the second half, Kannapolis Brown was unable to take advantage of South Point's only turnover. Kaseel Hollis intercepted Justice at the 42 but a tackle for loss by Jeremy Hunter

and a sack by Home held the Wonders to a 29-yard field goal attempt, and Brenden Brown missed it wide left.

Four plays later, McWhirter took a pitch left and gained 50 yards to set up South Point's final touchdown, a 1-yard run by Aaron Crumbley.

"It was just a tremendous turnaround in field position, plus momentum of the game," South Point coach John Devine said.

South Point tacked on three points on Joey Mitchell's 27-yard field goal near the end of the third quarter and the Red Raiders coasted from there.

Crumbley led a balanced South Point rushing attack with 76 yards on 16 carries. His touchdown gave him 84 for his career, tying the Gaston County record.

McWhirter finished with a season-high 74 yards on just five carries. Justice gained 59 yards on 20 carries, and Ramon Costner carried nine times for 58 yards.

Justice also completed three of six passes, with one interception, for 35 yards. McWhirter caught two of the passes for 18 yards. Shane Merrill pulled down a 17-yarder.

South Point	7	7	10	0	— 24
Kan. Brown	0	7	0	0	— 7

First quarter

SP—Josh Justice 17 run (Joey Mitchell kick), 11:43.

Second quarter

KB—Xavier Stanback 18 pass from Martel Campbell (Brenden Brown kick), 6:21.

SP—Scott McWhirter 9 run (Mitchell kick), 0:39.2

Third quarter

SP—Aaron Crumbley 1 run (Mitchell kick), 4:51.

SP—FG Mitchell 27, 0:15.7.

	SP	KB
First downs	14	11
Rushes-yards	51-266	33-82
Passing yards	35	110
Comp-Att-Int	3-6-1	10-20-0
Fumbles-lost	1-0	1-1
Penalties-yards	3-20	5-42

Individual statistics

RUSHING—South Point, Crumbley 16-76, McWhirter 5-74, Justice 20-59, Costner 9-58, Team 1-minus 1. Kannapolis Brown, Stanback 9-70, Antwoine Jordan 13-28, Damien Washington 1-3, Campbell 10-minus 19.

PASSING—South Point, Justice 3-6-1-35, Kannapolis Brown, Campbell 10-20-0-110.

RECEIVING—South Point, McWhirter 2-18, Shane Merrill 1-17, Kannapolis Brown, Spencer Falls 2-41, Stanback 4-23, Washington 1-21, Tyler Gilmore 2-20, Dillon Robinson 1-5.

You can reach Phillip Gardner at 704-869-1843.

