



Ben Gott/The Gazette

Clover's Derrick Carothers, left, escapes South Point defender Jordan Forney on a touchdown run during the game at Clover, S.C., on Friday.

Bested again

Clover drops defending state champion Red Raiders

Inside the game

Total yards — South Point 198 (156 rushing, 42 passing). Clover 295 (268 rushing, 27 passing)

Turnovers — South Point 2 (1 fumble, 1 interception); Clover 1 (fumble)

Next week — South Point plays host to Lincolnton while Clover visits Ashbrook.

QB comparison — Aaron Miller, Clover's third-year starter, rushed for 144 yards and directed a 295-yard offense. Patrick Horne, making his first start at QB for South Point, rushed for 35 yards and committed two turnovers.

By Phillip Gardner
pgardner@gastongazette.com

CLOVER, S.C. — Expectations are as high as ever for South Point, but the Red Raiders still can't solve their nemesis south of the border.

Derrick Carothers rushed for 86 yards and two touchdowns and Clover defeated South Point 22-7 Friday, handing the Red Raiders a season-opening loss for a third straight year.

Quarterback Aaron Miller led all rushers with 144 yards, helping Clover increase its win streak over Gaston County opponents to 13. The Blue Eagles can make it 14 next week when they travel to Ashbrook.

South Point, the defending N.C. 3AA state champion, failed to move the ball with regularity, finishing with 198 yards against a Blue Eagles defense that returned five starters from an 8-4 team. Patrick Horne, a junior making his first varsity start at quarterback rushed for 35 yards, completed 4 of 19 passes with one interception and lost a fumble.

Clover, meanwhile, looked sharp much of the night, rolling up 295 yards under the direction of Miller, a third-year starter. The Blue Eagles picked up 268 yards on the ground.

>> See CLOVER/Page 4C

Continued from Page 1C

"It was good just to get that under our belt as a confidence builder for the young guys," said Miller, a Gastonia native and the offense's only full-time starter returning to the same position.

South Point was the more experienced team, returning 14 starters from last year's 14-2 squad, but head coach John Devine didn't seem disappointed in the least bit.

"We had tremendous effort," Devine said. "We didn't get pushed around. We made them fight for everything they had."

South Point's offense was undermanned with fullback Troy Loeper nursing an ankle injury. Loeper rushed for more than 500 yards in a backup role last season and is expected to match the production of Aaron Crumbley, who graduated as Gaston County's career touchdown leader. Devine expects Loeper to be ready for next week's home game against Lincoln.

Josh Hice started in Loeper's place, gaining 68 yards on 11 carries. Freshman Tyler Bray, the star on Belmont's middle school championship team last fall, carried seven times in the second half for 28 yards. Ramon Costner added 25 yards on six attempts.

Clover dominated time of possession in the early going and drew first blood when Carothers found the end zone on an 8-yard sweep with less than a minute left in the



Ben Goff / The Gazette

South Point running back Josh Hice looks his sights on Clover defender Chad Hill, right, during the game at Clover on Friday.

first quarter. The Blue Eagles added two points on an option play after lining up for the extra point.

After going three-and-out on its first series, South Point got its triple-option offense going on its second possession, driving 59 yards on nine plays to answer. Patrick Home finished off the drive with a 6-yard quarterback keeper and Dayton Rogers' extra point drew South Point within one at 8-7 with 9:41 before halftime.

The Red Raiders' momentum was short-lived, though, as Trey Childress returned the ensuing kickoff 97 yards for a touchdown. Childress, a 6-foot-2, 185-pound junior, actually fumbled the kickoff, but by the time he recovered, he found a seam up the middle and took it all the way.

"I didn't think I was going to score," Childress said. "I dropped the ball, turned around, picked it up, turned

around and then I just made whatever I could. It opened up. I only had one person to beat and that was the kicker and I just ran by him."

Miller filled in for the winded Childress at kicker for the extra point and split the uprights for a 15-7 lead that held for the rest of the half.

Clover added its final touchdown on a 40-yard run by Carothers, who broke three tackles on his way to the end zone.

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

South Point	0 7 0 0 - 7
Clover	8 7 7 0 - 22
First quarter	
C-Derrick Carothers 8 run (Trey Childress run), 0:54.8.	
Second quarter	
SP-Patrick Home 6 run (Dayton Rogers kick), 9:41.	
C-Childress 97 kickoff return (Aaron Miller kick), 9:25.	
Third quarter	
C-Carothers 40 run (Childress kick), 4:19.	