

# Rumble On



Gazette photos by John Clark

Forestview's Octavious Wallace tries to break away from a group of South Point defenders during their first-round playoff game Friday night. Wallace ran for 107 rushing yards, but was held out of the endzone.

## Leeper returns, carries load in South Point victory

By Phillip Gardner

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GASTONIA — An injured player healed just in time for South Point.

Troy Leeper carried the load for the Red Raiders at crunch time, rushing for two fourth-quarter touchdowns in a 14-0 defeat of Forestview in the first round of the 3AA state playoffs Friday.

The 5-foot-9, 165-pound junior delivered when South Point needed him most, carrying 16 times for 85 yards on a single drive that gave the Red Raiders the only points they needed. Leeper touched the ball on all but one play on that possession and polished it off with a 4-yard TD run, putting South Point ahead 7-0 with 7:23 remaining.

"I felt like the linemen did my job for me," Leeper said.

South Point (9-3) advances to a second-round home game against Erwin (9-3), a 61-40 winner over Kings Mountain. The Red Raiders, last year's state champions,

extended their playoff winning streak to six games.

Leeper entered the game with a county-best 133.3-yard rushing average but had missed four regular-season contests. He said two slipped disks in his neck and nerve damage kept him out of the last two games.

He felt fully healthy on Friday and withstood a beating after finishing with 171 yards on 29 carries — all in the second half. Leeper scored his second touchdown on a 3-yard run with 26.9 seconds remaining.

"He responded to the challenge," South Point coach John Devine said.

The game contrasted starkly from South Point's 42-15 regular-season win. The Red Raiders had their way on offense in that game, but Forestview played keep away for much of the rematch and held South Point's Red Bone offense in check until the final two drives.

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South Point quarterback Patrick Home is tackled by Forestview's Catrell Boyd during their first-round playoff game Friday night. Forestview's defense held South Point for much of the night, until the final two drives of the game.

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"We did what we wanted to do except for score points," Forestview coach Chris Medlin said. "I feel bad about that for the guys because they played hard."

Octavious Wallace rushed for 107 yards on 25 carries to lead Forestview, but the Jaguars managed only 120 yards

of total offense and nine first downs. Forestview reached inside the South Point 40 on two occasions but stalled both times.

Leading the defensive effort for South Point was Clarence Taylor, who recorded 13 tackles. Deryk Dionne had 11 tackles, Jeremy Hunter 10 and Storm Winkler nine.

Offensively, South Point generated 240 yards of offense, including 211 on the ground.

The game was similar to South Point's first-round last year, when the Red Raiders survived Ashbrook in overtime in another conference rematch.

"All I can say is, 'Woo,'" Devine said.

South Point avoided

another conference rematch next week when Erwin knocked off Kings Mountain.

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Forestview	0	0	0	0	-	0
South Point	0	0	0	14	-	14

Fourth quarter

SP—Troy Leeper 4 run (Dayton Rogers kick), 7:23.

SP—Leeper 3 run (Rogers kick), 0:26.9.

