

Winless no more

Red Raiders score in closing minutes to end losing skid

By Ian Richardson
sports@gastongazette.com

SHELBY — Entering Friday night's encounter at Pearley Allen Field, Shelby and South Point were two football teams moving in opposite directions. Shelby was 2-0 while South Point found itself in an unfamiliar 0-2 hole. But the records counted for little on the field as the Red Raiders outlasted the Golden Lions in a 44-39 shootout to claim their first win of the season.

"It was gut check time for us," South Point head coach Mickey Lineberger said. "I'm proud of the way we came out and played probably about as good as we can play against a fine, fine Shelby football team."

On the home sideline, Shelby head coach Lance Ware was left to rue a mistake-ridden first half that included two 80 yard Red Raider touchdowns.

"We made way too many mistakes to overcome the deficit," Ware said. "It comes down to a bunch of different factors, but those big plays really killed us."

The Golden Lions began the game in solid fashion, marching down the field and converting two long third

>> See **RAIDERS**/Page 5C





Ben Earp/Halifax Media Services

South Point's Jaquan Brooks, right, breaks a tackle by Shelby's Buck Ussery to score a touchdown on the run during Friday night's game at Shelby.

Continued from Page 1C

en route to a Jayden Borders catch from R.J. George for the game's first score. But the Shelby lead lasted a mere matter of moments as South Point running back Tanner Muse took the Red Raiders' first play from scrimmage 80 yards for a score.

Shelby then fumbled on the first play of its next drive, making way for South Point quarterback Jaquan Brooks to score from 27 yards out on the very next play, giving the Red Raiders touchdowns on their first two plays.

And it didn't slow down from there as the two teams traded punches for the remainder of the first half until South Point appeared to land the knockout blow when Muse returned an interception 80 yards on the last play of the half to push the Red

Raiders ahead 25-15 at the break.

However, the Golden Lions returned swinging after the interception, forcing a fumble on the very first play, then scoring with a 16-yard Chad Reid run one play later. Shelby even reclaimed the lead midway through the third quarter on another Reid run, but it was just as short-lived as the Golden Lions' first lead as Brooks hit Jeffrey Pearsall for a 74-yard score two plays later to put South Point back on top 32-29.

Two more Brooks touchdown runs gave the Red Raiders a 44-32 lead late on before Shelby put together a quick drive to pull within five with 30 seconds to go. However, South Point managed to fall on the ensuing onside kick to dash any hopes of a Golden Lion comeback.

Brooks finished with 106

yards and three touchdowns on the ground for South Point.

"I'm proud of the way we came out in the second half and made a ball game of it, but we have to play better," Ware said. "There's a lot of correcting and a lot of soul searching to be done as we try to put this behind us and get ready for conference with R-S Central next week."

For Lineberger, the win over the defending 2A state champs was the first step in a long journey back.

"I've loved how our guys have handled the adversity," he said. "We played with a lot of heart and a lot of guts and that shows we're going to get better."

Ben Cargill/Herald-Examiner

South Point's Jaquan Brooks takes a open route against Shelby Friday night at Shelby High School.



South Point 44, Shelby 39**South Point 12 13 7 12 — 44****Shelby 15 0 14 10 — 39****First quarter**

S—Jayden Borders 5 pass from R.J. George (Richard Wright kick), 9:04.

SP—Tanner Muse 80 run (kick blocked), 8:49.

SP—Jaquan Brooks 27 run (conversion failed), 8:28.

S—Chavon Miller 67 blocked kick return (Borders pass from George), 0:44.

Second quarter

SP—Muse 7 run (Nick Farmer kick), 9:42.

SP—Muse 80 interception return (kick failed), 0:00.

Third quarter

S—Chad Reid 16 run (Wright kick), 11:39.

S—Reid 5 run (Wright kick), 5:36.

SP—Jeffrey Pearsall 74 pass from Brooks (Farmer kick), 4:40.

Fourth quarter

SP—Brooks 32 run (kick failed), 11:12.

S—FG Wright 27, 7:15.

SP—Brooks 27 run (kick blocked), 1:26.

S—Luke Etchison 18 pass from George (Wright kick), 0:30.

	SP	S
First downs	23	15
Rushes-yards	56-473	28-147
Passing yards	74	216
Total yards	547	363
Comp-Att-Int	1-4-0	16-26-1
Fumbles-lost	4-2	2-1
Penalties-yards	3-25	10-75
Punts-avg.	1-34	3-45.3

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING—South Point, Ryland Etherton 19-142, Brooks 22-141, Muse 8-105, Pearsall 6-82, Tyler Hall 1-3. Shelby, Reid 12-98, Buck Ussery 7-38, R.J. George 6-11, Xavier Brooks 2-9, Team 1-minus 9.

PASSING—South Point, Brooks 1-4-0 74. Shelby, George 16-26-1 216.

RECEIVING—South Point, Pearsall 1-74. Shelby, Luke Etchison 8-101, Kavacia Shell 1-40, Reid 2-32, Ussery 2-26, Borders 3-17.