

Wild conditions no problem for Raiders

Etherton scampers for 121 and a touchdown

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GASTONIA — In a game played in hurricane-like conditions, the visiting South Point High football team used its lethal rushing attack led by running back Ryland Etherton, who ran for a game high 121 yards and a touchdown on 21 carries, to battle a determined host Hunter Huss and persevere with a 20-0 Big South 2A/3A Conference win Friday night at Hunter Huss High.

South Point improved to 4-2 on the season, 2-0 in Big South 2A/3A play, while Huss saw its two-game winning streak snapped to fall to 2-4 overall, 1-1 in Big South 2A/3A play.

With Hurricane Joaquin forecasted to indirectly influence approximately 12 inches of rain on the Gaston County region this weekend, the status of Friday night's game was in question right until lunchtime on Friday when school officials decided to play the game as originally scheduled.

"I think playing tonight was the smartest thing to do," said South Point head coach Mickey Lineberger. "If the weathermen are right, we're going to get 12 inches of rain this weekend. The field is going to be in better shape tonight, before we get 12 inches of rain."

The game was played in a steady rain and swirling wind, making the footing tough for both teams throughout the evening.

Following a scoreless defensive struggle in the opening quarter,



Brian Mayhew/Special to the Gazette

South Point quarterback Diontre King carries the ball against Hunter Huss in wet conditions Friday night. The Red Raiders won, 20-0, behind Ryland Etherton's 121 yards rushing and a touchdown.

South Point was able to strike 1:32 into the second quarter on a 37-yard run by senior quarterback Diontre King.

On a fourth-and-two play at the Huss 37-yard line, King faked a dive play to Etherton and kept the ball around left end all the way into the end zone. Thomas Lempereur added the extra point to give the Red Raiders a 7-0 lead, which stood at the half.

"Diontre made a great fake and a great read," Etherton said, "The entire defense went towards me on the fake into the line. Diontre made his read, the line blocked great to open the lanes and he was able to take it around the end to score."

Etherton would score the game's

second touchdown to put the Red Raiders up 14-0 late in third quarter. Following a defensive fumble recovery at the Huss 30-yard line, the senior running back scamped 30 yards one play later to give South Point a two-touchdown lead heading into the final quarter.

Sophomore Matthew Robinson capped the scoring and the shutout for South Point's defense with a defensive touchdown off a bad punt snap from the Huss seven-yard line with 58 seconds remaining in the game.

"When you pitch a shutout and score a defensive touchdown, that's pretty good stuff," Lineberger said of his defense's effort. "Our defense played well tonight."

SOUTH POINT AT HUNTER HUSS

South Point 0 7 7 6 — 20
Hunter Huss 0 0 0 0 — 0

Second quarter

SP — Diontreia King 37 run (Thomas Lempereur kick), 10:28.

Third quarter

SP — Ryland Etherton 30 run (Thomas Lempereur kick), 3:20.

Fourth quarter

SP — Matthew Robinson recovered fumble in end zone (kick failed), 00:58.

	SP	HH
First downs	9	9
Rushes-yards	40-185	37-81
Passing yards	0	17
Total yards	185	98
Comp-Att-Int	0-0-0	2-14-0
Fumbles-lost	2-0	2-1
Punts-avg.	5-32.4	5-28.2

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING — **SP**: Ryland Etherton 20-126-1, Diontreia King 14-37-1, Nolan Wilson 3-13, Ometrick Leeper 3-9. **HH**: Jaquavious Butler 15-63, Dallas Danner 9-20, Akeythio Carson 2-3, Tony Davis 11-minus 5.

PASSING — **SP**: King 0-0-0-0. **HH**: Davis 2-14-17-0.

RECEIVING — **HH**: Antwanez Barnett 1-9, Danner 1-8.