

Game Recap

Raiders Stumble at Ashbrook, Greenwave Escapes 20-14

For all its value to entertain, football is often said to teach valuable life lessons. But those lessons are typically considered only after a team falls short on a scoreboard. Every team and every program establish an identity. And that identity is reflected in a specific mantra, a repeated statement or a characteristic that describes the teams' approach to the game. Former Alabama Head Coach Nick Saban once said, "We don't want to waste a failure." His point is that following a loss, lessons must be learned to eliminate future shortcomings. Coach Saban is credited with having established the mantra that "you either win or learn in football." This isn't to suggest that losses should be ignored as if they do not exist. Rather the intent is to evaluate the things that require improvement to assure future success. South Point fought hard against a speedy and elusive Ashbrook team last Friday night in Gastonia. And after the defense forced a much-needed punt with time ticking away in the fourth quarter, the Red Raiders gave themselves a chance for late game heroics. But the challenge of a 98-yard drive proved insurmountable, and the Big Red was left with a learning opportunity.

Ashbrook won the toss and elected to receive, giving their offense the first crack at points. The Raiders though grabbed the momentum immediately as the kick fell to the ground and was mishandled. South Point recovered the ball, and it was the Red 'O' that claimed the game's first possession. Grinding out yardage to the Ashbrook four, the Raiders were poised to take the early advantage. QB Patrick Blee cut through the line and put six on the board. K Mason Hovis notched the PAT, and with 1:32 having expired from the clock, the Raiders had a 7-0 lead. The Greenwave answered with a possession that was reminiscent of a typical Raider ground attack. A nearly five-minute drive ended with a six-yard touchdown run and the Raiders' advantage was cut to 7-6. South Point's ensuing possession carried over into the second quarter as the pace of the game reflected the ball control ability of each team.

The Raiders ran off the final 5:30 of the first stanza and added 4:28 in the second, but the drive of nearly ten minutes ended with a fumble covered by Ashbrook at the Greenwave twenty-three-yard line. With the momentum, Ashbrook chewed up the clock and completed a touchdown pass to take the 13-7 advantage. The Raiders mounted no challenge in the final 0:49 and the teams went to the intermission to regroup.

The squads traded punts after long possessions in the third quarter. Like two heavyweights in the ring, the opponents landed shots but mustered no points. South Point carried the quarters final drive into the fourth stanza.

Held on downs early in the fourth, the Raiders comeback was further delayed. Pressure mounted when the Greenwave managed a two-score advantage with 9:27 remaining in regulation. Ashbrook's lead grew to 20-7 and South Point was forced to battle quickly. QB Cayden Rumph punched in from four yards out to bring the Raiders to within six at 20-14. The Red 'D' then put in perhaps their hardest work of the contest. They forced a punt with 3:26 remaining to give their offense a chance. The Ashbrook punt though, was touched down inside the South Point five-yard line. The Raiders ran out of time attempting to cover the needed yardage for the win. A late interception with 0:32 to go sealed the Greenwave win.

The Big Red fell short on the scoreboard at Ashbrook and were left with a learning opportunity. Coach encouraged the team to leave the past behind and focus on what lies ahead. This, he emphasized, goes for the games as well as practices. Nothing can be done to "fix" or undo the past. But there's plenty to be done to eliminate similar shortcomings moving forward. Goals are still intact. No trophies have been awarded yet. A solid effort in the week ahead and the Big Red will be back on track.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

South Point hosts Hunter Huss in a conference matchup next Friday night at Lineberger Stadium. The Huskies come in off a win over North Gaston and sporting a 4-1 record. TC Roberson is a common opponent between the Raiders and Huskies. South Point pounded Roberson 34-6 while the Huskies dropped a 12-10 decision to the Rockets. Hunter Huss fell in their first game of the season and has not lost since. Time to remind them of the pain! Go Big Red!