

South Point Withstands the Tide - Turn Back Green Wave, 56-7

October 2, 2011

The leading defense in the Big South 3A Conference was no match for the conference's top offense as South Point pummeled the Ashbrook Green Wave Friday night at Lineberger Stadium. The Red Raiders put together what Coach Mickey Lineberger referred to as the "total package" as they scored early and often in a lopsided 56-7 victory. Offensively, Patrick Horne, Tyler Bray, and Devan Robbins figured prominently in the win while defensively Jack Gardner and Jeremy Sanders made key plays for the Red Raiders. South Point remains undefeated and atop the conference standings as they continue to improve in all phases of the game, week in and week out.

Ashbrook won the toss and deferred the option to the second half, electing to go on defense to begin the contest. The move was not surprising but the decision was soon questioned as the opening kickoff left the tee. Devan "T-bird" Robbins fielded the kick at the South Point five yard line, hit the wedge at full speed, burst through a gaping hole and ignited the afterburners on his way to the endzone! The ninety-five yard return opened the scoring, giving the Red Raiders a 7-0 lead with mere seconds having run off the clock. The Green Wave had expected that keeping the South Point offense off the field would be a positive aid to their defense against the Red Raiders. But it is doubtful that this was what they had in mind! Dayton Rogers sailed his kickoff into the endzone forcing Ashbrook to begin at their own twenty yard line. The Green Wave found success in the passing game and in fact picked up positive yardage and first downs throughout the night. But the South Point defense rose to the occasion time again to stall Ashbrook drives. The Green Wave drove to the South Point thirty-five, and appeared to have a good chance to even the score until Aaron Biggerstaff blitzed and tipped an Ashbrook pass that would be hauled in by Jack Gardner. Gardner towers above many on the field and the junior defensive lineman stretched his frame to snatch the ball out of the air to give the Red Raiders a second scoring chance in the quarter. Asked about his first career interception, Gardner stated that "it just went up in the air" and added, "I might as well go for it." Such focus and concentration has become the norm for this South Point team and reflects positively upon what the coaching staff insists will be constant improvement as the season progresses. The Red Raiders drove smartly downfield to the Ashbrook fifteen yard line. Robbins would then take the ball from Horne and scamper in for his second touchdown and a 14-0 South Point advantage. The Green Wave again found success in a short passing game and chipped their way down to a score. The seven point deficit would be as close as Ashbrook would get as the Red Raiders would turn things up a notch as the second quarter approached.

In a possession that carried over from the first, South Point got Leeper involved as they drove to the Green Wave sixteen. Leeper burst up the middle for his first of two touchdowns giving the Red Raiders a 21-7 lead. The Red "D" clamped down once more, forcing an Ashbrook punt at the 9:18 mark of the second quarter. Converting on several third downs,

South Point moved into Green Wave territory, threatening to extend the lead. A nineteen yard, Horne to Bray, pass completion sustained the drive that carried the Red Raiders to the Ashbrook one. Leeper moved the pile for his second touchdown that made the score 28-7, South Point. Still another great defensive stand by the Red Raiders gave them the ball with plenty of time on the clock. South Point began their last drive of the first half in good field position at their own forty-three. Horne took charge on the drive, making good decisions and excellent ball fakes as he moved the Red Raiders to the Green Wave twelve. From there, Horne's twelve yard run would end the first half scoring and give South Point an impressive 35-7 lead at the half.

South Point kept the pressure up to begin the third quarter forcing Ashbrook to punt after a three and out series. The Red Raiders went to work from their own forty-seven. The drive nearly stalled as South Point crossed midfield, but Robbins would pick up a first down on a fourth and two pitch around the outside. Horne picked up where he left off before the end of the first half. With the ball resting at the Green Wave thirty-nine, Horne called his own number and outran all defenders to the endzone. The extra point pushed the Red Raider lead to 35 at 42-7 with 8:15 left on the clock. Both teams would punt following a couple of three and out series, perhaps winded by the pace of the high scoring (for South Point) contest. Ashbrook took possession at the 4:21 mark with little more hope than to try to make the final score respectable. The Green Wave possession began at midfield and Ashbrook wasted no time advancing into South Point territory. Jeremy Sanders picked up his defensive teammates by picking off a Green Wave pass! Sanders returned the ball to the Ashbrook thirty-one yard line and put the Red offense in business. Similar to his interception a week before against Hunter Huss, Sanders credited the defensive positioning for the pick. He added, "I was just reading the (quarterback), reading the eyes" and knew where he was going with the ball. As impressive as was the interception, Sanders' return was equally remarkable. The defensive back reminded that he has been used at the wingback position so carrying/protecting the ball was not new to him. South Point picked up seven yards on the drive, needing twenty-four for the touchdown. Robbins obliged, racing through a gaping hole in the Ashbrook defense to pick up his third touchdown of the game. The Red Raiders led 49-7 with a quarter yet to play.

Ashbrook returned to the field in the fourth quarter and the offense ran with a sense of desperation. South Point met the challenge with the intent to keep the Green Wave from another score. Held twice on downs in the quarter, Ashbrook continued to struggle against the Red Raiders defense. South Point inserted backups into the game and never missed a beat. Tyler Bray, who like Horne had rushed for over 100 yards on the night, ended the scoring with a twelve yard touchdown run, accounting for the 56-7 final.

The matchup that pitted the conference's best defense against the best offense turned sour early for the Ashbrook Green Wave. South Point showed improvement in all phases of the game, handily defeating the Green Wave in a conference showdown. The Red Raiders remained undefeated and appear clearly focused on more than just another Big South 3A Conference title. A few teams are still in the way. Next up, South Point visits the Forestview Jaguars. Here Kitty, Kitty!

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Troy Leeper's number of carries (12) in the Ashbrook game may send a mixed message to those who follow high school football. His value to the team was not diminished nor was he emphatically stopped by the Green Wave defense. Leeper scored twice. The fact is, other offensive players had outstanding games proving that the Red Raiders triple option (as it should be) is not "one dimensional" relative to who might be the workhorse.

In the 2009 championship season, South Point shutout Ashbrook (34-0) and then escaped with a 21-14 victory in a first round playoff game. Might see them again...just something to think about.

JV Report by Calvin Craig

Plenty of scoring, South Point JV scores more than the Greenwave, 58-40

There was plenty of scoring as the the JV Red Raiders (6-1, 3-0) outscored their conference rival Ashbrook, 58-40. □

The game began with South Point scoring the first points off their first drive of the game with Jaquan Brooks capping the drive with a 19 yard touchdown run, but Ashbrook stormed back.

The Greenwave were able to score their first points of the half in the early portion of the 2nd quarter and, capitalizing on a South Point fumble, were able to score their second touchdown to go ahead of the Red Raiders, 13-7.

However, the JV Red Raider offense flexed their muscles and were able to score on their ensuing possession with a 10 play drive capped with Brooks 23 yard touchdown run and following an Ashbrook punt with a great Red Raider punt return to the Ashbrook 41, Brooks scored on the first play of the drive with a 41 yard touchdown scamper to quickly put the Red Raiders up, 22-13.

But that wouldn't end the scoring in the half, as Brooks was able to find Trey Crenshaw for a 37 yard touchdown throw with 34 seconds remaining and following a Tanner Muse two point conversion the Red Raiders lead the break 30-13.

Both teams scored plenty in the second half, but the Red Raiders provided one of the more spectacular plays of the night at the beginning of the 4th quarter.

Facing a 3rd down and 11 at the South Point 43 yard line, Jaquan Brooks took the ball

and shook off an Ashbrook defender as he began to roll to his left. The left handed quarterback immediately found Richard Dunning on the left side at midfield and Brooks was able to fire the ball to Dunning to connect with a 57 yard touchdown catch and run bringing the score to 45-27 and Ashbrook was never able to recover.

Despite giving up 40 points the Red Raider defense made plenty of stops including a great goal line stand in the second quarter that ended with Zach Barnes throwing the Ashbrook quarterback to the ground following 4th and goal at the South Point 3.

The JV Red Raiders will continue play next week at home against the Forestview Jaguars at 7:00pm.