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# VARSAITY REPORT

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*by Jamey Andrews*

“South Point Overcomes Elements...Brings The Ran Against Forestview, 42-0”

South Point's 59 points in the Week 2 victory over Lincoln set a record for the series. In the 35<sup>th</sup> game, dating to 1969, the Red Raiders eclipsed the old mark of 55 set in 2002. Down for down and play for play, South Point has yet to meet a match this season. The Red Raiders have entered each contest with a level of intensity that has allowed them to grab early leads en route to victory. So far the biggest challenges for South Point have been to push themselves to get better and to maintain focus on the next opponent. The late Bud Wilkinson, former head coach of the Oklahoma Sooners led his team to an NCAA record 47 consecutive wins (a D1 record that stands today). The run would mark Wilkinson's greatest success in football as the Sooners would pick up 2 of Wilkinson's 3 national championships along the way. No doubt with such domination, the coach would need to find ways to keep his team motivated beyond the impressive string of victories. Coach Wilkinson summed up the attitude instilled within his teams, explaining, “We compete, not so much against an opponent, but against ourselves.” Adding, “The real test is this: Did I make my best effort on every play?” So how would South Point follow up the impressive victories in the first two contests against a winless underdog, desperate for points as much as victories? How would the Red Raiders prepare and fare against the “coiled rattler” that was eager to strike? The Big Red did what they do best! Overcoming the soggy conditions and never giving up on any play, South Point “brought the rain” with a heavy barrage that put up big numbers and held the Forestview Jaguars scoreless in the 42-0 victory! With the win, the Raiders move to 3-0 on the season, and appear hungry for more as the conference schedule draws closer.

South Point received the opening kick and went to work quickly on offense. A runback to the Red Raiders' forty-one gave the Red O good field position to begin the game. A quarterback Scottie Lee pitch to fullback Jake Alexander picked up 6 yards. And then a Lee pass deep down the sidelines hit split end Ray Grier in stride for 44 yards. Three plays later Alexander plunged through from the one to put six on the board. Kicker Cade Ratliff perfectly booted the PAT and South Point had the early 7-0 lead with 9:36 remaining in the first quarter. The Red D came on to pitch a three-down shutout to force a Jaguars punt. South Point was easily in control of the early going, but then the game was soon to take a “bizarre” turn. An unfortunate fumble on a big run gave the ball back the Jaguars but Forestview was not equal to the task thanks to the Raiders defense. The Jaguars punted and South Point began their third drive from their 24 yardline. In two plays the Red O was across midfield. In three more plays, Lee once again hit Grier with a 39 yard completion for the score. South Point had built the 14-0 advantage on the heels of 2 long pass plays. Less than three minutes remained in the opening quarter and Forestview was still looking for some offensive success. It would come in the form of some special teams trickery...almost! Taking advantage of a non-existent rush, the Jaguars punter tiptoed toward the line of scrimmage then broke out in a run that crossed midfield before being caught by the opportunistic Ray Grier at the South Point forty. Grier stripped the ball and cut back in the opposite direction racing downfield for the apparent touchdown. But a penalty on

South Point erased the great play and gave the ball back to Forestview at the Red Raiders thirty-seven. The Red D was equal to the task as the quarter would end with the Jaguars facing a third and long at the Raiders thirty-two.

In the second, Forestview quickly completed a pass to the Red 14 and had established some momentum stemming from the unfortunate turn that cost South Point at the end of the first. Several plays later and after running through the playbook (passes, runs, wildcat formation, etc.), the Jaguars settled for a field goal attempt. The kick sailed wide and the scoreboard remained unblemished on the home side. On the ensuing possession, South Point initially went back to the power football for which they are known. In nine, clock chewing plays, the Raiders converted a fourth down and drove to Forestview territory. On the tenth play of the drive, Lee once again hit Grier. The 49 yard connection put South Point up 21-0 with five minutes to go before halftime. The rain fell and the Raiders continued to pelt the Jaguars. Another three and out series by the stout Red D followed by a shanked punt gave the Raiders possession at the Forestview 36 yardline. Running back Clay Gibson hauled in a pass in the flats and carried to the thirteen. But the drive would eventually stall serving only to run even more time off the clock. The Raiders defense held the Jaguars on the next drive and the teams left the soggy field for the intermission with South Point holding the 21-0 advantage.

To begin the third stanza Forestview passed their way to the South Point five, putting them in great position to score their first offensive touchdown of the season. It would not happen! On perhaps the game's most athletic play, linebacker Mario Brandon leaped and tapped a pass before snagging it out of the air in the endzone to end the scoring threat. The ensuing Raiders drive served to flip the field position and put the protection of the lead into the capable hands of the defense. Forestview, out of desperation, continued to make way with a passing attack but for minimal success. The Jaguars only good fortune on the possession came, ironically, after a snap over the head of the punter was corralled at the goalline and booted to the Raiders forty. Forestview held and forced a punt, but were further crushed by good coverage from the Red special team. Nate Hamilton scooped up a fumble on the return and cruised into the endzone for the score. South Point moved out to a 28-0 lead with 2:45 remaining in the third. The Jaguars continued to try the air. From his linebacker position Brandon broke on a ball thrown deep downfield and picked off his second pass of the game. The teams continued to battle the elements as neither would mount another scoring threat before the fourth quarter arrived.

After a Forestview punt early in the fourth, the Raiders found some rhythm and success in the running game. Driving to the Jaguars three, Alexander punched in for the 5<sup>th</sup> South Point touchdown. The Raiders lead grew to 35-0 with 7:40 to go in regulation. Forestview could muster no offense against the Red D and would punt yet again. Keaton Hale took over under center for the Red offense. Hale engineered a drive from the Jaguars 48 that culminated in a Ty Tinker 4 yard touchdown burst that ended the scoring for the Red Raiders. South Point led 42-0 and the question became, could the Jaguars score, not only an offensive touchdown, but at all?! With 1:27 remaining...it was not likely. The Raiders defense sealed the victory!

With impressive showings in the first three contests of the season, South Point now faces the challenges to continue to improve and not underestimate their opponent. Neither should the

Red Raiders overestimate their own ability. Former head coach, the late Bud Wilkinson offered the charge, emphasizing the importance to put forth the best effort on every play. For South Point, a successful season that meets and exceeds expectations depends on that mentality. Next up is a tough Clover Blue Eagles team. Keep “bringing the rain”, Red!

Go Get ‘Em, Red!

### **Notable Facts and Thoughts**

The Blue Eagles of Clover have yet to be beaten by a North Carolina foe this season. A lot of pride is at stake. And at South Point... PRIDE and Tradition run deep!

Jamey Andrews