

Game Recap

Raiders Pound Huskies, Torch Huss 53-6

Any doubt about South Point's resolve to bounce back from the letdown a week prior was put to rest in short order at Lineberger Stadium on Friday night. The Raiders caught a spark inside the first two minutes of the contest against the Huskies of Hunter Huss, and the ensuing blaze left Huss in a pile of ashes. The Big Red rolled to a convincing 53-6 victory, sending the Huskies to their second loss of the season. Former Penn State head coach, the late Joe Paterno once stated, "You can't win together if you don't work together." The week of practice was obviously an exercise in working hard and working together. A popular theme for many college teams this year has been the emphasis placed on playing "complementary football." The idea is that the offense feeds off the defense, the defense sustains the momentum of the offense, and the special teams support both units. Contributors in all phases work side-by-side to accomplish the common goal. Victory. South Point's season could have taken a sour turn following the first blemish on their record. Instead, the Big Red reset their determination. They brought their long-term goal back into focus. And they took out a week's worth of frustrations on a confident Hunter Huss team who was dazed by the dismantling. Another solid practice effort will be in order as the Raiders next face a hard-hitting rival to the west, the Crest Chargers.

South Point won the toss and deferred their option to the second half. Huss had the first possession but only managed positive yardage following a facemask penalty on South Point. But two plays later the Raiders seized momentum. A scrambling Huskie quarterback drew back to pass and the ball, wet from the steady drizzle that fell, slipped from his hand. The Big Red 'D' pounced on the fumble and put their offense in business at the Huskie forty-three-yard line. Six ground-pounding plays later, FB Kaveaun Pless burst through the line to put six on the board. K Mason Hovis drilled the PAT to give the Raiders the early 7-0 advantage. After the Red 'O' made good on the momentum grabbed by the defense, the Red 'D' continued to pressure Huss. The Huskies could muster no positive gains on the ground against the swarming Raiders defense, so they went to the air. The result was worse. DB Tucker McWhirter stepped in front of a Huskies pass in South Point Territory and the speedy back weaved his way to the Huss fourteen. The Raiders kept exerting their will. QB Patrick Blee assisted his fullback as the pair followed the O-line to the one-yard line. From there Pless dove in to increase the South Point lead to 14-0 with 3:07 remaining in the opening quarter. Nearly nine minutes into the contest and the Raiders had yet to run an offensive play from their side of midfield. Huss was forced to punt on their ensuing drive and RS Kham Crawford reeled off a return to the Huskies thirty-five-yard line to assure the Raiders offense of starting every first quarter drive in Huss territory. The possession carried over into the second stanza.

Driving quickly to the three-yard line, Pless sliced through again for his third touchdown of the night. Forty-six seconds into the second and the South Point lead was pushed to 21-0. Huss had no answers and South Point continued to stoke the fire! The Huskies were forced to punt again and again RS Crawford torched the opponent. Fielding the punt at the South Point eighteen-yard line, Crawford sped past a perfect wall of blockers covering eighty-two yards for the score. The Raiders lead stood at 27-0 with 7:55 remaining before the half. And even the rain couldn't slow the blaze started by the Big Red! Huss went exclusively to the air on their next possession, but the Red 'D' was ready. A three-and-out series forced yet another Huskies punt. The snap was mishandled, and the Raiders covered the ball at the Hunter Huss thirty-yard line. The game clock read 7:26 and South Point had still not begun an offensive possession in their own territory. A couple of runs moved the Raiders to the eighteen. From there QB Blee covered the yardage needed for South Point's third touchdown of the quarter and fifth of the game. The score stood at 34-0 and things would get worse for the Huskies before the intermission. On their next possession the only pass completions for the Huss QB were made by alert participants on the Red Raiders sideline! The Huskies would be forced to punt from their endzone, and the ball was allowed to roll dead at the forty-nine-yard line. The Huskies forty-nine, that is, marking South Point's fifth consecutive drive to begin on the Huss side of midfield. QB Cayden Rumph took over under center and in two plays he notched six more for the Raiders. The Raiders O-line continued to open holes in the line that allowed the Big Red ball carriers to gain chunks of yardage. QB Rumph's thirty-seven-yard scamper put the Raiders up 40-0 with 4:18 to go before the half. Huss was mired in frustration and losing control of their emotions they began to draw penalty flags. The mistakes backed them up and once again they were punting from their end zone. The return put South Point at the Huskies twenty-yard line. Working the clock the Raiders drove to the three. From there QB Rumph cruised in to mercifully end the scoring in the half. South Point led 47-0 at the intermission. And for the record, not one of the Raiders drives began of South Point's side of the fifty-yard line.

By rule, the substantial lead initiated a continuous clock to begin the third quarter. Substitutions were in order for South Point. Receiving the opening kickoff of the second half the Raiders finally found themselves beginning a possession in their territory at the forty-two-yard line. They would be held on downs, and the small measure of momentum aided the Huskies. Huss found the endzone on a forty-three-yard pass completion to eliminate the shutout bid. The South Point lead was 47-6. And when the Raiders fumbled on their next drive, the Huskies gained another glimmer of hope. It did not last. DB Jeremiah Holt picked off a Huss pass to end a Huskies threat. The quarter expired on the play, and the teams went to the fourth quarter with the Raiders unchallenged.

South Point continued to provide playing time for many backup players. The clock continued to run. A Raiders fumble was recovered by Huss, but yet again the Huskies attempt for points was

slammed! A long throw downfield fell into the waiting arms of DB K. Crawford and, as he had with his punt return for a touchdown, he raced toward the end zone perfectly, setting up his blockers along the way. Crawford's long yardage plays were only two of many successful runs made by the Raiders. But they came at notable times in the game that proved to be backbreakers to an already deflated opponent. Asked about his ability to see the field and weave his way through the defenders, Crawford was quick to credit his blockers. "My teammates block for me every week, so I try to find the open holes, and I try to hit them," said Crawford. He then pointed out that he doesn't worry about the pursuit by the defense, his attention turns strictly to the goal line and his determination to cross it. His pick-six ended all scoring and accounted for the final 53-6.

South Point worked hard during a week of practice that followed a disappointing outcome at Ashbrook. The team regained their focus on the common goal. And in the process, they grew closer as a team, capable of playing "complementary football." Their effort against the Huskies can only be described as an unquenchable blaze! The Big Red started with a spark, and the flames left Huss in the ashes! More of the same will be required next week as South Point heads to Shelby to face the Crest Chargers.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Inclement weather forced delay of the Crest vs Forestview game on Friday. The Chargers lead 7-0 in the game that will resume on Monday. Crest will then have a short turnaround to prepare for the Raiders. But make no mistake, when the Big Red comes to town, they always get the opponents' best shot. It's what marks a champion. Go Big Red!