

Game Recap

“Derailed...Red Raiders Stumble Against Shelby, 41-25”

SHELBY – South Point’s bid to claim an outright Southwestern 2A Conference championship fell just short of the mark last Friday night in Shelby. The Golden Lions bounced back from a solid start by the Red Raiders and eventually outlasted South Point in a hard fought contest. Although one team goal set by the Raiders at the beginning of the season will not be realized, a bigger prize still lies ahead. Their on-track path has, in effect, been temporarily derailed. But the loss, while disappointing, is just that, “disappointing”, not “devastating”. A devastating loss would signal the end of all hopes for more football and the opportunity to claim a state title. That goal is still intact, and the Red Raiders will now regroup, hit the practice field, and work to put together a successful playoff run.

For fifteen minutes in the game against Shelby, South Point had set and controlled the tempo. After forcing an opening drive punt by the Golden Lions, the Raiders pounded away on a possession of over seven minutes. The 89 yard drive culminated with RB Jamani Leeper’s 5-yard touchdown run. The Red ‘D’ immediately forced another Golden Lions punt on the host’s ensuing drive. The Raiders second possession extended into the second quarter and ended with SE Ray Grier’s 8-yard scamper. South Point had the 12-0 lead, early in the second, but Shelby found an answer. Two touchdowns out of their next three possessions gave the Golden Lions the 13-12 advantage at the half.

The two SWC 2A heavyweights continued to battle in the second half. South Point benefitted from QB Keaton Hale’s 58-yard run with 7:09 to go in the third. And RB Naseem Jones added a one yard run in the fourth. But Shelby was able to match those scores and add to their lead with big plays that included a 95-yard kickoff return that answered Jones’ score. Momentum shifted throughout the contest, but it was the Golden Lions who managed to sustain the drives when needed, to ultimately claim the 41-25 victory.

South Point fell just shy of a season goal with the hard-fought loss to Shelby. But while temporarily derailed by the outcome, the shortcoming is simply disappointing and not devastating. The playoffs begin in two weeks and to a man, each player has expressed the determination to get a little better with each practice. The season will continue. And under the right circumstances, as driven by the heart of the Red Raiders, greater victories lie ahead!

Go Get ‘Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

The delayed start of the playoffs stems from the games cancelled/postponed earlier in the season due to inclement weather and the destruction caused by Hurricane Florence. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with those affected by the hurricane(s).

Jamey Andrews