

Brown joins 1,000-yard club

Fullback also scores 22nd TD of season

By RICHARD WALKER
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BELMONT — South Point High's Joe Brown joined select company Friday night.

But Brown's entry into the Red Raiders' 1,000-yard rushing club was only a small part of a somewhat bizarre 56-0 victory over North Gaston.

For starters, the Red Raiders' "Red Bone" offensive attack clicked to the tune of 391 total yards as each of the team's four runners — and a backup — scored touchdowns.

Adding to the unusual nature of the contest was the brief health scare endured by North Gaston High coach Bruce Clark. Clark felt chest pains in the first half, was checked out by Gaston Emergency Medical Services personnel and then returned to the Wildcats' sideline.

"I wouldn't have left the sidelines if I wasn't concerned," said Clark, who said he's had stress-related chest pains before. "Everything came out good on the EKG and blood pressure checks, so I came back to my team. They advised me to go home, but you don't want leave your folks."

As Clark admitted, what he saw on the field Friday did little to ease his stress.

South Point scored on seven of its eight offensive possessions — failing to score only because of a fumble at the North Gaston 21 — and tacked on another score on a pass interception return.

"My hat's off to South Point," Clark said of the Red Raiders, who clinched at least a share of their fourth straight conference title with the victory. "They are a well-oiled machine. We felt like we had a great game plan coming in. But we had some bad missed assignments early on and they set the tone for the game."

Brown said it was apparent pretty quickly his offensive unit was clicking on all cylinders.

"Every play worked for us," said Brown, the lead back in the Red Raiders' attack. "When that happened, I knew it would be a good night."

And a short one, at least for Brown and many of the South Point starters.

Brown surpassed the century mark for the season with only one half of work, as he picked up 94 yards and scored one touchdown in eight carries before intermission and didn't play on offense again. It gives him 1,048 yards rushing and an area-high 22 touchdowns on the season.

"I really haven't thought much about getting 1,000 yards this season," said Brown, who became the 19th South Point player in the school's 34 football seasons to surpass 1,000 yards rushing. "It's a tribute to the line that does all the work

SOUTH POINT 56
NORTH GASTON 0

to create the holes."

Red Raiders coach John Devine seconded that opinion.

"What Joe and all the other great runners here have in common is that they've had some great blockers in front of them," Devine said. "It's those guys that wear red hats and play offensive line that make that tradition happen. And the credit goes to guys like coach (Mickey) Lineberger and coach (Earl) Lingafeldt, the guys who have coached those linemen over the years and made that position so important to the success of this program."

This year's offensive line rotation is comprised of seniors William Henkel, Nicholas Karvounis and Jonathan Spargo and juniors Jarrod Fraley, Adam Hodge, Jonathan Mims and Jesse Whitley.

But Devine also was quick to praise his defense for recording its second straight shutout and fourth straight game of limiting the opponent to single-figure points.

"Defensively, you want that goose egg," said Devine, whose defense has limited five Big South 3A Conference opponents to 32 points. "We felt like if we could control the line of scrimmage, we could be effective."

Friday night, they certainly did that, even as North Gaston did muster 188 yards of total offense.

But the Wildcats were turned away from the end zone time and again as the Red Raiders recorded their shutout to improve to 8-1 overall and 5-0 in the conference after a week off.

South Point closes out its regular season at East Lincoln next Friday.

North Gaston, which fell to 1-9 and 0-6, was led by sophomores Jeff Johnson and Rafael Littlejohn. Johnson completed nine of 22 throws with three interceptions for 130 yards. Littlejohn finished with 52 yards rushing to nudge his seasonal total to 997 yards.

The Wildcats close out their season next week in a non-conference home game against Kings Mountain.

NG 0 0 0 0 — 0
SP 14 28 7 — 56

SP — Javar Williams 1 run (Andrew Rinehart kick)

SP — Tyler Gorton 10 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Joe Brown 7 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Brian McWhirter 6 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Williams 18 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — McWhirter 19 run (Rinehart kick)

SP — Josh Robinson 35 interception return (Rinehart kick)

SP — Corey Brown 1 run (Rinehart kick)