

## Game Recap

### Raiders Drop Battle With Knights, Fall to Charlotte Christian, 41-36

By all accounts, scoreboard and media, South Point suffered their first blemish on the season, coming up short to the Charlotte Christian Knights, 41-36, last Friday night in Charlotte. But, as is often the case, those accounts don't tell the whole story. The Red Raiders were in the fight and except for a few miscues that cost them points, the Big Red would have come away with a victory. The loss stings but does not eliminate the team's goals set from the beginning. And while the damage was caused by self-inflicted mistakes, there's still time for this young group to make the adjustments and be a factor throughout the season. The Knights managed 17 points on three South Point turnovers while the Raiders were unable to cash in on a single fumble by Christian. Both teams showcased speed and hard hits, and each squad was able to sustain lengthy drives. South Point led late in the first quarter, 8-6, but played from behind for the final three quarters of regulation, never able to sustain the momentum that would draw them close. Learning from the loss is important. The Big Red knows they are in every battle and are capable of great things. But they need to continue to improve every day and every week to eliminate the mistakes that prove so costly.

The Knights received the opening kickoff and mounted a drive that carried them inside South Point territory. The Red 'D' stopped the momentum and forced a field goal attempt. The kick was good, giving Christian the early 3-0 advantage. The Raiders set out to answer with their first possession. But a fumble was recovered by the Knights on the Raiders side of midfield. Once again the South Point defense held strong and forced another field goal. Christian moved ahead 6-0 with 5:35 remaining in the opening stanza. The ensuing Raiders drive of 4:35 essentially ended the first quarter and culminated with a QB Patrick Blee 1-yd touchdown. The 2-point conversion was successful and South Point won the first quarter, 8-6. The Knights next possession carried over into the second quarter of play.

Charlotte Christian boasted several athletes with college prospects, and these players at the skill positions kept the Knights potent on offense. The hosts were able to reclaim the lead, 13-8, but would add more and set the game's tone shortly thereafter. On South Point's next play from scrimmage, a fumble was once again covered by the Knights at the Raiders' 17 yardline. Christian wasted no time going to the air for the score to put them up 20-8 with 9:11 to go in the half. South Point answered with a 5-yd touchdown burst by WB Harrison McKinney. McKinney lined up in the fullback position and bulled through behind a solid push from his 'O' line. The Raiders answer closed the gap at 20-15, but the flow had been established with South Point having to play catch-up for the remainder of the game. A Knights fumble on the next drive

gave the Raiders hope, but South Point gave the ball back on the next play. Christian regrouped and scored their third touchdown of the quarter to push the lead to 27-15 with 2:36 remaining. The Big Red kept punching. Masterfully managing the clock, the Raiders made good on a 66-yard drive for more points. A 19-yd pass from Blee to Garrett Tidd ended the scoring in the half and drew South Point close at 27-22 heading into the intermission.

The third quarter displayed just how even the teams were matched. Each claimed two possessions yet neither managed a scoring drive. Both continued to deliver hard hits and moved the ball efficiently. But the quarter was essentially played between the Red Zones. Christian carried their 3rd quarter ending drive into the final 12 minutes of play.

The Knights sustained a drive that led to points early in the fourth quarter. A 3-yd touchdown run put Christian up 34-22 with 8:46 to go. The Big Red answered on a Blee 42-yd run for a touchdown to close to 34-29 with just over six minutes left in regulation. South Point needed the stop to maintain momentum and gain the chance to snatch victory. But the Knights held strong. A 9-yd touchdown run once again kept them two scores in front, 41-29. The Raiders refused to go quietly and the Big Red managed a touchdown in the final 1:42 of regulation. A Blee connection with McKinney put the ball at the Knights' 4-yardline. FB Chayne Ford burst in for the score to make the final 41-36.

South Point suffered their first loss of the young season, but by no means does it damage the goals set by the team. Getting better day-by-day is the expectation. Famed Alabama Crimson Tide Head Coach, the late Paul 'Bear' Bryant once said, " Losing doesn't make me want to quit. It makes me want to fight that much harder." Based on what was seen last Friday night in Charlotte, this group of Red Raiders have no quit in them. And it's for certain they will battle that much harder to uphold the great tradition of South Point Football.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

### **Notable Facts and Thoughts**

South Point travels to Hibriten for a matchup with the Panthers. Hibriten appears to be a team still searching for an identity. The Panthers are 2-1 on the season with a 50-7 thrashing of West Calwell before struggling with Hunter Huss (W, 22-19) and being taken to the woodshed by Hickory (L, 35-14). Time for the Big Red to build some momentum. No better place to start than in Lenoir!