

Game Recap

Red Raiders Fall In Opener...Crest Outlasts South Point, 13-7

The story lines for South Point's season opening loss to Crest are numerous and varied. But all are familiar scenarios that include a gallant effort by a hard-hitting squad, a fierce determination in all phases of the game, and unfortunately...costly mistakes. The heartbreaking fact is that the Chargers suffered an equal number of miscues, but the Raiders were unable to take full advantage of the momentum shifts. As with past matchups with Crest, the contest was, as expected, an old fashioned 48-minute slugfest that throughout seems to belong to either team. And, as with those same past matchups, South Point enters week two looking to expound on the positives and correct the negatives.

South Point received the opening kickoff but were unable to muster positive ground gains and so were forced to punt. Crest took possession at the Red Raiders 45 yardline. The field position put a charge in the Chargers, but the Red 'D' was equal to the task. A forced fumble and recovery by the Raiders at their thirty-three shifted the early momentum. On the play, linebacker Jackson Risk grabbed hold of the jersey of the scrambling Chargers' quarterback. Risk held on behind the line of scrimmage until teammates Matt Hastings and Elijah Daniels arrived to help end the fray. The resulting turnover brought the Raiders offense back onto the field. Once again though, the Crest defense stalled the Raiders to force another punt. The ebb and flow of the game began to settle with neither team penetrating the redzone. But there must be a reason it's called the "Redzone" because after the Raiders defense stifled the Chargers on their second drive, the Red 'O' got in gear. Devon King set the Raiders up with a solid return to the Crest forty-eight. A mix of ground pounding runs by fullback Naseem Jones behind a determined O-line moved the Raiders downfield. A quarterback Javus Davis pass to running back Will Rhinehart sustained the drive at the Chargers' twenty-three. Five plays later, Jones bulled through from the ten for the game's first score and a 7-0 South Point advantage. The nearly five minute drive brought the opening stanza to a close and the Chargers would carry their next drive over into the second quarter.

Marching to and just across midfield, Crest faced a fourth and short at the Raiders' forty-six. The swarming Red 'D' ended the threat there. South Point took over on downs and appeared poised to take control of the game. But taking a page from the Raiders playbook, the Chargers used an opportune defense to slow the South Point attack and shift momentum. The Crest equalizer came on a drive that started at the Chargers' eighteen and ended with a 56 yard touchdown pass with 7:36 to go before the half. The heavyweights then battled back and forth until the clock read zero and the score knotted at seven.

The third quarter played out much like the first half. Each team would start three drives but could muster no scoring threat. A Crest turnover on downs, back-to-back punts, back-to-back fumbles, and a South Point possession that would carry over, would be the story of the third quarter.

To begin the final twelve minutes, the Raiders had the ball at the Crest 25 yardline. The potential go-ahead field goal was blocked, and the recovery put the Chargers in business at their 43 yardline. Crest rode the emotion to a score and a 13-7 lead with 10:35 remaining. South Point drove inside the Chargers' ten, taking valuable time off the clock. The Raiders were six yards and an extra point away from a potential first win. Sadly, it was not to be. An unfortunate turnover gave Crest the ball for the final 4:49 of regulation. The Chargers held on for the 13-7 hard fought victory.

Living up to its customary billing, the South Point-Crest matchup was a hard-hitting contest between two determined opponents. Being the first of the season, and although unacceptable yet expected, the game was filled with miscues. The Red Raiders gave every indication that the mistakes are correctable. Their errors stemmed from an aggressive attitude, an overanxious attempt to make a play resulting in a loss of control. Expect that control to return following a focused week of practice. Coach put the painful loss in the proper perspective by driving home the point that winning in August is good but winning in December is better. That run will start with the thrashing of the Lincolnton Wolves next Friday.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Two teams left the field Friday night, victims of an unacceptable number of yellow flags. (For what it's worth) Former FSU Head Coach Bobby Bowden would concede that some penalties are the result of an overaggressive nature. His point was that when a player jumps offsides, it could be a mark of eagerness to make a play. And that can be easily addressed and corrected. Using that logic, the other type of penalty is one that is usually much more costly and is marked by a loss of control of one's emotions as well as a lack of discipline. Two teams left the field Friday night and one was guilty of consecutive unsportsmanlike conduct infractions. And it wasn't the Red Raiders. Just a thought.