

Game Recap

Raiders! - Stun Chargers 27-26

Big Red. Friday night. Rival. Slobber-knocker. Barnburner. Chest-pounding. Grit. Heartbeat - off the chart. Victory! If any of these terms even remotely describe some element of your fandom, if your fall weekends include multiple football games, AND if you consider yourself a diehard member of RaiderNation, then it's likely you spent the remainder of your weekend relaxing with a good book, enjoying some easy-listening music, or...napping. Because after South Point slammed the Chargers at Lineberger Stadium last Friday night, everything else leading up to Monday, well - you get the idea! The Red Raiders took the punches, and delivered more, en route to a crushing Big South 3A victory over rival Crest! South Point trailed by two scores prior to the 8:52 mark of the fourth quarter. At that point the Big Red took advantage of a defensive stop, struck quickly on offense, and sealed the game on a special teams takeaway. The smoke cleared, the barn was reduced to ashes, and South Point remained unbeaten with the 27-26 victory.

South Point won the toss and elected to defer their option to the second half. Crest received the opening kick, and the Chargers speedy offense went to work quickly. A sixty-six yard drive ended with an 18-yard touchdown scamper to give Crest the early 6-0 lead. South Point immediately answered with a 58-yard strike from QB Patrick Blee to TE Peyton McCarn. McCarn was untouched coming off the line of scrimmage and he remained that way all the way to the endzone! The score was knotted at 6-6 for the remainder of the opening stanza as the Raiders would force a Chargers punt and then suffer a turnover on the following drive. Crest carried their next possession into the second quarter.

Having driven to the South Point 3-yardline to end the first, the Chargers scored on the first play from scrimmage in the second stanza. Crest moved ahead 12-6 with 11:54 remaining before the half. The two heavyweights then traded blows for the next six possessions. An interception stalled a South Point drive. Then on the fourth play of the Chargers possession, Gavin Smith picked off a Crest pass to thwart a scoring threat. From the safety position, Smith made a perfect play on the ball to make the leaping grab. The momentum, as had been the case throughout the contest, was short-lived. A strip and Crest recovery gave the Chargers another chance with the ball. The Red 'D' stepped up and forced a punt with 3:39 to go. South Point could mount no threat and was forced to punt the ball back to Crest with 1:55 on the clock. Then, inside the last two minutes, fireworks went off! Crest's quick strike offense put six more on the board with a 10-yard touchdown pass to go ahead 18-6 with 0:43 remaining. On the ensuing kickoff, Gavin Smith took the kick, hit the wedge, cut right, and made the kicker a part of the highlight reel! Smith raced eighty-four yards for the score to keep the Raiders close at 18-12 going into the intermission.

With the ball to begin the third quarter, South Point was looking for a score to draw even and go ahead. But the Crest defense was equal to the task and forced the Raiders to punt. The Raiders defense held the Chargers on downs to get the ball back. At this point, the hard-hitting contest that is customary of a South Point/Crest matchup was taking its toll. The Chargers managed the only score in the third on a twenty-two yard run to move out to a 26-12 advantage. This score held going into the final quarter.

With the ball at the Crest 41-yardline to begin the final twelve minutes, The Red 'O' continued to press. FB Eric Forston converted a fourth down for a new set of downs before Blee bulled his way to the Crest sixteen. From there, he hit WB Garret Tidd in the flat for a 16-yard score. Brody Crawford easily drilled the PAT to cut the Chargers lead. Trailing 26-19 with 8:52 remaining in regulation, South Point had set the stage for an explosive finish! The Red 'D' held the line and forced a Crest punt with 3:05 on the clock. From the South Point 19-yardline, the Raiders had the ball and a chance. But a loss of ten on the first downplay cut deeply into the hopes of the Red faithful. An incomplection on second down left the Raiders facing an improbable 3rd and 20. The improbable then turned back into hope! A pass deflected by Brody Crawford was hauled in by SE Chris Stowe and the gain set up a 4th and 1 from the Raiders 28-yardline. OL Andrew Wright, Gavin Gibson, and TE McCarn opened a hole on the right side for Blee to gain the needed yardage for a first down. Blee did not stop! The QB burst into the open field and outran all Chargers, 72 yards for the score! Later, asked about the play, Blee stated, "We slowly started to use it in the second half, and it was working for us." The QB gave credit to his offensive line, pointing out their determination throughout the game. South Point was within an extra point of tying and two points from taking the lead. The barn wasn't yet on fire, but the kindlin' was smolderin'! Blee broke through the same hole on the conversion to give South Point their first lead at 27-26 with 1:50 left in regulation. The Chargers had no timeouts remaining, giving the Raiders an advantage on defense to ice the victory. The Red 'D' would not have to take the field! An errant cross field lateral by the Crest return team was pounced on by South Point's Walker Spargo. Spargo's effort and alert play sealed the win for the Big Red. The Red 'O' returned to the field and kneeled out the clock. The barn was ablaze!

All the elements of the customary South Point/Crest matchup were realized in the game last Friday night. The rivals never fail to put forth an impressive, hard-hitting effort. And as is typical of these contests, the game is rarely decided before the final seconds tick off the clock. The Raiders exciting victory kept fans on the edge of their seats, elevated heart rates, and left little to look forward to, in the way of football, for the remainder of the weekend. That being the case...hope you enjoyed your nap!

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

With two weather cancellations/postponements and an early season bye week, it would seem that establishing any game rhythm would be a challenge. But South Point has proven a determined nature in running their record to 4-0 on the season. Coach emphasizes that there's a lot of football left to be played. Expectations remain high and so does the Big Red effort.