
VARSITY REPORT

by Jamey Andrews

“Red Raiders Pounce On Jaguars...Crush Forestview, 45-3”

Following last week’s thumping of conference foe Ashbrook, much of the talk about South Point being “back” was just that...talk. One game can rarely be considered the absolute statement that a team has turned a season around. Neither does one victory emphatically send a message to the conference that the championship goals are assured to be on track. One game, a win, is simply one step in a positive direction. Victories are validated when they are built upon. So in order to validate the Greenwave victory and set straight the focus for the championship run, the Red Raiders needed to follow up the performance with another solid win. Enter the Forestview Jaguars. South Point, for the second consecutive week put 45 points on the board and slammed the door on an opponent in impressive fashion. The end result is increased confidence and the gelling of a team that has faced its share of adversity as the season has worn on. The Red Raiders were efficient on offense, defense, and special teams, cruising to a 45-3 victory over the Jaguars Friday night in Lineberger Stadium. Remaining opponents will look to exact a measure of revenge on South Point as the regular season nears the end. Momentum now becomes a key as the Raiders seek to “run the table” without a letdown. Being favored will not be enough. The Red will need to take care of business on the field. The previous two conference games are assurance that they have the ability. The next three games will prove they have the desire.

South Point won the toss and deferred the option electing, to put the defense on the field from the outset. The Jaguars would be quickly forced to punt, but so would the Raiders on their first possession. The initial drives would do little more than chew up the first quarter clock and when Forestview was forced to punt on their second possession, just over three minutes remained in the quarter. The Raiders then took the field to start a drive from their 26 yardline. Nick Farmer, from the wingback position, picked up positive yardage to the twenty-eight. Ty Tinker then bulled through to the South Point 41 for a fresh set of downs. A slip resulting in a sack put the Red O back at the thirty-four. But they wouldn’t stay there for long. On a second down play, quarterback Scottie Lee took a three step drop and lofted a perfect spiral into the hands of split end Rayonta (Ray) Grier. Grier never broke stride as the ball fell softly into his hands. Racing to the endzone the play covered 66 yards and put the Raiders on the scoreboard. Thomas Lempereur’s PAT was good and South Point had the early 7-0 lead. Asked about the play, Lee and Grier both described the stop and go route that turned into points. And both began their descriptions by lauding the offensive line for providing the time for the play to develop. “They gave me time to throw it” said Lee, adding that this is what made the play possible. Grier also credited the O-line and added that the team feels they have a “hill to climb” and they refuse to be knocked down. The play would prove to be the start of the unraveling for the Jaguars. A fumble on the ensuing kickoff was covered by the Raiders at the Forestview thirty. Two plays later, a Lee run of twenty yards and a pitch to Jake Alexander for 5 yards, gave South Point the 14-0 advantage as the first quarter came to a close.

The Jaguars would punt on their possession that began the second stanza and the Raiders, with their foot on the gas, pushed the pedal through the firewall! A Lee run of 14 yards and a Lempereur 29 yard field goal pushed the lead to 24-0 at the half. Forestview, in two quarters would be forced to punt four times and suffered one turnover. The Red D routinely put the offense in position to be successful and the special teams fumble recovery helped account for a score in the first half. In twenty-four minutes of regulation play, South Point had displayed as much balance as they had in any game to this point of the season. And with the ball to begin the third quarter, the Raiders were looking to slam the door for good.

On a drive that began at the South Point 44, fullback Ty Tinker became the workhorse. The Raiders scored on a five play drive with Tinker carrying the ball on each play. His final touch covered 30 yards and pushed the South Point lead to 31-0. Forestview attempted to gain a measure of respect on their following possession. That measure amounted to about a teaspoon as they would only muster a field goal to avoid the shutout. It would be the only victory the Jaguars would enjoy. The Raiders weren't satisfied to simply protect the lead. They matched the Forestview score by adding a 9 yard Alexander touchdown run. The drive began at the 4:35 mark and ended with 25 seconds remaining in the quarter. More importantly, the Alexander touchdown put South Point ahead 38-3, and would all but assure that the game would end with a live clock.

A quick fourth quarter punt by the Jaguars gave the Raiders another opportunity. And once again the Red made good on the possession. From their 37, South Point began a drive that from the first play would bring out the frustration of the Jaguars. A late hit out of bounds moved the ball into Forestview territory and the Red O continued the push. Alexander would be joined by teammates Mario Brandon and Caleb Gibson as the trio would march the ball downfield behind a stout offensive line to the Jaguars 2 yardline. Lee kept and carried over for the team's final score. The scoreboard tilted heavily in favor of the home team by a 45-3 count. With just over eight minutes to play all that remained was to add to the stats as the outcome had long since been decided. Forestview managed to cross midfield and were looking to make a lopsided score seem more respectable. But a long pass downfield was intercepted by Nathan Silver and the weak scoring threat was emphatically shut down. The Raiders had left the Jaguars with but 3 points worth of "moral victory"!

One game does little to make a statement during the course of a season and usually amounts to little more than idle talk. But add to the victory another convincing win for validation and the "talk" becomes confidence. The Raiders continue to improve and that improvement has shown up as the first back-to-back wins of the season. Momentum is squarely in their corner so the challenge for the Raiders is to sustain the push through the remaining schedule. Being favored won't guarantee the victories, but consistent and improved effort will result in success. No time for letdown against an expected weaker opponent, South Point will need to be on their game against the next foe, Lake Norman Charter. One game at a time.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

The Forestview game provided an ideal description of how the Red Raiders have come together as a team, for the good of the team. Six different ball carriers and almost an equal number of receivers are scoring threats for South Point. In fact, on four consecutive plays during the final scoring drive, four different players carried for positive yardage. Sometimes this is forced on teams due to injuries or other misfortunes. For South Point, it's a case of having the talent to keep the "fresh legs" in the game. Such a luxury could help the team to a deep run in the playoffs.

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