

## Game Recap

### Raiders Cage Jaguars, Down Forestview 56-14

The tradition of the program, and the championship caliber of South Point are well known throughout the area, and the state. Programs of this stature naturally draw the best efforts of every opponent. From top to bottom, everyone associated with the South Point football team would have it no other way. And in sports there is great satisfaction in defeating a rival opponent. There is greater satisfaction in demolishing a rival opponent! After two conference victory shutouts, the Red Raiders were poised to continue their dominance with a homecoming visit from a struggling Forestview team. The Jaguars entered Lineberger Stadium last Friday night without a league victory. So, the only thing to gain would be a moral victory should they be able to pull off an upset of miraculous proportion. And for one half of football the role of spoiler seemed to suit the Jaguars. But two quarters does not a football game make. And when the Raiders returned from the locker room for the second half, they brought a Big Red attitude! South Point turned a 21-14 halftime nail-biter into a 56-14 beat down of their upstart crosstown rival. Baltimore Ravens star quarterback Lamar Jackson once said, "I have to put my team in a good situation." Every Raider that comes out of that locker room displays that resolve. Outstanding individual plays came together to result in a team effort win. The early challenge was a good test for South Point and the continued improvement in practice was evident as they battled to victory.

South Point won the toss and deferred the option, electing to give the visitors the first crack at points. Forestview nearly obliged. The Jaguars put together an unexpected drive of fifty-five yards to the South Point 15-yardline before the Red 'D' forced a field goal attempt. The thirty-two-yard kick sailed wide left, and the Raiders took over on downs. RB Jesse Leford, QB Patrick Blee, and FB Kaveaun Pless combined to move the ball downfield through holes opened by a powerful O-line and downfield blocks by the receivers. A hot knife never cut so easily through butter! The Big Red was on point. From the Jaguars' 9-yard line, Pless burst through, did his part to assist a South Point blocker, and crossed the goal line for six points. Lining up in the slot, RB Walker Spargo engaged a Forestview DB downfield. Spargo maintained contact but the two were in the intended path of the fullback. Pless collided with his teammate and bounced off to sail to the endzone. Individual efforts were already evident from both the Raiders defense and offense as South Point took the early 7-0 lead. The Jaguars, stunned but not yet ready to concede, mounted a drive on the ensuing possession. Forestview managed to find some success through the air and were able to march to the Raiders 16-yard line. There, facing fourth and eleven, it appeared South Point had forced another field goal attempt. But the Jaguars offensive remained on the field. A pass in the field of play would have been short of the marker, but trailing linemen moved the pile across the goal line for the score. A successful two-point

conversion gave Forestview a surprising 8-7 lead. Forty-seven seconds remained in the quarter, and the Raiders carried their next possession into the second stanza.

Facing a second and five from the Jaguars 38-yardline on the opening play of the second quarter, QB Blee burst around the left side to the Forestview eleven. From there, Pless plowed up the middle to put six more on the board. K Wilson London notched his second PAT, and the Raiders reclaimed the advantage, 14-8, with 11:51 remaining in the half. Undaunted, the Jaguars still had some fight left in them. (Spoiler roles tend to do that to an underdog.) A drive of over five minutes put Forestview on the South Point 7-yard line. The drive, and the game in general, was marred by several facemask penalties that were evident only to the officiating crew. A high snap was controlled by the Jaguars QB and his emergency scramble netted points for Forestview. The extra point was blocked and so the game was tied at fourteen. Seeking to put distance between the rivals on the scoreboard, South Point struck quickly on their next drive. On a third down play from the Jaguars 20-yard line, Blee hit a wide-open Cayden Rumph in the corner of the endzone for a touchdown. The Raiders went up 21-14 with 3:01 remaining in the half. Forestview sought more success in the passing game on the following possession. But the Red 'D' was ready. South Point forced a punt and ran out the final seconds to send the teams to the intermission.

With the ball to begin the third, South Point drove from their 31-yard line to the Forestview one. The ground-pounding attack continued to be too much for the Jaguars' defense. Pless barreled through for a score and K London remained perfect on PATs to put the Raiders up 28-14 with two minutes gone in the quarter. Forestview tried a conservative approach by mixing in a run game with their passing attack on their next possession. It was a futile effort as the Raiders defense had now taken full control of the momentum claimed by the Red offense. The onslaught continued. Following a Jaguars punt, the Raiders took over at their 12-yard line. On first down, Blee broke free to the Forestview forty-four. Then Pless powered through to cover the remaining yardage and 35-14 advantage. The two plays covered eighty-eight yards in under a minute. South Point did not ease up! Forestview managed to cross midfield on their next drive. But were forced to turn the ball over on downs after losing yardage on a fourth and three. The Raiders then continued to wear down the opponent. The O-line was in complete control, blowing the Jaguars off the line of scrimmage, allowing the Red ball carriers to pick up yards in chunks. From eleven yards out, Blee broke tackles, reversed direction and dove across the goal line to move South Point in front by a 42-14 tally. Nearly five minutes remained in the quarter meaning the Raiders had put three touchdowns on the board in seven minutes. Forestview had no answer. And after DB Brody Crawford sprinted untouched across the line to record an unassisted sack on third down, another punt was forced. Just over two minutes remained before the final twelve of regulation. Rumph set the Raiders up at the Forestview thirty-one with a solid punt return. Ledford and Pless then pushed South Point to the 13-yard

line. RB Malakai Felician then took a pitch to the two. Rewarded for his effort, he was then given a pitch with which he covered the remaining yards for the score. With twenty seconds remaining in the quarter, South Point had moved to a 49-14 lead. The clock went live.

Following the South Point touchdown to end the third, the Jaguars began play from scrimmage in the fourth quarter at their 20-yard line. The D-line continued to have their way at the line of scrimmage when Forestview had the ball. And when Crawford burst in for his second unassisted sack, all that remained was to see if the Raiders could add more to their scoring total. Asked later about the two sacks that essentially ended Forestview possessions, Crawford said, "we've just got to do our part; we've got a job to do and we're just going to do it the best we can." He was among several individual efforts that benefited the Big Red in victory.

Following the Jaguars' punt, the Raiders took possession at the South Point 40-yard line. Cayden Rumph took over under center and RBs Felician and Ethan Conner became the featured backs. Conner carried over from three yards out to end all scoring and sent the Homecoming faithful away with a resounding 56-14 victory. Time expired, along with the Jaguars, on their next possession.

South Point faced a foe with little more motivation than playing the role of spoiler in the Red Raiders Homecoming tilt. Forestview though was overmatched as the individual efforts of players up and down the Big Red roster contributed to a beat down of the Jaguars. Each player puts their team in a good position and going forward this will be the expectation. The playoffs demand focus, effort, and determination. All were on display last Friday night.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

### **Notable Facts and Thoughts**

South Point's final playoff tune-up comes next week on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University. The Ambassador Christian School Lions will host the Red Raiders. Established in 2022, high school students were admitted to the private Christian school in 2024, so football history is essentially non-existent. No matter, Big Red football travels well. And the objective never changes. Go Big Red!