

Game Recap

South Point Falls to Kings Mountain, Experience Carries Mountaineers, 31-20

It never seems that there can be anything good that comes from a loss. It's doubtful anyone ever played the game of football because of the "life lessons" it teaches. That's just a valuable benefit that results. Rather, the competitive fire that pushes players into the sport also feeds a desire to win. There are reasons why competitors are openly emotional when a championship trophy is awarded to the "other" team. So put aside the "builds character", "teaches teamwork", "strengthens resolve", and various other positive attributes ascribed to playing the sport of football, and just for the moment consider that the game is played to win. Winning has become part of the Big Red tradition. And that is because it happens often and becomes an expectation. So, when the Raiders find themselves on the short end of a scoreboard, it's tough to accept. When it happens, it can only be overcome by looking forward rather than back and working hard to reclaim what seems to be gone. Getting back on the desired track becomes the quest. This is the "good lesson" that comes from a loss. And the subsequent test, thankfully, is only a week away! The Raiders gave a decent account of themselves in the matchup of unbeaten South Point with Kings Mountain, despite a scoreless first half that found them down 10-0 at the intermission. Flip the script on a couple of plays and it could have just as easily been South Point in the locker room with a lead. But that wasn't the case, so we must be encouraged that the Big Red faced the challenge and fought hard throughout. This leaves no doubt that should the teams meet again in the postseason, the pressure will be on the regular season victors. And the outcome would likely be different because of the lesson learned.

South Point kicked off to begin the contest and the Red 'D' took the field. A quick three-and-out set the early tone as the Mountaineers gained but five yards on the opening possession. After the Kings Mountain punt, the Raiders started their first drive from the South Point 36-yardline. A FB Cam Medlock run of 30 yards on first down immediately put the Mountaineers on their heels. A turnover would end the advance though, so after the quick start, the momentum quickly shifted back to Kings Mountain. The ensuing Mountaineers drive culminated with a field goal giving the host an initial 3-0 lead. Undaunted, the Raiders offense went back to work. A 3rd and 9 completion from QB Patrick Blee to TE Jackson Blee moved South Point into Kings Mountain territory. The

drive stalled shortly thereafter, and the Raiders were forced to punt. The flow of the game had been set and it seemed to favor both teams with South Point's ability to move the ball and Kings Mountain's ability to take advantage of a Raider miscue. The Mountaineers carried their next possession into the second quarter.

A good mix of plays, runs and passes, moved Kings Mountain downfield. The experience of the senior quarterback was evident. The Mountaineers scored on the drive to push their advantage to 10-0, but there remained plenty of time for a Raiders answer. South Point continued to pick up positive yardage on the ground, but the six-play drive ended with an interception at the Kings Mountain 16-yardline. South Point was able to thwart the next Mountaineers possession in similar fashion. CB Frank Vickers never gave up on a play after a completed pass in his coverage. Vickers caught up with the receiver, made the tackle, and the ball jarred loose. Teammate Jaquis Rumph was trailing the play and made the recovery for the Raiders. South Point made some progress, but a costly penalty backed the Raiders up and eventually forced a punt. Time was running out in the half, and it appeared Kings Mountain was content to take the current lead into the intermission. But while giving the appearance to take a knee, the Mountaineer play-caller handed the ball off behind his back and the trick play covered yardage across midfield. A few quick plays later, the Mountaineers lined up for a field goal that missed the mark. The Raiders took over and kneeled out the half.

With the ball to begin the third, the Raiders managed to plant a seed of doubt in the minds of the Mountaineers. An eighteen-play drive that moved the third quarter clock from 12:00 to 2:30 also moved the Raiders to the Kings Mountain 3-yardline. From there, Medlock carried over to cut the lead to 10-6. The Red 'D' continued to hit hard and forced the Mountaineers to carry their next possession into the final stanza.

As was the case in the second quarter, the experience of Kings Mountain propelled them to a score. The Mountaineers moved in front 17-6 and turned up the pressure on South Point. Kings Mountain managed yet another score to take a 24-6 lead before the Raiders could answer with a 10-yard TD reception by Jackson Blee to move to within 24-12. The ensuing onside kick failed, and the Mountaineers were awarded good field position. They turned the good fortune into another score to move the tally out to 31-12. South Point added an 11-yard Medlock run for a touchdown and followed with a Blee two-point conversion to make the final 31-20.

It would seem that no good can come from a loss when a program boasts a longstanding tradition of winning. But given the ebb and flow of the contest between the top contenders in the Big South 3A, there's every reason to believe that the Big Red will overcome the blemish and keep their focus on a bigger prize. One game at a time. That's how a winning program is built. And that's how a winning tradition is sustained.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Next up: the Greenwave of Ashbrook. No better place to right the ship than on a Wave!