

Game Recap

“Raiders Roll Into Win Column...Pound Wolves, 42-7”

In trying to determine the reason for the quick turnaround after the week one loss, look no further than the post-game huddle following Friday's convincing win over the Lincolnton Wolves. As expected, reference was made to the good week of practice and the determination to work hard to improve. But it was the words of support spoken by coaches and players alike that define this win, this team, and this program. Coaches recognized players for their improved play. They recognized the effort of other coaches in getting the team prepared. Players lifted each other up with encouragement for the jobs well done. Hard work across the board does not go unrecognized and seasoned Red Raiders know, that brand of teamwork usually translates into victories. "I believe in my family", said Junior WR/CB Ray Grier, when asked about the team's ability to bounce back and then sustain their success. He added that the Red Raiders were humbled following the season opener and that, to a man, each player bought in to the Coach's expression that wins on Friday begin with wins on Monday - whether in the classroom, weight room, or on the practice field. The message was received, loud and clear, as South Point scored on each of their first half possessions to emphatically slam the winless Wolves.

Winning the toss and deferring the option, the Raiders sent the defense onto to the field to set the early tone. They did not disappoint! After K Cade Ratliff's boot reached the endzone giving no chance for a return, the Red 'D' dug in. Overcoming a couple of pass completions, South Point held the Wolves on a fourth down play turning the ball over to the offense with 7:37 remaining in the first quarter. From their 48 yardline, QB Jamani Leeper drove his team to the Lincolnton twenty-three. Then, facing a fourth and two, Leeper pitched to Senior RB Caleb Gibson who split defenders and covered the necessary yardage for the score. The PAT was blocked so the Red Raiders' lead stood at 6-0. The Wolves offense was immediately stuffed by a tackle for loss by Senior DE Nolan Cochran. The play reflected the effort of the Red 'D' and signaled the uphill climb that Lincolnton would face throughout the contest. South Point forced a punt on the Wolves second drive and the ensuing Raiders possession would carry over into the second stanza.

Moving from their 30 yardline, South Point used a mix of plays, that included passes, to drive into Lincolnton territory. The drive was sustained by a fourth and three pickup that was set up by a pass interference call on the previous play. Grier had sped pass his defender down the middle of the field and when he reached back for the ball, the undersized Lincolnton defender drew the obvious call. Junior FB Naseem Jones picked up the needed 3 yards and the drive continued. In just under six minutes, the Red 'O' had driven inside the Wolves ten. Jones then burst through the middle behind the bruising blocks of Josh Bogen, Larry Dowdy, Collin Owensby, Jacob Patterson, and Peyton Chaney, for the final six yards to paydirt. Leeper flipped a pass to Jones to complete the 2-point conversion and a 14-0 South Point advantage. From that point in the contest the Red Raiders kept their foot on the gas pedal! A Grier interception gave the Raiders another chance from the Wolves forty-one. Driving to the eight, Gibson cut between

Dowdy and Chaney to score his second touchdown of the game. The South Point lead was 21-0 after Ratliff's extra point and the Raiders were still not satisfied with the scoreboard! Quickly forcing another Lincolnton punt, South Point had a full 1:10 on the clock before the half to amass more damage. A 56 yard drive of 41 seconds moved the Raiders further ahead. Key plays in the drive were back-to-back completions from Leeper to Junior RB/DB Nick Gange and Senior WR/CB Tré Glenn. Gange's catch and run bailed out his scrambling quarterback, moving the ball 24 yards to the Lincolnton thirty-one. Glenn then caught the 31-yard toss from Leeper for the score that would send the teams to the intermission with the Red Raiders in control, 28-0.

The Wolves did little to answer the bell in the third quarter except to force South Point's first punt of the contest on the opening drive of the second half. The attempt to swing momentum failed as Sophomore LB Omari Hunt quickly scooped a fumble to bring the Red 'O' back onto the field. The Raiders offense rewarded the defensive effort with a two-play drive of 34 yards. Gibson carried first to the ten yardline and then Jones carried over for the 35-0 lead. With 7:53 remaining in the third the Red 'D' continued to take the fight out of the Wolves. Another Lincolnton punt and another South Point score left little doubt as to which team would even their record on the night. Jones' 15 yard run behind a punishing block by Chaney set the score at 42-0 and set the clock to roll. With the live clock, the Wolves drove from their twenty-five to the Raiders' forty yardline to end the quarter.

In the final twelve minutes Lincolnton tried to halt the onslaught by letting their offense play defense. The intent was to keep the Raiders offense off the field. Throughout the drive, that covered nearly ten minutes of the running clock, the Wolves waited at the line of scrimmage for the play clock to wind down before snapping the ball. Lincolnton managed a touchdown with 2:09 to go in regulation, gaining a measure of respect by saving the shutout. All that remained was for Leeper to kneel out the final ticks to complete the 42-7 drubbing.

Intent to turn negatives into positives, the Red Raiders focused on their "family" attitude to support each other and win each day leading up to the week two meeting with the Lincolnton Wolves. The effort proved more than effective as the good week of practice translated into a convincing victory over the Wolves. The Forestview Jaguars will now come to town and the next 48 minutes on the gridiron will tell whether the Red Raiders have turned the corner and will continue to roll. Cage the kittens!

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

The Raiders response to the adversity suffered during the opening week of the season is admirable, yet not unexpected. RaiderNation is never surprised that the maturity on the field often carries over outside the lines. Proud to be a Red Raider!

Jamey Andrews