

Game Recap

Big Red Steamrolls Wildcats - Shutout North Gaston, 48-0

Like a runaway locomotive, the Red Raiders powered through an opponent for the second consecutive week to post a convincing shutout victory! The way to improve upon a 47-0 win over Forestview was a 48-0 beatdown of North Gaston. South Point's path to the conference title required three wins to end the regular season. The Raiders have made an empathic statement heading into the final matchup with Hunter Huss. A win gives South Point the title by virtue of a tie-breaking victory over Kings Mountain. But perhaps more importantly would be the momentum and level of play the Raiders would carry into the postseason. The message remains the same, stay focused, hungry, and determined. And this team has a proven level of talent and skill to carry them through a deep playoff run. Playing their best will position the Big Red well, but the Raiders will need to ensure they don't take for granted the ability and resolve of future opponents. It should be noted that they've won nothing yet. They've only drawn closer to a goal and have shown they have what it takes to move ahead. The key is to continue to play until the final whistle blows.

North Gaston won the toss and opted to give South Point the game's first possession. It would not be the only mistake the Wildcats would make, just the first! After picking up a first down on the initial drive, QB Patrick Blee reeled off a 32-yard run that put the Red 'O' deep into Wildcat territory. The O-line dominated, allowing the Raiders to drive to the three. From there FB Chayne Ford powered across the goal line for the opening score. K Wilson London drilled the PAT to give South Point the 7-0 advantage. The Wildcats managed to cross midfield with their opening possession. But facing a third and five from the South Point thirty-two, Big Red Defenders Garrett Tidd, Gavin Gibson, Luke Wesolowski, and Peyton McCarn met in the backfield to drop the North Gaston QB for a six-yard loss and force a punt. The ground games for both teams dented the first quarter clock. With their second possession coming at the 3:00 minute mark, South Point went back to work on offense. They moved to the South Point thirty-six on a pitch to WB Gavin Smith. Blee then called his own number, broke through the line, shed tacklers, and raced sixty-four yards for the touchdown. The Raiders went ahead 14-0 as the first quarter neared its end.

Early in the second stanza, North Gaston was again forced to punt following a three-and-out series. The punt bounced out of bounds at midfield to give South Point good field position. On first down, Blee again kept the ball and cut through the right side into the open field. Fifty yards later the Raiders added to their lead. South Point was in firm control with a 20-0 advantage. North Gaston captured a bit of momentum with a long kickoff return to the Raiders 24-yardline. The Wildcats took advantage of a South Point penalty and worked the ball inside the five. The Red 'D' dug in! On consecutive plays the Wildcats lost yardage before finally turning the ball over on downs at the South Point one. The Raiders moved out of the shadow of their endzone, but the drive stalled, and they were forced to punt. North Gaston gained some positive yardage, but fumbled and South Point's Cayden Rumph recovered at the Wildcats 46-yardline. The Raiders moved to the five and from there Blee hit a wide open McCarn for six points. The extra point sent the teams to the half with South Point up 27-0.

To begin the third quarter, North Gaston put together a drive that gained positive yardage into South Point territory. But the Raiders held and took over at their 36-yardline. Chewing up the clock the Red 'O' moved downfield to the Wildcats eleven. Blee kept around the right side and crossed the corner of the endzone to further pad the South Point lead. With 3:48 remaining the Raiders went up 34-0 and showed no signs of shifting into cruise control. The Red 'D' had pounded the Wildcats through nearly three quarters and seemed easily headed for the shutout. But it wasn't enough for DB Gavin Smith. On the ensuing drive, Smith stepped in front of a receiver and picked off a Wildcat pass on the run. The DB sped 47 yards for the score. The interception marked Smith's seventh of the season and third return for six points. Asked about his ability to be in the right place at the right time Smith made it sound simple. "Read the quarterback, fly to the ball", he explained. He then added a point often overlooked, or at least discounted, by fans caught up in the excitement of a turnover. Speaking of the pick sixes he gave credit to his defensive teammates. "That's all the D-line and linebackers blocking", he said, adding "it's a team effort." Smith's touchdown ended the scoring in the third and sent both teams to the final stanza with the Raiders well in front by a 41-0 tally.

On a possession that carried over from the third, North Gaston was forced yet again to punt. DE Kevin Murphy penetrated the line and was positioned for the punt block. Murphy's rush forced an error on the punter who barely made contact with the ball, and only after it had hit the ground with his drop. The ball was downed at the 50-yardline, and South Point took possession. Cayden Rumph took over under center and the shifty QB made an immediate impact at the position. A perfect fake pitch froze the Wildcats DE and Rumph cut up field for a 35-yard gain. FB Josh Crawford-White lined up in the backfield and in two plays punched in from 12-yards out to end the scoring at the 11:06 mark of the final quarter. From that point the clock was live, and the seconds ticked off quickly. A turnover on downs put the ball in the hands of South Point. The Big Red ran a play and took a knee to close out the victory.

Displaying the power of a runaway train, South Point blew through North Gaston to claim a second straight shutout victory, 48-0. The Red Raiders sustained the momentum they built a week before when they shut out Forestview by a 47-0 score. The conference championship is in sight with a game against Hunter Huss standing between the Raiders and the title. South Point is focused, hungry, and determined to achieve the goal. Taking nothing for granted, the Big Red will seek to keep the locomotive on track and steaming through the Huskies.

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Hunter Huss fell to arch-rival Ashbrook in their "Battle for the Bell". Leading 12-7, the Huskies failed to hold on, and the Greenwave took the narrow 15-12 victory. Expect the Huskies to try to break their chains and come after the Red Raiders. Go Big Red!