
VARSITY REPORT

by Jamey Andrews

“Red Raiders Unstoppable...Hammer Hilltoppers, 62-0”

The history of the football program at Cumberland College (University) in Lebanon, Tennessee is storied and unmatched by any other program at any level in football. The school began participating in intercollegiate athletics in 1889 and over the years, for various reasons, athletic programs, including football, have been disbanded and later reestablished. While football at most schools is held in high regard such that fan bases seemingly live and breathe according to the success of a season, it is the occurrence of the unimaginable that forever links Cumberland football with the acme of futility. During the 1915 baseball season, Cumberland handed Georgia Tech a one-sided, 22-0 loss on the diamond. The embarrassment so inflamed head baseball (and football) coach, John Heismann, that Heismann swore revenge. His vow was realized a year and a half later when, on October 6, 1916, his Yellow Jackets crushed, pummeled, demoralized, thrashed, buried, steamrolled Cumberland 22-0 on the gridiron. It is told that Cumberland had dropped the football program earlier that year but as the game had already been scheduled, Heismann insisted that it be played or Cumberland be fined. Thirteen players, make that participants, were rounded up to don pads and do battle with Georgia Tech in Atlanta. A check of the scorecard indicates that neither team made a first down in the game, yet only the Yellow Jackets could boast a stingy defense. Cumberland never so much as threatened a stop as Georgia Tech scored either on 1st, 2nd, or 3rd downs. The halftime score was 126-0 and the second half was mercifully shortened to 15 minutes total. South Point was not quite on the same pace against R-S Central, but the determination and focus of the Red Raiders was evident and figured prominently in the dominating 62-0 pounding delivered the Hilltoppers.

With the ball to begin the contest, South Point made quick work carving up the R-S defense. In less than two minutes, and aided by a Jake Alexander 69 yard run, Ty Tinker punched in for the evening's first score. Kicker David O'Hanlon notched the PAT and before many fans had settled in their seats, the Raiders led 7-0. South Point's next drive would come just seconds later as they would recover a Hilltopper fumble deep in the opponent's territory. A fifteen yard strike from Scotty Lee to Ray Grier advanced the lead to 14-0 with 9:53 remaining in the first. R-S continued to struggle at the hands of the hard-hitting Red 'D'. Another fumble, this time recovered by South Point at the R-S 26 yardline, set up the Raiders on offense. A one yard dive on second effort by Alexander put the 21st point on the scoreboard. And the first stanza was not yet near halfway through. The mark of successful teams is an ability to ignore the score and stats and rather continue to work hard on every play. South Point reflected this characteristic throughout, and especially with their next possession. After forcing a Hilltopper punt, the Raiders took over at their 9 yardline. On first down, Lee dropped back and fired a perfect spiral that Ray Grier hauled in, in stride, at midfield. The speedy receiver would not be challenged in the foot race to the endzone and the 91 yard completion lit up the scoreboard once again! The pass play sent Lee and Grier into the South Point record books as the long completion equaled a 91 yarder from former Raiders Bill Hannon to Doug Froneberger in 1971. Asked later about the statistical and history making play, the two would simply admit that the

team and the team's focus is what matters as the "second" season approaches. "We just kept focusing on the game", said Lee, adding, "If a big play happens, it happens. We've still got a game to play." Grier also pointed out the heightened focus as the regular season nears its end. "More weights, more everything, including more effort, we're just going to give it all we've got", insisted the productive receiving target.

Leading 28-0, the Raiders were not done! A three-and out series by the Raiders defense gave the offense another chance with over three minutes remaining in the quarter. A ground pounding drive carried the Raiders to the redzone and both teams to the second quarter.

From the Hilltoppers 12 yardline, Lee threaded the needle between two defenders and Grier caught his second touchdown pass of the game. South Point in just over twelve minutes of regulation had bolted out to a 35-0 lead. R-S found some offensive success on their next possession, picking up a first down near their 35 yardline. The success would not last. On the second down play, Tre Glenn picked off a Hilltopper pass to give the Raiders the ball at the R-S 43 yardline. South Point drove down to the 2 and Alexander walked in untouched for the 42-0 advantage. The clock read 9:15 of the second quarter and the game had reached the point at which the clock would become live, stopping only on called and official timeouts. The lopsided contest had provided opportunity for backups to see action. The Raiders suffered no letdown on either side of the ball. Another R-S punt and another South Point drive netted points for the Red Raiders. Tinker found the endzone from 9 yards out and with 1:24 to go before halftime, South Point had complete, dominating control at 49-0! The Hilltoppers ran out the clock to send the teams to the break.

History has it that at halftime of the Cumberland-Georgia Tech debacle, even though his team held a 126-0 advantage, Coach Heismann cautioned his players of the trick the Cumberland team might have "up their sleeves" for the second half! In that game there would be no comeback of epic proportions. And neither would there be in this game. R-S had the ball to begin the second half and after a Mathew Robinson sack, the Hilltoppers were forced to punt. Mario Brandon was deep and the speedy return specialist hauled in the spiraled kick at the South Point thirty-three. Weaving his way back and forth across the field, setting up and following blocks, Brandon covered the needed 67 yards to notch the eighth touchdown of the night for the Red Raiders. The South Point lead had grown to 55-0 and at this point the clock could not roll quick enough for the Hilltoppers. Brandon would figure into the next Raiders possession as he would recover an R-S fumble on the ensuing Hilltopper drive. Keaton Hale, under center, called his own number and completed the 12 yard drive with an 8 yard touchdown run. South Point had put the final points on the board leading 62-0 with the clock running in the third. R-S could muster nothing against the Raiders defense and so they would quickly be forced to punt, as had been the norm for the flow of the contest. The Raiders took over and drove deep into Hilltopper territory before turning the ball over on downs. The drive carried over into the final quarter and except for an "extra" chain in the yard marker, the Raiders would have maintained possession with another chance to score.

R-S finally moved the ball, managing to advance across midfield but a Nolan Cochran sack ended the minor threat. Then on the fourth down play the Raiders pursuit of a scrambling quarterback forced an errant throw out of bounds and South Point took over. With the clock

continuing to roll, the offense was charged with picking up first downs and carrying home the win. Naseem Jones became the workhorse and behind solid blocking up front he helped the team pick up the needed first downs to maintain possession. Hale took two knees at the R-S 21 and 22 yardlines to close out the victory.

Lopsided victories are not uncommon in football. Those on the order of Georgia Tech's 222-0 annihilation of Cumberland in 1916 are not likely to be repeated. But the key for a team that is on either side of such a game is to hold fast to determination and focus. Never underestimate an opponent and never overestimate your own ability. "A little bit more."

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

Two Southwestern 2A Conference games remain for the Red Raiders and in spite of the undefeated record so much is left to be decided, including playoff seeding. Focus and hard work are ever important, perhaps at this juncture...even more so.

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