
VARSITY REPORT

by Jamey Andrews

Next Raider Up!

No dwelling on the past, there's only focus toward the future. No weak resolve, there's only confidence in strength. No effort in the locker room, it's ALL left on the field. The time is now, the season is here, and a proud tradition stands ready! The South Point Red Raiders will take the field Friday night at Lineberger Stadium to kickoff the 2016 high school football campaign.

As usual, expectations are high and goals are lofty. After all, this is South Point football. But as is the norm, this year's squad understands what it takes to be champions. In pre-season scrimmages the messages haven't changed. Preparation is a key to success and the Raiders have given a fine account of themselves in the early going. There is much work still to be done and the coaches have emphasized continuous improvement. The mentality is "Next Raider Up" and this group, perhaps more than many others, seems eager to accept that challenge. The intent of the concept is for the team on the field, regardless of personnel, to exhibit toughness, skill, and ability, the likes of which an opponent cannot match. It's how we define championship football. It's how we define South Point Red Raiders football!

As each new season begins, every team faces questions concerning players in key positions, and the Red Raiders are no different. Gone are many cogs in the "Big Red Machine" that lead South Point to a Western NCHSAA 3A title last year. But this year, we focus on the Next Raider Up. And there is no doubt that when the Crest Chargers come to call next Friday night, there'll be a roster full of "Red hats" eager for their shot to harness the ponies!

Go Get 'Em, Red!

Notable Facts and Thoughts

While the early season, non-conference schedule will pit the Red Raiders against some familiar opponents, there are some points to note:

Match-ups with Crest, Lincolnton, and Shelby will once again challenge South Point to be in championship form right out of the gate! And the Raiders are sure to rise to the occasion! The Chargers and Wolves will "take their lickin'" under the usual Friday night lights at Lineberger Stadium. But the Golden Lions of **Shelby** will host the South Point varsity on **Thursday September 1st** in Time Warner Cable Sportschannel's NCHSAA Game of the Week. (The Red Raiders JV squad will have a Bye that week.) So mark the calendar, don the Red, and let's make certain the world, or at least our corner of western North Carolina, knows how proud we are of our Red Raiders!

The week after the special game in Shelby, the Clover Blue Eagles make a return to the South Point schedule. The Red Raiders will travel to **Clover** on **Friday, September 9th** for a match-up that had taken a four year hiatus. It may be presumed that it took that long for the Blue Eagles to lick their wounds following the 63-0 drubbing they took from the Red Raiders in 2011. Once again, let's ensure the world, or at least Clover's piece of the "Sandlapper" Upstate, is re-introduced to the POWER that is Red Raiders football!