

Krusen helps Neshaminy steal a comeback victory at Bensalem

The defender had three interceptions in the 27-19 triumph. One of them he returned for a touchdown.

By Joe Fite

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BENSALEM — After he had helped Yardley Western win the American Legion World Series last month as the leadoff hitter and rightfielder, Neshaminy's Chris Krusen's upbeat mood was understandable: Not many boys his age get to play for and win a national title in front of a national audience

on ESPN.

When he put on the pads and played in a 25-7 loss to Allentown Dieruff in the Redskins' opener on Aug. 30, his mind still wasn't entirely into football. But a week of practice changed his focus, just in time to help his team win its first game of the year.

At rain-swept Bensalem Memorial Stadium on Friday night, Krusen

intercepted three passes, including one that he ran back for a touchdown, as Neshaminy came from behind to beat the Owls, 27-19, in the Suburban One National Conference opener for both teams.

While the Redskins (1-1, 1-0) snapped a six-game losing streak, Bensalem (0-2, 0-1) extended its streak to 10 losses. The Owls' last win was over Neshaminy early last season.

Because of the mistakes against Dieruff, Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt conducted long, grueling practices, and it helped Krusen play

the football game of his life.

"The last game, I wasn't all up there," Krusen said. "I wasn't psyched up or anything, but today I was so psyched up. That week of practice was maybe the hardest week of practice I ever had. [Schmidt] worked us hard. He wants to win. That's how he is."

Krusen's first interception from his strong safety spot swung the momentum completely away from the Owls.

Bensalem was dominating the Redskins and led at halftime, 13-0, after Owls quarterback Rob Dunner

had gone 6 for 13 for 176 yards.

But the Redskins, led by Krusen, answered in the third quarter.

Neshaminy opened the quarter with the first of two touchdowns by running back Lester Wiltz (23 carries, 112 yards) with 10 minutes, 34 seconds left.

Krusen tied the game at 13 during the Owls' ensuing series when he picked off Dunner at the 38-yard line and ran unscathed to the end zone with 8:47 left.

Bensalem regained the lead when Keith Davis scored on a 65-yard sprint, but the Redskins took the

lead for good, 20-19, when Jim Dietz hit Omar Harris with a touchdown pass and Rob Miller added an extra point with 3:04 left in the third quarter. Krusen capped his football return with a pair of fourth-quarter interceptions, including one on the last play of the game.

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|-----------|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| Neshaminy | 0 | 0 | 20 | 7 | — | 27 |
| Bensalem | 7 | 0 | 6 | 0 | — | 13 |

B: Dunner 1 run (Lombardo kick)

B: Lewis 52 pass from Dunner (kick failed)

N: Wiltz 2 run (Miller kick)

N: Krusen 36 run with interception (kick failed)

B: Davis 65 run (kick failed)

N: Harris 13 pass from Dietz (Miller kick)

N: Wiltz 4 run (Miller kick)