

Traitz's improvisation for Truman is a tough act to follow

He saw his quarterback in trouble at the goal line.
So he stole the ball — and got the winning score.

By Rick O'Brien
INQUIRER CORRESPONDENT

LEVITTOWN — Thanks in large part to Ray Traitz's quick thinking, Harry S Truman overcame a lackluster first half and blanked visiting Neshaminy, 21-0, in a Suburban One National football game Friday night.

Late in the third quarter, Traitz broke a scoreless tie with a 1-yard touchdown run that had everyone,

including the referees — for a while, at least — bewildered.

On fourth and inches, Truman's Shawn Slivinski tried to cross the goal line on a quarterback sneak. Slivinski, however, was met — and stopped — at the line of scrimmage by a pack of defenders.

Traitz snatched the ball from Slivinski before the whistle sounded and slipped into the end zone. The referee, unsure of how Traitz

wound up with the ball, waited several seconds before signaling a touchdown.

"I walked over to the referee and said, 'Hey, I've got the ball,'" Traitz said. "I think he thought Shawn still had the ball."

Traitz's score broke open a taut contest and helped the Tigers (5-1 overall, 4-1 conference), The Inquirer's eighth-ranked area team, remain one game behind the conference leader, Central Bucks East.

Slivinski was similarly surprised to see Traitz, a senior fullback and defensive lineman, sneak up and take

the football.

"I was still moving my feet when Ray came up and grabbed the ball away from me," Slivinski said. "I had the ball on the back of my hip, and he just came up and stole it."

Truman put the game away with fourth-period touchdowns by Dan Errigo, who scored on a 19-yard pass from Todd Lewis, and Lewis, who went over from the 1-yard line in the final minute.

The 5-foot-9, 180-pound Traitz also recorded two second-half sacks for a defense that recorded its fourth shutout of the season and held the

winless Redskins (0-6, 0-5) to minus-25 yards rushing for the game.

Neshaminy's leading rusher, senior Tim Smith, injured his left leg less than four minutes into the game and was carried off on a stretcher. He was taken by ambulance to St. Mary Hospital in Langhorne.

The visitors also lost junior quarterback John Hatfield, who suffered a concussion, midway through the third quarter. He completed 8 of 20 passes for 103 yards in the first half.

"Nobody's run the ball on them all year, so we tried to spread their

defense out and throw the ball," said Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt, whose squad was hurt by five turnovers.

Shawn Feizer, a senior middle linebacker for Truman, set up Traitz's touchdown by intercepting a pass by the replacement quarterback, sophomore Jim Dietz, at the Neshaminy 12-yard line and rumbling to the 6.

Neshaminy	0	0	0	0	—	0
Truman	0	0	7	14	—	21

T: Traitz 1 run (Cloak kick)
T: Errigo 19 pass from Lewis (Cloak kick)
T: Lewis 1 run (Cloak kick)