



LINDA JOHNSON / Inquirer Suburban Staff

Neshaminy running back Jamar Brittingham (2) picks up some yardage against Pennridge. He carried the ball 29 times for 218 yards and four touchdowns in his team's 28-22 victory Friday night. He notched the game-winning TD with 51 seconds remaining in the contest.

Brittingham key to Neshaminy's win

By Rich Fisher

INQUIRER SUBURBAN STAFF

PERKASIE — People looking for temporary escape from the horror caused by last week's terrorist attacks got what they were looking for at Poppy Yoder Field on Friday night.

In a game that lived up to its billing as one of the most intriguing of the month, and one that provided nearly three hours of welcome entertainment, Neshaminy rode the powerful but aching legs of running back Jamar Brittingham to a 28-22 victory over Pennridge in a Suburban One League National Conference football game.

"We were thinking of the people that died in the tragedy," Brittingham said. "But we knew we had to come out here and try to win this."

Brittingham, whose right calf and hamstring began cramping severely in the second half, carried the ball 29 times for 218 yards and four touchdowns, including the game-winner with 51 seconds remaining.

The 6-foot-1, 194-pounder gained 149 yards after intermission, despite the fact that he was in obvious pain as trainers worked on his leg for most of the fourth quarter. Britting-

ham, who gained 310 yards on the ground in the Redskins' opener against Father Judge, has 528 yards rushing in two games. He is averaging a staggering 9.26 yards on the ground every time he touches the ball.

"My whole leg was cramping," Brittingham said. "But I just said, 'I have to go; my team needs me.'"

Brittingham scored on an electrifying 52-yard run to tie the game, 22-22, with 7 minutes, 24 seconds remaining.

It was the second time the Redskins (3-0 overall, 2-0 conference) had battled back after Pennridge (1-2, 1-1) had taken leads of 15-0 and 22-15.

"We hadn't played in two weeks, so we were fired up to the point we were a little rusty," said Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt, whose team was awarded a forfeit victory over Bensalem last week because of a teachers' strike in the Bensalem School District.

"We felt there were some things that were going to work, we just had to settle down. And Jamar is a warrior. He's just a special kid."

After touchdown runs of 4 and 2 yards by Jim Stephenson gave Pennridge a 15-0 lead, Neshaminy rebounded when Brit-

tingham scored on a 23-yard run with 1:38 left in the half.

"That really hurt us," said Stephenson, who rushed for 87 yards. "It gave them a lot of momentum for the second half."

The Redskins began to control the ball effectively with their ground game in the second half. On its second possession of the third quarter, Neshaminy went 80 yards on nine plays, capped by Brittingham's 1-yard run. Keith Ennis (six catches, 76 yards) caught a 31-yard pass from Jason Wiater to sustain the drive.

Pennridge regained the lead on freshman Ryan Greiser's 6-yard touchdown run with 10 minutes remaining. On its next possession, Neshaminy faced a third-and-5 situation at its 48-yard line. Brittingham burst around left end, raced down the sideline, and, in the final 10 yards, broke one tackle and leaped over another defender into the end zone.

"You cannot simulate those kind of moves and that kind of speed in practice," Pennridge coach Jeff Hollenbach said. "There are very few backs who are going to run the way he does. He's got speed, size and strength. We're going to see him for a long time."

Hollenbach saw more than enough of Brittingham on Neshaminy's winning drive, which started at the Redskins' 10 with 5:52 remaining. Austin Jones started things with a 35-yard run and, aside from Ennis' 5-yard catch, Brittingham carried on the other 11 plays for 55 yards, including a 16-yard TD run on a counter up the middle.

"This was a very big win," Schmidt said. "We're starting a four-game stretch where we're playing four playoff teams. You get one of these games in the win column and it's a plus."

Despite the loss, Hollenbach was happy the game was played.

"It was a very important football game for us, but there are other people that are struggling with a lot more important things than us," Hollenbach said. "It was a tough week for everybody, and you do have to keep it in perspective, but I think it's good we played."

"You could say maybe we shouldn't have played," Schmidt said. "But I'd rather these guys do this than go home and watch more television and more horrible stories."

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