

Patriots' line play conquers Redskins

By Tim Panaccio
Inquirer Staff Writer

Neshaminy coach John Chaump usually stands when he addresses the press after games.

On this night, Chaump was slumped on a gymnasium bench.

He appeared tired and beaten, much like his football team had looked during a 37-14 loss to visiting Central Bucks East on Friday.

With only seven lettermen returning this season, Chaump knew he would be lucky to go over .500 while playing in the new — and tough — Suburban One alignment.

Now at 4-5 (2.5 in the league) with two games to play, Neshaminy probably will not break even.

"We've got some good football players, but this has been a year where everyone else has some great football players," Chaump said.

Consider Central Bucks East. The Patriots (8-2, 6-1) have superior talent up and down their lineup and especially on their offensive line, which led the way to a season-high 303 yards rushing against the Redskins. East dominated both lines of scrimmage, turning short-yardage plays into big gainers on offense, and snuffing out Redskins drives on defense.

East held Neshaminy to 129 yards rushing and a measly 16 yards passing. That passing total might be the lowest Redskins mark since ...

"I don't know," Chaump said. "Until Friday, no one had ever run up 303 yards on Chaump, either."

Credit East's multitalented backfield of quarterback Sean Lenz (87 yards rushing, 1 touchdown), fullback Curt Hahn (67 yards, 1 touchdown) and tailback Dave Zerby (73 yards, 1 touchdown).

Lenz also completed 8 of 12 passes for 95 yards and a touchdown.

Also credit left offensive tackle Dodd Stretch. At 6 feet, 4 inches and 235 pounds, Stretch opened gaping holes for Hahn and Zerby, particularly in the first half when the Patriots rushed for 242 yards and took a 23-0 lead.

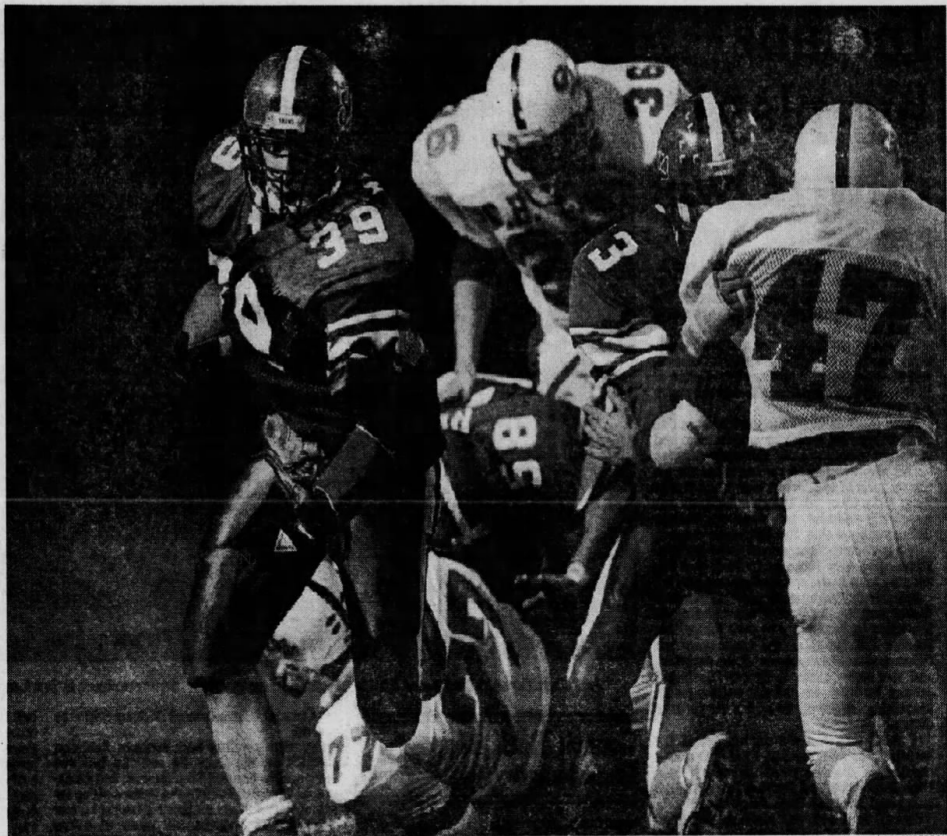
Stretch was so excited, he asked coach Larry Greene at halftime for some more plays over his tackle spot.

"I asked him to run a few quarterback draws," Stretch said with a smile. East ran several, one of which resulted in a Lenz touchdown.

"Boy did that offensive line do a heck of a job," Greene said. "We had good pass protection too."

Lenz had good receivers, including Brian Penecale, a 6-2, 200-pound senior split end with Division I potential. Penecale caught 4 passes for 68 yards, including a 12-yard touchdown from Lenz.

His 36-yard reception in the second quarter off a square-in pattern set up Brett Sleichner's 28-yard field goal for a 17-0 lead. The catch was sensational as Lenz threaded the needle past



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Neshaminy's Mike Rizzo runs for yardage while keeping an eye on East's Matt Ermigiotti (47), who is being blocked on the play.

Cent. Bucks East 37 Neshaminy 14

defender Joe Gettis, and Penecale dived for the ball.

"Gettis was stride for stride with the kid," Chaump said. "I've seen that kid play. What a great athlete."

East had far too many of them against Neshaminy.

Neshaminy had just 26 total yards of offense in the first half — a season low.

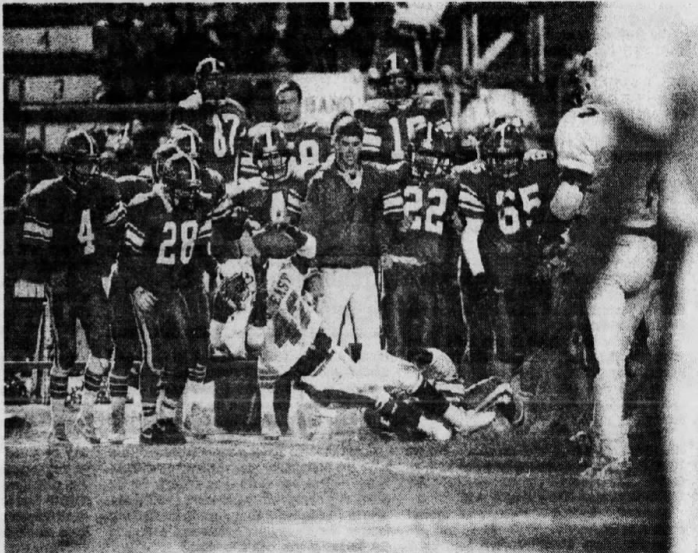
Mike Rizzo and quarterback-of-the-future Joe Mormello had rushing touchdowns for Neshaminy, but neither score occurred at a time when the lead was within reach.

"Their offensive line is excellent," Chaump said. "Where have you ever seen simple dive plays end up becoming 30-yard gains?"

This season, it is happening a lot to Neshaminy.

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|-----------|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| C.B. East | 7 | 16 | 0 | 14 | — | 37 |
| Neshaminy | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 | — | 14 |

- CE: Hahn 35 run (B. Sleichner kick)
- CE: Zerby 23 run (B. Sleichner kick)
- CE: FG 28 B. Sleichner
- CE: Penecale 12 pass from Lenz (kick fail)
- NE: Rizzo 49 run (Stewart kick)
- CE: Lenz 1 run (D. Sleichner kick)
- NE: Mormello 24 run (Stewart kick)
- CE: Carlon 49 run (D. Sleichner kick)



Dave Zerby of Central Bucks East is tackled in front of the Neshaminy team by Joe Mormello.