

# Neshaminy Has a Bone to Pick with Skeptics

By **MIKE KERN**

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When Dick Bedesem took over the downtrodden remnants of the once-proud Neshaminy football program in 1984, he inherited many question marks. Yet with a proven commodity such as Bedesem at the helm, there was never a question in anyone's mind that things would turn around.

But Bedesem has moved on to Delaware Valley College. The job now belongs to John Chaump, who inherited an entirely different situation than did his highly regarded predecessor. This time, the new Redskins' coach takes over a club with relatively few question marks.

The lingering questions, though, are quite another matter.

"I'm sure there were people who were waiting to see what we'd be like without [Bedesem]," senior quarterback Bill Vergantino said. "But really, [Chaump's] kept everything pretty much the same, so it's no big thing.

"If [Bedesem] were still here, with what we've got coming back, I'm sure we would have been considered one of the better teams around. But instead, it's like everybody's waiting to see if we can keep it going. People aren't assuming that we'll be good anymore, so we'll just have to prove it."

It remains to be seen exactly how much the Redskins proved in their opening game last night, a 24-0 non-league win over visiting Central Bucks East. After all, they did fumble the

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**Bill Vergantino**  
Neshaminy quarterback

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ball away five times. Plus, they were flagged for 10 penalties that set them back a total of 101 yards. And Vergantino, one of the top QBs in the area, completed only one of eight passes for a meager 7 yards.

"It sure wasn't pretty, but we're not about to give it back," said Chaump, who previously was the head man at Neshaminy Maple Point (1975-80) and Morrisville (1981-82). "We can't have those kind of mistakes against the teams we're going to play later, or we'll be in trouble."

But against East, which debuted under first-year coach Larry Greene with a 10-0 victory last week over Archbishop Wood, Neshaminy was able to dominate despite its many transgressions. The 'Skins cranked up the wishbone to the tune of 307 yards total offense, while limiting the Patriots to just 95, 58 of which came on a meaningless drive in the closing moments.

"Things are a little different, but it hasn't changed as much as most people think," said senior halfback Tom Knox, one of three returning starters in the backfield. "In fact, we've even added some stuff, and I think we're better than ever. All we kept hearing was how our line wasn't ready, but they just blew them

away tonight.

"Hey, those guys played varsity last year. People should have come and watched us practice. That way, they would have known what's in their hearts... We didn't want to mess with success."

Knox rushed for 94 yards on 12 carries, and scored Neshaminy's final touchdown from a yard out late in the third period. Fullback John Rizzo, another incumbent, added 68 yards on 12 attempts. And sophomore Jonathan Hall displayed complementary flashes of brilliance, with 60 yards on eight tries.

He put the Redskins on the scoreboard with a 1-yard, off-tackle plunge on fourth-and-goal late in the first quarter. Neshaminy upped its lead to 17-0 by intermission on Mike Doyle's 30-yard field goal and Kevin Gowen's 13-yard TD run, on which he went untouched around the left flank after accepting a perfect option pitchout from Vergantino.

Defensively, the Redskins came up with a pair of turnovers themselves. And Chris Gerdvil's interception of a screen pass, which he returned 16 yards to the 1, led directly to Knox's TD. Nose guard Mark Kruszczynski and linebacker Brian Moser were among those

primarily responsible for holding East to just 25 yards in 19 carries, and forcing Greg Coverdale into a shaky 7-for-24 effort through the air.

"I know I'm not about to overlook one mistake we made, but still, I guess you have to expect that the first time out," Vergantino said. "In scrimmages, I've gotten in a bad habit of not trusting our line, and I've started rushing myself. But they've improved dramatically. They're ready to go. I only hope I can restore their confidence in me.

"In our offense, the whole key is not depending upon any one guy to do too much. And I'd been getting away from that. I guess I tend to put more pressure on myself. If I would have settled down, we might have put 40 points on the board tonight."

And that is the kind of answer Neshaminy's opponents were hoping they wouldn't have to deal with for once this season.

**SUBURBIA:** Central Bucks West set a South-eastern Pennsylvania area record by winning its 33rd consecutive game, 33-0 over Downingtown. Ridley Park won 32 in a row from 1953 to '56... Owen J. Roberts turned the ball over five times in a 10-0 loss at Harrisburg, which is supposed to be one of the stronger teams in District 3... **Marc Scotti** scored on a 2-yard run in the fourth period, and **Chet Wisniewski** caught a two-point conversion pass from **Matt Matson**, as Souderton rallied from a 14-0 deficit to tie North Penn, 14-14... Quakertown buried Upper Dublin, 34-12, for new coach **Steve Curley**.