

Games and players who made the memories of the '85 season

Thoughts on the 1985 scholastic football season:

Best game. The Suburban One National showdown between Pennsbury and Neshaminy before about 7,500 fans at Pennsbury. The game was tied at 7-7 late in the fourth quarter before Pennsbury won, 14-7, on a 67-yard touchdown pass from Dave Fisher to Bob Filotei.

Operating against a strong wind, Neshaminy quarterback Tim Ford was unable to bring the Redskins back with his passing, and Pennsbury happily accepted its second consecutive league championship. The game was marked by a controversial penalty against Neshaminy and a questionable decision by Neshaminy coach Dick Bedesem.

Pennsbury's winning TD came one play after Neshaminy was called for defensive holding on third down. On the previous series, Bedesem had opted for a 42-yard field-goal attempt into the wind instead of gambling on fourth and short at the Pennsbury 25.

Best game, Part II. The Philadelphia Catholic League quarterfinal playoff between Cardinal O'Hara and West Catholic at Veterans Stadium. O'Hara, the eventual league champion, posted a 19-13 overtime victory. Underdog West erased a 13-0 deficit to forge a 13-13 tie on a 56-yard pass play in the third quarter, but O'Hara blocked the extra point that would have given West the lead — and maybe the victory — and then survived a turnover-plagued fourth quarter to win.

Best single-game effort. In a 46-14 victory over Upper Perkiomen, Central Bucks West's Tim Donovan ran 13 times for 144 yards and four touchdowns, caught one pass for a 60-yard TD, amassed 255 all-purpose yards and started at defensive back.

Best player. On overall worth to his team, how about Kevin Parker of Cardinal O'Hara? After starting the season at running back, Parker was moved to quarterback by coach Bob Ewing. All he did was lead the Lions,

John D. Harris Jr. on high schools

who had lost their first two games, to 12 straight victories and the school's first Catholic League title since 1980.

Best little player. Rich Arrington, a 5-foot-8, 160-pound running back and defensive back from Glen Mills. Arrington is small but mighty. Along with having rushed for 1,075 yards and 17 TDs this season, he is a national power-lifting champion who can bench-press 345 pounds. Many linebackers and defensive backs learned the hard way the dangers of trying to tackle Arrington one-on-one.

Most durable player. Spring-Ford running back Scott Highley. The 6-foot-1, 190-pound senior carried the ball 314 times, an average of 26 a game. He ran for 1,864 yards and 22 touchdowns as Spring-Ford finished second in the Ches-Mont League with an 8-2-2 record.

Biggest upset. Penncrest over Ridley, 19-0. The result snapped Ridley's 47-game unbeaten streak. The second biggest upset was Sun Valley over Academy Park, 9-6.

Tough-luck award. This goes to a young and gifted Abington team that lost key players to injuries and poor grades. The Ghosts were hampered by a sputtering offense. In losses to Upper Merion and William Tennent, they scored only two points while allowing only eight. Expected to contend for the Suburban One National title, they finished last with an 0-6-1 record.

A look ahead. Fifteen players who figure to be among the area's finest next season: Ralph Miller, running back, Downingtown; Rich Drayton, wide receiver, Central; Al Settembrino, running back, Archbishop Ryan; Dave Rogers, offensive and defensive tackle, Malvern Prep; Chris

Beasley, running back, Owen J. Roberts; Matt Blundin, quarterback, Ridley; Ernest Pendleton, running back, Lower Merion; Chris Roberts, running back, Abington; Scott Thompson, wide receiver, West Catholic; Louis Riddick, running back and defensive back, Pennridge; Paul Siever, offensive tackle, Downingtown; Mike Roche, quarterback, Central; George Reid, wide receiver and running back, St. James; Marc Thompson, wide receiver, Roxborough; Kevin McCoy, running back, Frankford.

Best quote. Brian Hensel, a senior tackle for Archbishop Ryan, on his having received the game ball after the Raiders' Catholic League quarterfinal playoff victory over Archbishop Wood at Veterans Stadium: "It's nice. I guess you've got to get a knee injury at the Vet to get one." (Hensel had suffered a minor knee injury during the game.)

The newest league in Southeastern Pennsylvania was officially named the Pioneer Athletic Conference on Thursday.

Also to be known as the Pac-8, the eight-member league features five schools from the Ches-Mont League (Phoenixville, Pottsgrove, Pottstown, Spring-Ford and St. Pius X), two from the Bux-Mont (Perkiomen Valley and Upper Perkiomen) and one from the Bicentennial (Lansdale Catholic).

The departures from the established leagues initiated much scrambling among the remaining members — especially in the Bux-Mont, where all seven schools officially applied for membership in the Suburban One League. The deadline for application was Friday.

"Not too many people were happy, but there wasn't much of a choice for us," said Pennridge athletic director Wayne Helman, whose school belongs to the Bux-Mont. "It's one of those things. I think a lot of old-timers are concerned that everything is happening so fast. But if Suburban One will accept all of us, I think we can take care of all the other problems."