

# Patriots' rookie coach brought back to earth

By Matt Schuman  
Special to The Inquirer

Two games into his first season as a head coach at the high school level, Central Bucks East's Larry Greene already has learned how both sides live. On Friday night, just one week after his Patriots overwhelmed Archbishop Wood, East was beaten convincingly by host Neshaminy, 24-0, in a nonleague contest.

"Since it was Neshaminy's season opener, I thought the Wood game would work to our advantage," Greene said. "But that's obviously not the way it turned out. It looks like this was a step backward for us."

Although Neshaminy's execution left something to be desired — the Redskins lost five fumbles and were penalized 10 times for 91 yards — the home team's lethal wishbone attack and ultra-physical defense jumped on the Patriots early and didn't let

---

## Neshaminy 24 C.B. East 0

---

them up until the final gun.

Three-fourths of the Redskins' outstanding offensive backfield from last year returns intact. Fullback John Rizzo, halfback Tom Knox and quarterback Bill Vergantino have bushels of ability to go with their varsity experience. Enemy defenses will have enough problems containing those three — and then there is sophomore halfback Jon Hall, a 5-foot, 7-inch, 160-pound blur. Together, that foursome — with help from assorted reserves — ran over, around and through East for 277 yards, averaging nearly seven yards per carry.

Meanwhile, the Patriots were limited to 98 yards in total offense, a mere 28 of which came on the ground.

"It's not like Neshaminy surprised us," Greene said. "We've scouted them, and we knew they were an excellent team. We knew all about their defense and their backs, but what did surprise me was number 1 [Hall]. We saw him on film, but you really can't tell how fast he is until you see him in person."

The Redskins were stricken by fumble-itis on their first two possessions, but when the Patriots returned the favor by fumbling the ball away on its own 17 yard line, Neshaminy cashed in. A seven-play drive ended with Hall scoring from the 1 and Mike Doyle adding his first of three extra points. Before the half, the winners also got a 30-yard Doyle field goal and a 14-yard touchdown run by Kevin Gowen to assume a 17-0 lead.

"Once we got down, 17-0, we were forced to go to the air," Greene said. "Neshaminy knew that and was able to defense us accordingly."

Although Neshaminy kept fumbling throughout the second half, the Patriots were unable to convert any of those opportunities into points. The only score after the intermission came on a 1-yard plunge by Knox that was set up when Redskins' linebacker Chris Gerdvil intercepted an attempted screen pass by East's Greg Coverdale and returned it to the 1.

Neshaminy's performance left John Chaump, its first-year head coach, contented — almost.

"I'm very concerned by the fumbles, because with the schedule we have we can't afford to make that many mistakes," said Chaump. "But otherwise, I couldn't be happier. We went up against a tough opponent

and controlled the line of scrimmage both ways."

Meanwhile, according to Greene, East's immediate strategy is to "go back to the drawing board."

"There are a number of things we have to work on, but the two main things are running the football [on offense] and pursuit [defensively]. Our pursuit wasn't what it should have been in the first half, and their backs were turning the corner almost every time they went outside. We made an adjustment at halftime, but then they started hurting us up the middle. I realize that's the advantage of the wishbone, but we still have to do a better job with our containment."

Central Bucks East	0	0	0	0	—	0
Neshaminy	7	10	7	0	—	24

N: Hall 1 run (Doyle kick)  
N: Doyle 30 field goal  
N: Gowen 14 run (Doyle kick)  
N: Knox 1 run (Doyle kick)