

Neshaminy plays bridesmaid to Pennsbury again

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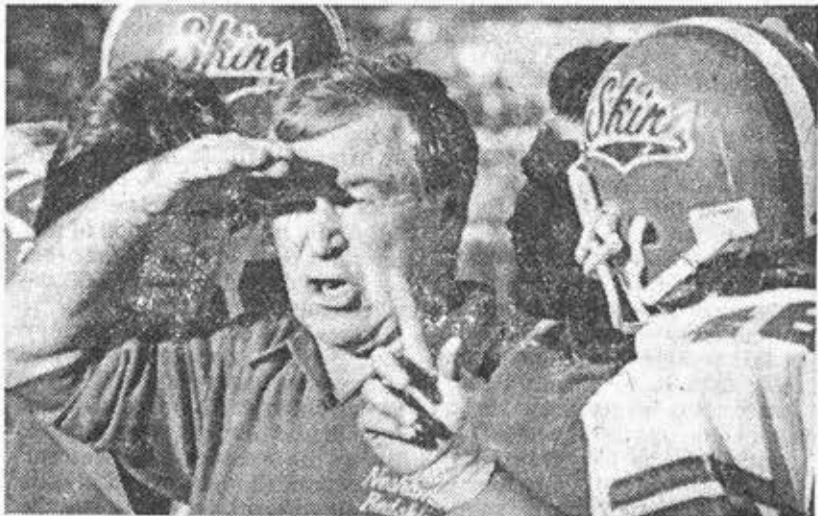
Nineteenth century poet John Greenleaf Whittier never saw a football game, but his insight into human nature appropriately summed up the Neshaminy Redskins' feelings about their Suburban One League National Division championship encounter with the Pennsbury Falcons.

"For all the sad words of tongue and pen, the saddest are these: 'It might have been'."

For Neshaminy, what might have been was an upset of No. 1 ranked Pennsbury and undisputed possession of the SOL crown. In reality, what "was" was a heartbreaking 14-7 defeat for Coach Dick Bedesem's Redskins.

For Bedesem and four returning senior starters, the demise of the Redskins' title fortunes marked the second straight year in which Neshaminy has been forced to play the role of bridesmaid to the SOL champion Falcons. If not for a fourth quarter, Dave Fisher to Bob Filotei 66-yard pass and run-scoring play, the Redskins stood poised to rectify last season's wrongs.

"We moved the ball well, and we played the way we knew we were capable of," said Bedesem. "Our offense and defense played their butts off. We deserved a better fate than the score indicated.



Courier Times photos by E. James Pitrone

Dick Bedesem: We deserved a better fate

"Each league game we played better and better. Preparation and execution got us to this championship game. The pressure of this game was on both squads. Let's face it. Playing in a championship game is a big thing in a young man's life. But these kids gave a tremendous effort."

Though the scoreboard might have indicated otherwise, Neshaminy held its own against the highly-touted Falcons, as they limited the steady Pennsbury offense to only 174 total yards. Besides rolling up 198 rushing

against the stingy Falcon defense, the Redskins played even-up football except for the Fisher to Filotei bomb with just under five minutes to play.

But coming close provided no solace to seniors Tim Ford, Terry Murphy, Butch Lange and Dan Santhouse, for the results smacked of *deja vu*. As the only returning starters from last year's squad, the quartet suffered through another title squelching defeat. Though the game lasted only 48 minutes, the loss will be remembered for a lot longer.

Quarterback Ford rushed for 55 yards on 13 carries, in addition to engineering the only scoring drive for the Redskins. However, his personal accomplishments offered no comfort in light of the results.

"Everyone was out there pulling, and we really moved the ball, but we just couldn't put it in the end zone," said Ford. "People counted us out early and figured us to finish around .500. But we worked hard to get here; we just fell short. Pennsbury's a good team, but we played well enough to win."

Much of the Neshaminy ground attack followed the blocks of 6-5, 265-pound tackle Murphy. In fighting Falcon defensive tackle Kip Domine to a standoff, Murphy spearheaded a second half ground game that got the Redskins close, but not over the hump.

"It's an empty feeling; I can't believe that we lost to them two times in a row," said Murphy. "We were able to run right, but it was the same story as last year. I thought we could have won, and maybe should have won, but that big play in the second half did us in."

While their offensive cohorts held their own against the formidable Falcon defense, the Redskin defense showed that Pennsbury had no monopoly on hard-hitting, aggressive play. In limiting the

Falcons to their lowest point output of the season, Neshaminy safeties Butch Lange and Dan Santhouse combined for 15 tackles.

"On defense we were going with what their offense did," said Lange. "We felt we had to shut down (Scott) LaBrecque and number 88 (split end Andy Anderson). We did, too, except for that long pass."

Lange's partner at strong safety, Santhouse, performed a yeoman's job, as he led the Neshaminy defense with 10 tackles. Besides two big third down plays in the second half to thwart Pennsbury drives, Santhouse came up with a second period interception at his own 34-yard line to hold off the Falcons.

Pennsbury 14, Neshaminy 7

	N	P
First Downs	12	7
Yards Rushing	198	90
Yards Passing	-2	84
Total Yards	196	174
Passes, Comp., Int.	4-2-1	7-5-1
Punts, Average	3-26.0	5-33.4
Fumbles, Lost	5-1	1-0
Penalties, Yards	2-22	8-65

SCORING

SECOND: P - LaBrecque 5 run (Kiefer kick).

THIRD: N - McClave 1 run (Waterbor kick).

FOURTH: P - Filotei 66 pass from Fisher (Kiefer kick).

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Neshaminy

RUSHING: Clemens 18-72; Ford 13-55; Dougherty 11-45; McClave 3-17, 1 TD; Knox 1-10; Christ 1-9; Waterbor 3-(1-9).

PASSING: Ford 2-4-1, (-2) yards.

RECEIVING: Clemens 1-0; Waterbor 1-(1).

Pennsbury

RUSHING: LaBrecque 14-55; Strandberg 7-28; Kane 2-7; Fisher 4-8.

PASSING: Fisher 5-7-1, 84 yards, 1 TD.

RECEIVING: Filotei 2-79, 1 TD; Anderson