

Neshaminy D eats up Ridley

By DOM COSENTINO
Staff Writer

John Waller recognized a certain reality about Friday night.

We knew even before the game started, said Waller, the Ridley football coach, that we weren't going to be able to run the football against them. They were just too big and strong.

The Green Raiders didn't abandon the run they actually rushed 28 times versus 24 passes. And that spread offense, the one with shotgun formations, with four, sometimes five, receivers blended with the occasional two-tight-end look, happens to be what they typically deploy.

But Neshaminy's size edge, coupled with the Redskins ability to bring pressure and to contain Ridley quarterback Andrew Pidgeon's numerous flair passes and occasional screens, dictated much of what went into their easy 31-3 win in a District One quarterfinal at Heartbreak Ridge.

All week, said Nick Schaeffer, the Skins 6-foot-2, 255-pound defensive tackle, that's what our concern was the run game and the screens.

Whats obvious was Neshaminy's offense the 111 rushing yards and three TDs by Bryan Dean, the 100 yards and a TD by Quilan Arnold, the excellent clock management and execution that led to Seth Jeffries 39-yard field goal just before the half but the Skins don't win this game so easily without such a stellar show by their defense.

It went beyond the four sacks, beyond the Chris Boland interception, beyond the fumble recovery. It even went beyond the meager 219 total yards allowed.

Time and again, this defensive effort created field position. But especially midway through the second quarter, when Ridley muffed a snap on a punt, allowing the Redskins to take over at the Green Raiders 14. The offense needed just three running plays by Dean to make it 14-3, to set the wheels of this run back to the district semifinals in motion.

Then there's this: The Redskins defense had been plagued by injuries in recent weeks. But Jay Colbert was back at defensive end, where he couldn't play until last week because of a dislocated kneecap. Linebacker Justin Donnarumma, who had tweaked a knee in practice, is also healthy.

And the other shuffling that resulted from Devon Reedel's Oct. 11 season-ending knee injury Matt Knorr up to rover, Cody O'Neal from nickel-back to safety is certainly paying off.

We remembered the ride back from Ridley, linebacker Paul Carrezola said, referring to last year's 27-7 loss to the Green Raiders in the district semis. We remembered how bad it felt.

Friday night's defensive performance assured the Redskins another bus ride down to Delaware County, this time to face unbeaten Garnet Valley in next week's district semis.

Should they keep this sort of defensive game going, they can likely count on a much more pleasant commute home.

November 15, 2008 11:17 AM <http://www.phillyburbs.com/pb-dyn/news/108-11152008-1621993.html>