

Turnovers doom Pennridge

Rams can't build on solid first half in loss to unbeaten Neshaminy

By Ed Kracz

THE INTELLIGENCER

PERKASIE — There weren't any paint-peeling speeches or fire-and-brimstone oratorics at halftime.

Mark Schmidt simply stood before his Neshaminy Redskins football team and, as calmly as Mark Schmidt is capable of being in the heat of battle, told them one thing: relax.

"We can be guilty of caring too much, but when we settle down and play, we can be pretty good," Schmidt said.

Pretty good became pretty excellent as the Redskins overcame a one-point halftime deficit against emotionally-charged Pennridge to win going away, 49-15, in a Suburban One League National Conference game at Poppy Yoder Field on Friday night.

The come-from-behind blowout kept Neshaminy perfect on the season at 6-0 and kept the Rams from tasting victory for the first time this year as they thudded to 0-6.

"A lot of great things happened for us in the first half," Pennridge coach Randy Cuthbert said. "We played with a

lot of emotion and we executed. Going up by a point at halftime, we were excited, but, unfortunately, I think the size of their offensive line wore us out."

The Rams could do no wrong in the first two quarters and didn't back down after the Redskins went ahead 6-0 on a 39-yard touchdown run by Joe Stemme with 8 minutes, 7 seconds to play in the first quarter.

Instead, Pennridge answered with a 19-play — yes, 19 plays — 80-yard drive, on which junior quarterback Brad Herrmann was 7-for-10 for 71 yards and the Rams converted all three fourth downs, including a fourth-and-goal from the 3-yard line when Herrmann found 6-foot-4 senior Jimmy Jefferson standing just across the goal line.

"Nervous?" asked Neshaminy senior lineman Adrian Kiczewski. "Never."

Not even after Pennridge again answered another Neshaminy score, this one a 74-yard bolt up the middle by Chris Ulmer (154 yards on 12 carries), as Herrmann tossed his second touchdown of the half, a 28-yard strike to senior tight end Brian Stephenson with 53 seconds left until halftime.

Instead of settling for a potential tying point-after kick, Cuthbert called for a fake that led to Derek Kunkle

Neshaminy 49, Pennridge 15

Neshaminy..... 6 8 21 7 - 49
Pennridge..... 0 15 0 0 - 15

SCORING SUMMARY

N — Stemme 39 run (kick failed)
P — Jefferson 3 pass from Herrmann (Kunkle kick)
N — Ulmer 74 run (Carrezola pass from Kinney)
P — Stephenson 28 pass from Herrmann (Stephenson pass from Kunkle)
N — Stemme 1 run (Capanna pass from Kinney)
N — Ulmer 30 run (kick failed)
N — Capanna 18 run (Jeffries kick)
N — Renson 66 punt return (Jeffries kick)
N — Arnold 5 run (Jeffries kick)

TEAM STATISTICS

	Neshaminy	Pennridge
First Downs	17	16
Yards Pushing	332	122
Yards Passing	56	130
Total Offense	388	252
Comp. Passes Int	5-6-1	10-28-4

Fumbles lost	0-0	1-0
Penalties-yards	5-35	7-50
Punts-Avg.	1-33.0	2-33.7
Sacked-Yds. Lost	0-0	1-2

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Neshaminy

Rushing: Ulmer 12-154, 2 TDs; Stemme 5-55, 2 TDs; Kinney 2-35; Leggett 5-32; Arnold 4-25, 1 TD; Capanna 1-18, 1 TD; Leonhauser 1-15; McCarney 2-(2).

Passing: Kinney 5-8-1, 56 yards.

Receiving: Capanna 3-28; Brebner 1-18; Ulmer 1-10.

Interceptions: Capanna 2; Martell, Knorr.

Pennridge

Rushing: Herrmann 17-70; Lynch 7-31; Patison 7-21.

Passing: Herrmann 10-27-4, 130 yards, 2 TDs; Kunkle 0-1.

Receiving: Stephenson 3-63, 1 TD; Jefferson 5-55, 1 TD; Knepp 1-6; Lynch 1-6.

Interceptions: Knepp

finding Stephenson in the back of the end zone for a 15-14 Rams lead.

"We had to settle down," Ulmer said. "We knew were the better team; we just had to settle down."

Oh, the Redskins did that all right. They recovered a fumble on the second-half kickoff and cashed that into points. They intercepted three Herrmann passes and turned those into 14 more points. And they got a 66-yard punt return for a TD from senior Gary Renson.

"Pennridge played marvelous," said Schmidt, "they really came after us."

Schmidt expects nothing less when he plays a Cuthbert-coached team. In 2002, a year after Neshaminy won the Class AAAA state title, Cuthbert was Central Bucks West's

head coach when he guided the Bucks to a stunning win over the Redskins.

Then, last year, Cuthbert led the Rams to a win, which, as Neshaminy was thumping the Rams in Friday's second half, led several Redskins to whoop, "This is payback," as they stalked the sidelines.

"It's frustrating," said Cuthbert. "You look at what we've done against North Penn and Neshaminy, two of the top 10 teams in the state, and there were times we played with them and times we were ahead, but it's been frustrating. We try to get better each week and we are, but we haven't gotten that first win. We need to get that win."

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