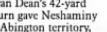


# Big third quarter helps Neshaminy advance

By TOM WARING

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MIDDLETOWN — When Abington kicked a field goal late in the first half Friday night to take a seven-point lead, Neshaminy wanted merely to answer with three points of its own.



But Bryan Dean's 42-yard kickoff return gave Neshaminy the ball in Abington territory, and the Redskins quickly moved down field. The Galloping Ghosts helped out by dropping what would have been a drive-killing interception. Then Corey Majors got the call.

"We wanted a field goal, but I aimed for a touchdown and got it," said Majors, a junior running back/inside linebacker.

The 10-yard touchdown run by Majors with 22 seconds to go in the second quarter helped the Redskins go into halftime tied and gave them the momentum to score two more TDs in the third quarter to pull away for a 24-17 victory in a District One Class AAAA first-round playoff game at Harry E. Franks Stadium.

Besides avenging a regular-season loss to the Ghosts, eighth-seeded Neshaminy advanced to a quarterfinal matchup next week against top-seeded North Penn.

"We were much better prepared this time. We had a good week of practice, and it helped that we knew what to expect," Majors said. "We're a second-half team, and we stepped up our game."

Ninth-seeded Abington (7-3) took an early lead on a blocked punt, recovery and short run for a touchdown. Neshaminy (9-2) made it 7-3 at the end of the first quarter on Ricky Domico's 26-yard field goal.

The TD run by Majors, just after the near interception, made it 10-10.

"We'll take it," said Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt. "It was big. Corey made a great run."

After the teams emerged from the halftime break, the Redskins owned the third quarter. They put together a 14-play, 63-yard drive that ended when Charlie Marterella found Rick Brebner for an 11-yard touchdown pass. Before the quarter was over, Dean ran for a 10-yard touchdown to make it 24-10.

An Abington touchdown closed Neshaminy's lead to 24-17 with 7:49 remaining, but there were still cheers from Redskins fans, as the public address announcer delivered the news that rival Pennsbury had been upset.

Abington gained possession again at its 20-yard line with 2:23 remaining, but sacks by Kevin Magee and Shane Quinn helped keep the Ghosts from reaching the end zone for the tying score.

Overall, Neshaminy's defense contained Abington's explosive trio of quarterback Sam Kind, running back Julien Ireland and wide receiver Anthony Hensley.

"We knew they were a good team, but we were ready for the run," said junior defensive tackle Ryan Katona, who helped the Redskins hold Ireland to 32 yards on 14 carries.

Offensively, Neshaminy dominated in time of possession, running 58 plays to Abington's 36.

"Our offense chewed the clock up," Schmidt said.

"Keeping Sam off the field was part of the plan."

Abington coach Tim Sorber was classy afterward, heading to the Neshaminy post-game huddle to wish the team luck against North Penn.

Sorber said his team's speed game was hurt on a rainy, windy night and a muddy field, but credited Neshaminy with forcing his offense to start most drives with bad field position.

"It was a hard-fought game by two very good football teams," said Sorber, whose team faces Cheltenham on Thanksgiving. "They did a nice job of keeping the ball out of our hands. Their offensive line does a nice job. Neshaminy was getting three, four yards and was patient with it."

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