

Two Bucks titans are on a collision course

The No. 5 Redskins and the No. 8 Falcons, both tough rushing teams, tangle at 7 tonight.

You can bill this one as the "Bucks County Brawl."

Neshaminy (ranked No. 5 in Southeast Pennsylvania by *The Inquirer*) and Pennsbury (ranked No. 8), both rugged and hard-hitting squads with run-oriented offenses, will fight it out for the Suburban One League National Conference championship. Game time is 7 tonight, at Falcon Field.

Both teams are 8-1 overall and have 5-1 conference records.

The winner will also likely nail down the No. 2 spot in the upcoming PIAA District 1 Class AAAA playoff tournament. The loser could drop to as low as No. 8 in the rankings.

Coaches. For Neshaminy, Mark Schmidt is 108-52 in 15 seasons. In eight seasons at Pennsbury, Galen Snyder is 54-23.

History. The series is tied at 35-35-7. The Neshaminy Redskins have won two straight meetings and seven of the last 10. In 2006, the Pennsbury Falcons, en route to a 10-3 record and the Class AAAA state semifinals, romped, 33-0.

Last year. With the help of three turnovers, host Neshaminy scored all of its points in the second quarter, including three field goals, and triumphed, 16-13, to clinch the National Conference title.

By the Numbers

Here are some interesting numbers for Pennsbury and Neshaminy:

■ **Pennsbury** has scored more than 40 points four times this year.

■ **Neshaminy** scored 42 points in wins over Council Rock South and Germantown.

■ The 27 points that **Pennsbury** allowed last week in a loss to Abington was a season high.

■ Opponents have reached double digits only four times in nine games against **Neshaminy**.

■ Through nine games this season, the **Pennsbury** defense has allowed an average of 7.4 points a game.

■ **Neshaminy** is outscoring opponents by an average of 18 points a game.

■ **Pennsbury** is outscoring opponents by an average of 26 points a game.

—Chris Melchiorre

Trickery. Pennsbury's wing-T attack is spurred by fullback Dante Devine, a 1,000-yard rusher with 16 rushing touchdowns, quarterback Brandon Pepper and halfback Joe Brown.

Of Devine, Schmidt said, "He's a real good athlete, a tough kid, has an edge to him. He's not afraid to be physical."

Workhorse. Neshaminy's catalyst is 5-foot-7, 166-pound tailback Bryan Dean, who rushed for 135 yards and a pair of scores in last week's 34-7 romp over visiting Bensalem.

Seeking redemption. The Falcons need to rebound from a 27-13 upset loss at Abington. After two quick scores, they surrendered 27 unanswered points.

Rotation. Schmidt continues to rotate senior Brian Titus and junior Charlie Marterella at QB. If one shows a hot hand early on, he may stick with that signal-caller.

Stout group. Pennsbury's defense has posted three shut-outs. Excluding the loss to Abington, the unit has allowed only 4.4 points per game.

Likewise solid. With consistent progress in the last five weeks, Neshaminy's defense has yielded 10.6 points per outing. Its stalwarts include end Kevin Magee, tackle Ryan Katona, and linebackers Steve Stemme and Corey Majors.

Analysis. For Neshaminy, it's important to get off to a quick start and not be forced to play catch-up. Pennsbury has to do a better job at defending against the pass. Expect another close battle, with a late turnover being the difference.

Pick: Pennsbury, 20-16.

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