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'Crazylegs' Heath makes successful debut for Hawks

After being a fill-in linebacker most of last season, St. Joseph's Prep senior Jeff Heath gladly takes on any extra responsibilities given him, as he did Saturday night in a nonleague contest against Bishop McDevitt.

In a 35-14 victory at Cheltenham, Heath, an aggressive performer and fixture at outside linebacker, was used as a ballcarrier — in addition to his usual role as a rugged blocker — for the first time. He rushed nine times for a team-best 70 yards and a second-quarter touchdown.

"I was real excited," the 18-year-old said. "Coach [Gabe] Infante threw me in there and I said to myself, 'Hey, here's your shot. Do something with it.'"

Rick O'Brien

The 6-foot-1, 185-pound Heath, lining up at halfback and following fullback Peter Siki's lead block, plowed through the middle for a 4-yard score that put the visiting Hawks in front, 14-6, with a minute to go in the first half.

"Coach Wags [assistant John Wagner] calls me 'Crazylegs,'" he said. "I do run in a weird kind of way. My legs don't just go in a straight-ahead direction. I don't know why it is. People have always told me that."

The original "Crazylegs" was Hall of Famer Elroy Hirsch, who starred as a halfback at Wisconsin and in the NFL in the 1950s. Francis Powers of the Chicago Daily News wrote that Hirsch "ran like a demented duck. His crazy legs were gyrating in six different directions all at the same time."

Against the Lancers, Heath also made a big impact at outside linebacker. He notched five solo tackles, including a 10-yard sack of quarterback Martin Henry in the second quarter, and a hurry.

"I like rushing the quarterback," he said, "but I like defending in man-to-man coverage, staying on a receiver's hips, just as much."

Last season, playing behind then-freshman Jared Alwan, now at Camden Catholic, Heath saw limited playing time. "It was tough," he said. "I had expected to be a starter. There were some weeks I didn't know if I was going to be with the JV or varsity."



Neshaminy's Corey Majors (23) is stopped by Council Rock South's P.J. Gallo as the Redskins' Tyler Stabilito watches. Gallo had nine tackles, six solo, in the win.

MICHAEL S. WIRTZ / Staff Photographer

The Inquirer TOP 10

FOOTBALL

| Team | Record |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 1. La Salle (1) | 6-1 |
| 2. Ridley (2) | 7-0 |
| 3. North Penn (3) | 6-1 |
| 4. Archbishop Wood (4) | 7-0 |
| 5. Cardinal O'Hara (6) | 7-0 |
| 6. Downingtown East (7) | 6-1 |
| 7. Council Rock S. (8) | 7-0 |
| 8. Neshaminy (5) | 6-1 |
| 9. Roman Catholic (9) | 5-2 |
| 10. West Catholic (10) | 5-2 |

Under consideration (listed alphabetically): Boyertown (7-0), Coatesville (5-2), George Washington (6-1), Strath Haven (6-1), Upper Moreland (6-1), West Chester Rustin (6-1).

—Rick O'Brien

In Week 4 this season against Archbishop Wood, Heath registered 12 tackles, with seven solos, in a 21-20 setback. "I had a slow start to the year, but I've progressed steadily since then," he said. "Coach Infante pulled me aside and said, 'Stay with it. We believe in you.' He never gave up on me, and that meant a lot."

Heath, of Newtown Square, is headed to Delaware on a partial lacrosse scholarship.

Last season, while earning first-team all-Catholic League South Division honors, he netted 42 goals and 15 assists for the Hawks.

Over the summer, he played for Duke's Lacrosse Club, which featured three fellow gridders: La Salle's Kevin Forster (headed to Maryland), Penn Charter's Joey Sankey (North Carolina), and Haverford School's Carl Walrath (Virginia).

Majors missed. In Friday's Suburban One League National Conference clash with Council Rock South, Neshaminy was without senior fullback/linebacker Corey Majors for the final 18 minutes.

Majors, who has committed to Villanova, rushed nine times for 32 yards. He suffered a bruised leg while making a 12-yard reception in the third quarter. The senior did not return in a 28-21 loss to the visiting Golden Hawks.

"It's nothing serious," he said. "I wanted to come back in, but the leg really tightened up. I tried to run on the sideline but really couldn't."

C.R. South-Neshaminy. C.R. South totaled 225 of its 272 rushing yards in the second half. ... In the final two minutes, Golden Hawks linebacker Hunter Shull (eight tackles) recorded two sacks, for a combined loss of 17 yards, and a hurry. ... C.R. South's other defensive standouts were end P.J. Gallo (nine tackles, six solos) and tackle Andrew Cohen (six, two). Safety Ryan Hickey (first-quarter in-

terception) and cornerback Anthony Alimenti each had five solo stops. ... For Neshaminy, held to 88 yards rushing on 34 attempts, wideout Dwight Williams had seven catches for 138 yards, including a 57-yard TD on a fly route to end the third quarter. At free safety, he made six tackles. ... The Redskins were led on defense by end Shane Quinn (eight tackles, three solos), and outside linebacker Tyler Masterson (seven, two).

Extra points. In McDevitt's loss to St. Joe's Prep, safety Matt Conroy made 10 of his game-high 13 tackles (nine solos) in the opening 16 minutes. ... In the second quarter, Lancers cornerback Gary Postell (18 carries for 86 yards, four solo stops) forced a fumble (recovered by linebacker Joe Polansky) with a crushing hit on Siki at the McDevitt 4. ... McDevitt's other defensive leaders were end Dominique Robinson (six tackles, four solos) and linebacker Darren Wright (five, four). ... The Prep's Mark Casale (13 carries for 57 yards) blocked a punt to set up a second-quarter score. ... Hawks QB Skyler Mornhinweg hit on 12 of 19 throws for 169 yards. ... Prep wideout/cornerback Paul McGann returned a punt 42 yards for a score, intercepted a pass in the end zone on the last play of the first half, and hauled in a 26-yard TD pass.

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