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Defense rises to the occasion

Neshaminy used planning and grit to contain C.B. South's vaunted offense on Friday.

Since he's good at crunching numbers, Steve Olenksi knew as well as anyone the challenge Neshaminy's defense was facing against Central Bucks South.

The high-octane Titans came in averaging 39.5 points, sophomore tailback Josh Adams was averaging 174.8 yards rushing, and senior quarterback John Pileggi was averaging 190.1 yards passing.

"You had to be impressed with what they were doing," said Olenksi, a senior outside linebacker who plans to major in finance or economics in college. "Most teams were struggling to slow them down."

With solid planning and ferocious tackling, Olenksi and Co. derailed C.B. South's formerly potent attack. And, with a 14-7 victory in Friday night's PIAA District 1 Class AAAA quarterfinals, the Redskins kept their season alive.

"We practiced real hard coming into the game," Olenksi said. "Our focus was on keeping [Adams] in check. We didn't want to let him get outside and break long gains."

Neshaminy held the Titans to a season-low seven points, limited the speedy Adams to 162 rushing yards and no touchdowns on 23 attempts, and gave up only 86 passing yards and one touchdown to the strong-armed Pileggi.

The 6-foot, 190-pound Olenksi, who sees spot duty at wide receiver, made a pair of second-half interceptions to help preserve the victory.

"In some coverages, I'll drop back and play strong safety," he said. "On the second pick, our line pressured [Pileggi] pretty good, the ball was overthrown, and it came right to me."

Neshaminy's linebacking corps also features Brian Toal, Tosh Thompson, and Denny Lord. Toal and Thompson are in the middle; Lord, like Olenksi, lines up outside.

"As a group, I think we've been steadily improving," said Olenksi, who has totaled 46 tackles in 12 games. "A lot of credit goes to the way our coaches have prepared us for our opponent."

The Redskins' defense is also spearheaded by ends Luke Curzeola and Alex McKeenzie, middle guard Alex Nicolas, safety Cole Creighton, and cornerbacks De-



Neshaminy's Steve Olenksi made a couple of key second-half interceptions to preserve the Redskins' win over Central Bucks South. Neshaminy's defense held the Titans to a season-low seven points. **JESS GARDNER**

von Brown and Trokon Bues-mall.

Against C.B. South, 5-5, 160-pound tailback Nate Hall carried 37 times for a season-high 282 yards and two scores. His 19-yard, fourth-quarter TD burst was the difference.

Next for No. 13 seed Neshaminy (9-3) is a semifinal meeting Friday night at No. 9 Coatesville (10-2).

"We've seen a little bit of them on film," said Olenksi, a captain and second-year starter. "They run a spread offense similar to C.B. South's. They have some talented skill-position guys."

Olenksi also performs well in the classroom. He has a 4.1 grade-point average on a weighted scale, is ranked 45th in a senior class of about 700, and takes one advanced-placement class and three honors courses.

"My goal right now is to be a financial adviser," said the Feasterville resident, who has applied to Penn and Villanova, among others.

Little rest. Before playing in a District 1 Class AAAA semifinal Saturday afternoon at Poppy Yoder Field, No. 7 Spring-Ford (11-1) and No. 3 Penridge (11-1) will play Thanksgiving games.

Spring-Ford will take on Pioneer Athletic Conference rival Phoenixville on Thanksgiving Eve; Penridge, looking to claim an outright Suburban One League Continental Conference title, will face Quakertown on Thanksgiving.

"Playing on Wednesday, we have the second-worst case scenario," Spring-Ford coach Chad Brubaker said. "Playing on Thursday, Penridge has the worst-case scenario."

Brubaker said he was trying to move the 7 p.m. start against Phoenixville up an hour.

Extra points. Because Bristol

The Inquirer TOP 10

FOOTBALL

Team	Record
Last week's rankings in parentheses	
1. La Salle (1)	11-1
2. St. Joseph's Prep (2)	9-1
3. Penridge (3)	11-1
4. Coatesville (5)	10-2
5. Archbishop Wood (6)	10-2
6. Imhotep Charter (9)	12-0
7. Downingtown East (8)	10-1
8. Pennsbury (10)	9-3
9. Episcopal Acad. (NR)	10-0
10. Neshaminy (NR)	9-3

Under consideration (listed alphabetically): Central Bucks South (10-2), Interboro (10-2), Pottsgrove (11-1), Ridley (11-1), Spring-Ford (11-1), West Chester Henderson (9-3).

— Rick O'Brien

earned a spot in the Class A state playoffs, the Warriors will not play Bucks County neighbor Morrisville on Thanksgiving, Bristol's first-year coach, Leo Plenski, said the game could be postponed to a later date. ... Imhotep Charter linebacker Brandon Chatman, a 6-2, 220-pound senior, is hearing from Colonial Athletic Association and Mid-American Conference schools.

West Catholic's 40-0 loss to Imhotep on Friday was the program's worst since a 47-0 shutout against Penn Wood in 2001. ... In Saturday's 37-20 loss to La Salle, Frankford totaled 247 of its 342 yards in the second half. The Explorers mostly went with their reserves after the break. ... Because of injuries, La Salle held out running back Jared Herrmann, and Ryan Coomahan, cornerback Chris Rocco, and lineman David Geppert. Herrmann and Coomahan are expected back for a Dec. 1 state quarterfinal against the Parkland-Delaware Valley winner.

Football Playoffs

FRIDAY
PIAA DISTRICT 1 CLASS AAAA SEMIFINAL
No. 12 Neshaminy at No. 9 Coatesville, 7 p.m.
SATURDAY
No. 4 West Chester Henderson vs. No. 5 Interboro, at Pottsgrove, 10 a.m.

PIAA DISTRICT 1 CLASS AAAA SEMIFINAL
No. 3 Spring-Ford at No. 11 Ridley, 7 p.m.
PIAA CLASS A FIRST ROUND
Williams Valley vs. Bristol, at Seawater, 1 p.m.

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