

# Neshaminy triumphs to keep hopes alive

The 24-7 victory over Pennsbury kept the Redskins in the Class AAAA playoff picture.

By Evan Burgos  
FOR THE INQUIRER

With its postseason football hopes in jeopardy, Neshaminy won its biggest game of the year Friday night.

The Redskins, their playoff existence on the line, went in to Pennsbury and earned a tough 24-7 victory in the teams' Suburban One National Conference regular-season finale at Falcon Field.

Neshaminy (7-3 overall, 4-3 league) entered the game on the District 1 Class AAAA playoff bubble, sitting at No. 17 in power-point standings, one spot out of the 16-team field.

The win over the No. 11 Falcons should give Neshaminy one of the final playoff spots, enabling the Redskins to avoid missing the postseason for the first time since 2006.

Quarterback Joe Bianchino's stellar play spurred the Redskins. He was 9-for-11 passing for 100 yards and three touchdowns. At times he picked up blitzes, hitting receivers for quick completions, and he also went downfield helping to block.

"Coming out, knowing the possibility that if I didn't play well this could be my last game, I just wanted to go out and do my job," Bianchino said. "It's a big rivalry game. We needed it to make the playoffs. I used all that for motivation."

Neshaminy pushed its winning streak to three after falling to Council Rock North and South in consecutive weeks in early October.

No win was more crucial than this one against Pennsbury (7-3, 5-2), which with the loss (and pending outcomes of Abington and C.R. South's games) falls out of contention for a share of the Suburban One National title.

"We really kind of stumbled in the middle of the season," Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt said. "... As a group, the last three games, we've just gotten better each



DAVID SWANSON / Staff Photographer

Neshaminy quarterback Joe Bianchino sparked his team's win over Pennsbury with three touchdown passes.

game. ... It's the best game we've played all year."

Bianchino threw first-half touchdowns to tight end Tadas Karusevicius, an 8-yarder in the first quarter, and to Bobby Martarella, a 5-yarder in the second. Those scores and Nicholas Tucci's 28-yard field goal right before the half gave the Redskins a 17-0 lead at intermission.

Pennsbury put up its only score of the game midway through the third quarter on QB Bruce Campbell's 2-yard TD run. Pennsbury was gaining momentum, but a 10-play drive to the Neshaminy 33 ended with a turnover on downs as the clock switched to the fourth quarter, effectively killing any chance of a comeback.

"There's a lot that gets you down about it," Pennsbury coach Galen Snyder said.

Neshaminy then ran out the clock, icing the game with a 10-play, 68-yard, clock-eating drive midway through the

fourth. Facing fourth-and-9 from the 32, Bianchino lofted a soft fade to receiver Justin Andrews, who hauled in the touchdown for a 24-7 lead.

"Solid. He made some real nice plays. He was heady," Schmidt said of his quarterback.

Neshaminy's Sean Ulmer collected 102 yards on 27 carries. Fullback Daquan Mack led the Falcons with 66 yards on 11 carries.

J.J. Denman, Pennsbury's Wisconsin-bound lineman, hobbled off the field late in the fourth quarter with an apparent right-leg injury.

The win gives Neshaminy a 37-36-11 edge in the Bucks County Brawl series.

|           |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----------|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| Neshaminy | 7 | 10 | 0 | 7 | - | 24 |
| Pennsbury | 0 | 0  | 7 | 0 | - | 0  |

N: Karusevicius 8 pass from Bianchino (Tucci kick)

N: Martarella 5 pass from Bianchino (Tucci kick)

N: FG Tucci 28

P: Campbell 2 run (Kiszwicz kick)

N: Andrews 32 pass from Bianchino (Tucci kick)

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**Bobby Martarella** of Neshaminy stretches to make a reception in the second quarter.