

Neshaminy seeking new football coach

By Tim Panaccio
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Add the Neshaminy job to the list of area high school football openings.

John Chaump, who took the Redskins to the first-ever state playoffs in 1988, was fired last Thursday.

"I just felt it was time to make a change in direction," Neshaminy athletic director Ray Kelly said.

Neshaminy has not been above .500 in Suburban One since 1988, when it went 8-0 in the league and 11-1 overall, and won just four league games the past two seasons.

This year's Redskins finished 2-7 in the league and 4-7 overall. It was Chaump's worst season since 1980, when he went 2-8 at Neshaminy-Maple Point, where he coached from 1975-80.

The two schools were merged in 1983 with Dick Bedesem becoming head coach of the merged Neshaminy in Langhorne. When Bedesem took over at Del Val College in 1987, Chaump got Bedesem's job. Chaump's five-year record at Neshaminy was 36-20-0.

Chaump said he and the teachers union likely won't fight the decision because a battle could drag on for months.

"By that time, there would be another coach and the team would be caught in the middle, and it will be a giant mess," said Chaump, who had to replace seven assistant coaches during the past three seasons.

Chaump said his inability to maintain a consistent staff was a factor in his dismissal.

Bill Saybolt is among the candidates to replace Chaump. He quit his coaching job at William Tennent in November because he couldn't get a chemistry teaching job there.

Central Bucks East is also seeking a football coach.

One versus two. The Feb. 15 match between the two top-rated teams in Southeastern Pennsylvania, No. 1 Cardinal O'Hara and No. 2 Downingtown, is one of the most anticipated girls' basketball games in recent memory.

The two athletic directors, Nick Lattari at O'Hara and Bob Boyer at Downingtown, said they've been fielding questions about tickets for several weeks.

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"I haven't even alloted all the tickets yet, but an awful lot of people have been asking about them," said Lattari, whose 2,500-seat gym will be the site of the 2:30 p.m. game. "I'm just getting them ready now and I guess I can start selling them."

Despite the anticipation, Lattari said ticket prices would remain the same, \$4 for adults and \$2 for students.

New site. Next Friday, two Catholic League Southern Division boys' basketball games will be played at St. Joseph's University's Alumni Fieldhouse. West Catholic and Monsignor Bonner will tip off at 7 p.m., and Cardinal O'Hara and Roman Catholic will meet at 8:30. The matchups will be repeated in another special doubleheader on Feb. 28 at St. Joe's.

Arrangements for the doubleheaders were completed this week, and ticket prices for the two games will be \$4 for adults and \$3 for students, a dollar more than the usual admission for a single league game in a high school gym.

Super players. Maintaining a tradition that began with the first Super Bowl in 1967, seven players in Super Bowl XXVI are alumni of the Big 33 game, Pennsylvania's top summer high school all-star game.

The Buffalo Bills have five Big 33 alumni, including quarterback Jim Kelly and backup Frank Reich (Cedar Crest High in Lebanon). Kelly was the West's quarterback in a 28-6 loss to the East in 1978.

Other Bills who played in the Big 33 are free safety Mark Kelso and offensive linemen Mitch Frerotte and Jim Ritcher. Two Washington Redskins players, linebacker Matt Millen (Whitehall) and offensive guard Russ Grimm, also are Big 33 alumni.

Every Super Bowl has featured at least one former Big 33 player, beginning with former Green Bay Packers defensive back Herb Adderley, who played in Super Bowl I and II.

Inquirer staff writers Frank Fitzpatrick and Gwen Knapp and the Associated Press contributed to this article.