



Bus Saidt

The Smoke Billows In Schoolboy War

FAIRLESS HILLS — The old coach has a nose for such things. Erle Baugher went back to cigarettes even before the opening kickoff. "This is gonna be one of the biggest wars you ever saw," said the longtime Pennsbury football coach as he settled nervously in his press box seat and nudged one of the white weeds from the crumpled pack. "I just have that feeling. I haven't had a smoke in five months, but I need 'em today. As great as these two teams are, I might need more than cigarettes before this thing's over."

NFL Official Impressed

"I was thinking about going down to watch Columbia and Penn," said Art McNally, the National Football League's supervisor of officials for the National Conference. "But I heard so much about these kids I came over here. That had to be one of the best football games I've seen in years. Boy oh boy, do these kids hit." You can talk all you want about schoolboy football in Texas, Ohio and western Pennsylvania. Nobody, but nobody, plays it better year in and year out than these Lower Bucks County schools with their fanatical tradition for high-calibre talent and quality coaching in superbly organized programs. As the memorable game ended, following Ron Dundala's historic hit which separated the Redskins' great runner-receiver Joe Sroba from the football and Neshaminy from a shot at an amazing, comeback victory, the "new" coach, Chuck Kane, rushed across the field to shake hands with his retiring opponent, Jack Swartz. "There's a great sight," Baugher said. "A brilliant, new coach meeting a brilliant, retiring coach."

The 'New Wrinkles'

Then there was the specific, supergame preparation and what Chuck Kane likes to call, "our new wrinkles." "All the sweat and the strain and the planning and they were all worth it," the beaming Kane said in the tumult and torrent of the Falcons' aerie. "You can't do these things in a couple of days. We put all these things in our offense when we were up at camp. "Then we put them away, but week by week we drove from them. When it came time for the big one, we studied our computer reports films and all our scouting records and decided thing we wanted to show for the first time. "Remember, the kids had them and we worked on them from time to time, but before today we never put them into our games. The point is the kids were ready." So there was Dale Delise sprinting 73 yards for a touchdown on Pennsbury's first offensive play. That set the tone for the day. "We showed the formation before but never the motion," Kane said. "We got the wedge in, their linebacker cleared out and Dale was gone. I figured it would work, but not that good." "The quarterback sneaks on short-yardage situations were new, and shifting our backs where we stacked three deep and shifted. And we just stuck in that jump pass on which Gary Kutsmeda hit Terry Hoffman for the TD right at the end of the first half." New wrinkles and talented, dedicated performances. John Giordano's talented toe which actually booted the winning points. The Falcons' lines, both of them, doing the work in the trenches. Kids like Tim Miller, Warren Knop, John Lerch, Bobby Bowden and Dundala hitting, hitting, hitting. "I can feel that banging all the way up here," Baugher said from the comfort of the press box. And every time Pennsbury wrapped it up, Neshaminy smashed back closer and closer. The Redskins did everything but steal it away. "We found out a lot of things today," Baugher said, "and very best. So was the total scene. So true, and so did the whole suburban superbowl. This was schoolboy football, vintage Americana, at its very best. So was the total scene



Chuck Kane... down to the knuckles

Falcons Win Over Skins, 23-21 To Wrap Up Perfect Season



Staff Photos By Herman Loescher

OVER THE TOP — Neshaminy's Len Barker (40) hurdles the Pennsbury line before being brought down by Falcon defender Mike Caine (76), while Pennsbury's Tim Miller (70) and John Lerch (61) move in to help on the tackle.

Defense Makes The Big Play Ron's Tackle Turned The Tide

By DON WILNO Staff Writer

FAIRLESS HILLS — Ron Dundala was waiting and watching. He knew the defensive unit had to produce the biggest play of the season or it might end the dream of a perfect year.

The Pennsbury High School linebacker made his move when he saw Neshaminy quarterback Bob Grupp fall back into the pocket and look for his favorite receiver, Joe Sroba.

"I saw someone coming across," explained Dundala in the happy Pennsbury dressing room after the Falcons captured the Lower Bucks County League Section One and Big Seven Conference championships with a 23-21 thriller over Neshaminy.

'Just Hit Him'

"I looked at Grupp, I saw the pass and just hit him," said Dundala, who jarred the football loose from Sroba on the 17 yard line to halt a Neshaminy drive with 39 seconds remaining in the game. "I just hit him."

Teammate John Lerch recovered the fumble to insure the perfect season for coach Chuck Kane, the first perfect season in the history of Pennsbury football.

"I had a feeling we could do it," said Dundala, surrounded by happy soda-throwing, champagne-tossing teammates. "This is just great. It was a team effort and a great job."

'Saw Ronnie Hit Him'

Lerch, standing a few feet away, was smiling from ear-to-ear. "I saw Ronnie hit him," said Lerch, who intercepted a Grupp pass on the 12 yard line earlier in the fourth quarter to halt another Neshaminy scoring drive.

"I saw the ball pop out of his hands. All I wanted to do was jump on it."

"The defense was really hitting," explained Kane, dripping from a toss in the showers by his players. "They were creating mistakes with the big hits."

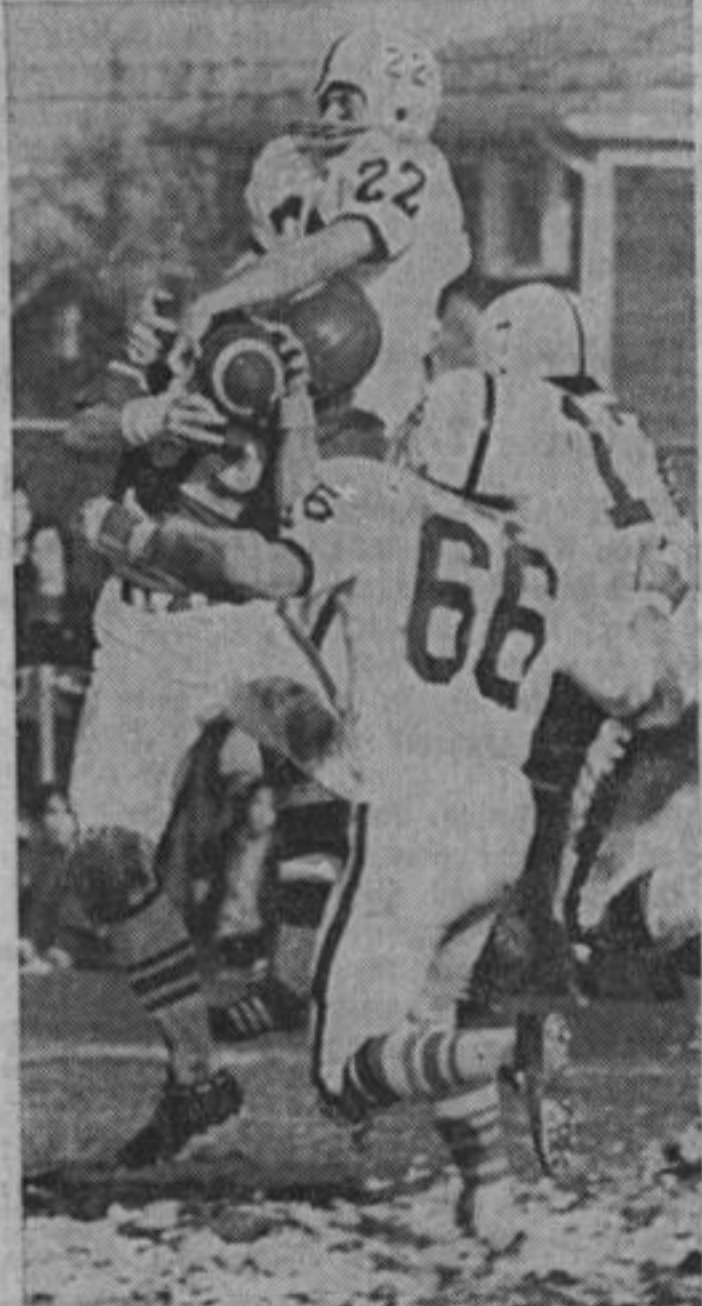
"We needed the big play right there," admitted Kane. "All I could think of is that they (Neshaminy) were charmed, as usual." Kane was obviously making reference to Neshaminy's comeback of a year ago which saw the Falcons leading 10-0 only to lose the game, 21-17.

Miller Defensive Key

The one player responsible for keeping the defense fired-up was Tim Miller, obviously the defensive star of the game. Miller called the game "the most important" in his career. "He had a great game," said Kane, "he gets himself so psyched up for the game that he just played the best he knows how. He's a great one."



DAZZLING DALE — Pennsbury's speedy Dale Delise sets sail on 23-yard scamper in third quarter.



SURROUNDED — Neshaminy's Joe Sroba (32) battles defenders to catch a big fourth quarter pass.

The defense was extra sharp yesterday. The deep secondary stymied the Neshaminy offense on several key situations. John Asma, Bobby Bowden and Mike Curley did a great job for the Falcons.

Asma made a big play tossing Sroba in the early moments of the third quarter. Sroba was in the clear along the right sideline and heading for the goal line only to have Asma knock the ball out of harm's way at the last split second.

Asma, Bowden and Curley combined efforts to stop another Grupp-to-Sroba pass minutes later, which would have given the Redskins the ball on the 12 yard line with Pennsbury holding a 17-advantage.

"There isn't much you can say about the way they've been playing all year," said Kane.

That's the way the entire Pennsbury High School team has been playing all year. And the big victory yesterday says it all.

But don't discount the brilliant effort by Neshaminy. Coach Jack Swartz's club gave it its best. And a tribute to the team was Sroba and Ben Watson, both seniors, who visited the Pennsbury dressing room after the game, and after the team buses had departed for home.

STATISTICS

Table with columns for NESH and PENN, rows for Rushing, Passing, Punting, Fumbles, Penalties, and Individual Leaders.

By GEORGE O'GORMAN Staff Writer

FAIRLESS HILLS — Unbeaten Pennsbury High completed its greatest football season ever yesterday afternoon outlasting arch-rival Neshaminy, 23-21, before 13,000 fans at Falcon Field, and in the process captured the coveted Big Seven and Lower Bucks Section One League titles and the number one ranking in the Delaware Valley.

Pennsbury's 11th win of the season was a total team effort as the Falcons got superb performances from sensational running back Dale Delise, placekicker John Giordano, quarterback Gary Kutsmeda and defensive standouts Tim Miller, Ron Dundala, John Lerch and Bob Bowden. In the end it was the strong Pennsbury defense that saved the day, forcing a Neshaminy fumble when the Redskins were driving for the apparent winning points in the final minute.

Sad Swan Song

The heartbreaking defeat for Neshaminy (9-2) spoiled the final coaching appearance of Jack Swartz, who ended his five year reign with a 33-10-1 record. Swartz had announced earlier this year that he would retire after the current season.

Sensational Joe Sroba, runningmate Mark (Muggsy) Donahue, quarterback Bob Grupp and defensive standout Mark Strawbridge very nearly sent Swartz out a winner with outstanding performances. But it was Sroba's crucial fumble with 39 seconds left that ruined Neshaminy's hopes for a comeback win. Dundala hit Sroba with a jarring tackle at the 13 after the Neshaminy back had caught a one yard pass from Grupp. Lerch recovered the ball and Pennsbury proceeded to run out the clock for the win.

"We were ready to go for the field goal until that fumble," Swartz said later. "The Redskins had moved the ball to the 16 in the final two minutes and Grupp had completed three short passes over the middle before Sroba's fumble on the third down play. "It's a heckya way to go out, but I can't be mad at our kids. They never gave up," Swartz said.

Record 6th FG

His counterpart Delise sparked Pennsbury's running attack with 141 yards and two touchdowns in 23 carries. He scored the eventual winning touchdown on a two yard run in the final period. But the actual winning margin was provided by Falcon placekicker Giordano, who booted a 25 yard field goal in the second period. It was Giordano's sixth field goal of the year, a new Bucks record, breaking the old mark held by Pennsbury's Erle (Duke) Baugher Jr.

Pennsbury, which beat Neshaminy for the sixth time in the last seven years, had to survive fourth period surge by the Redskins, highlighted by Donahue's dazzling 85 yard kickoff return midway through the period.

Pennsbury had struck for its first touchdown on the opening play of the game when Delise took a pitchout and cut inside key blocks by Jeff Fitz-Maurice and Bill Porter and darted 73 yards for a touchdown.

"That's the first time we



END OF LINE — Neshaminy's Bart Smith (23) and Mark Strawbridge combine to bring down Pennsbury's Dale Delise in second period action.

had run that play this year," Delise said later. "I haven't run any motion plays where I take a pitchout before, but we tried some new things today. Once I saw the opening I knew I was going to score."

Coach Chuck Kane's club came back with its best offensive drive of the game moments later, marching from the 36 to the eight in 17 plays before Giordano booted his decisive field goal. The drive consumed eight minutes of the first period.

Neshaminy got its first score midway through the second period when Grupp teamed with Sroba on a 63 yard pass play. Sroba caught the ball at the 45 and outraced three Falcons to score. Pennsbury took a 17-7 lead at halftime after Kutsmeda hit Terry Hoffman with a seven yard touchdown pass. It was a disputed TD since Hoffman fumbled the ball after falling into the endzone, but the officials had already signaled a score.

Neshaminy started its comeback in the third period when it marched 56 yards in 12 plays, with Grupp capping the drive as he dashed for the corner of the endzone to score from five yards away. It cut Pennsbury's lead to 17-14.

Key Recovery

But early in the fourth period Grupp was tackled while passing and fumbled the ball at the 45. Warren Knop recovered for Pennsbury and it set the stage for the final Falcon score. Delise got that TD on his two-yard run with 6:42 left to complete a seven play, 55 yard drive. Delise carried six times in the drive, setting up the TD with a brilliant 23 yard run to the four.

Donahue however kept the pressure on Pennsbury with his 85 yard kickoff return on the ensuing play. The Neshaminy defense held Pennsbury and the Redskins got a big break when Mike Curley's fourth down punt went only 14 yards. Grupp couldn't find his receivers on the next two plays, but a gamble on a fourth and 14 situation worked, when fullback Len Barker hit Sroba with a 28 yard pass to the 16.

It set the stage for the disastrous fumble and the big defensive play by Dundala and Lerch.