

# Staff picks NL to win

From the sports staff which predicted victories for Thomas Dewey, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Custer comes a prognostication on tonight's big playoff game:

**Mike Ferretti:** The chance to see Neshaminy Langhorne's Jim Riley and Bensalem's John Kreider on the same field, doing what they do best is worth the price of admission alone. It will keep the game low-scoring. Neshaminy Langhorne, 13-10.

**Drew McQuade:** Strictly a hunch by someone who doesn't know what he's talking about. Bensalem, 14-13.

**Stacy Briggs:** It's asking a great deal of high school football players to play a game four or five days after they last played. A sky-high John Kreider will be difficult to handle but Bensalem will miss Al Creamer. Neshaminy Langhorne's defense and the kicking game of both teams will be the story. Neshaminy Langhorne, 26-10.

**Mike Tasker:** The Redskins will improve on its Oct. 1 score of 42-14 over Bensalem. It will be no contest after one quarter. Neshaminy Langhorne, 49-0.

**Dave Clark:** The formula for a Bensalem victory will be "D-44." The Owls have a good defensive unit, which will have to be at its best against the Redskins. Eric Price (44) will have to give that little extra to pull off a close decision. Bensalem, 10-6.

**Joe Puchello:** Neshaminy Langhorne seems to be on the move lately and it looks like an offensive showcase for some Redskin offensive talent (Tom Calkins and Bruce Cordelli). Neshaminy Langhorne, 28-7.

**Steve Gordon:** Since its mid-season loss to neighboring Neshaminy Maple Point, the Neshaminy Langhorne offense has followed in the footsteps of the highly regarded St. Louis Cardinal attack. While Bensalem has not been a slouch, Langhorne has momentum and should take the title and prove the first win over Bensalem was no fluke. Neshaminy Langhorne, 28-19.

**Dick Amtmann:** Neshaminy Langhorne is back on top. Shades of the (John) Peterkuskie days. Neshaminy Langhorne, 20-7.

**Doug Kepple:** Bensalem looks for a split against the Redskins. Bensalem, 20-14.

**Gene Morris:** Neshaminy Langhorne will be able to stop Eric Price, but the Owls will have their hands full with Tom Calkins. Neshaminy Langhorne, 17-7.

**Paul Davenport:** Neshaminy Langhorne already proved what it's got in the first game against Bensalem. Neshaminy Langhorne, 33-14.

**Wayne Fish:** Defense does it in the rain. Neshaminy Langhorne, 13-7.

**Ray DiLliso:** It's been a long time for the Redskins. Neshaminy Langhorne, 21-7.

## Now, for the expert opinions

On the basis of scores against common opponents, Bensalem Township rates an edge in tonight's Lower Bucks County League football playoff game with Neshaminy Langhorne.

The Owls ran up a 74-17 point edge against Delhaas, Council Rock, Neshaminy Maple Point, Woodrow Wilson and Pennsbury, for a "power" ratio of .802.

The Redskins scored 87 points against the same teams, while yielding 38 for a .695 quotient.

That, however, does not include Neshaminy Langhorne's 42-14 victory over Bensalem.

Lower Bucks County League coaches aren't playing the numbers game. They favor Neshaminy Langhorne in tonight's battle at Henry C. Morgan Field in Bristol Township.

John Chaump, Neshaminy Maple Point (lost to Bensalem, 14-7; defeated Neshaminy Langhorne, 7-0): "I think Langhorne is going to win. Neshaminy beat Bensalem soundly the first time and that should be in the backs of their minds. Neshaminy got stronger as the season went on. If they play the way they did against Pennsbury last Friday, I don't see how they can lose. When we beat Neshaminy, we took away their running game. But I think Neshaminy is going to attack with their offense and I don't see how Bensalem can defend against Neshaminy's sweep."

Chuck Kane, Pennsbury (lost to Bensalem, 10-3; lost to Neshaminy Langhorne, 20-7): "Having played both teams, I felt we moved the ball better against Bensalem. So I'll go for Neshaminy by the score of 28-7."

Walt Snyder, Council Rock (lost to Bensalem, 13-0; lost to Neshaminy Langhorne, 14-9): "Neshaminy Langhorne has the advantage of an extra day's rest and has beaten Bensalem in a previous game. If Calkins (Tom) is healthy, Neshaminy will win, 14-13."

(Woodrow Wilson's Ed Neumann and Delhaas' Ron Cardinal were not available for comment).

## LSU cagers defeat Soviets

BATON ROUGE, La. (UPI) — Sophomore Jordy Hultberg rimmed a 25-foot jump shot with 1:17 remaining in double overtime and Ethan Martin added two free throws to give Louisiana State a 99-96 win over the Soviet national basketball team Tuesday night. Hultberg's jumper put LSU ahead 97-96.

Soviet forward Mikhail Korkia, the game's leading scorer with 26 points, forced the second overtime when he took an in-bounds pass under the board and pumped in two points at the buzzer for an 89-89 tie.

Three Soviets fouled out in the aggressive match, including 7-foot-4 center Vladimir Tkachenko, the second-highest scorer with 23 points.

High scorer for LSU was Willie Sims with 21 points, followed by Kenny Higgins and Hultberg with 17 points each.



Bob Dietz

By Gene Morris  
Courier Times Sports Writer

It all happens tonight at Henry C. Morgan Stadium. Bensalem and Neshaminy Langhorne will do battle to determine the rightful possessor of the Lower Bucks County League crown.

These two teams are fairly evenly matched, as both are blessed with some outstanding offensive threats. For Bensalem, quarterback Bob Dietz is a threat either running or passing. Langhorne's Bruce Cordelli owns similar skills.

Elsewhere in the backfield, Bensalem's Eric Price and Langhorne's Tom Calkins are nothing short of sensational, and will put severe pressure on the opposing team's defense.

The possibility exists that all these potent forces could neutralize each other, thus placing the scoring burden somewhere else. Therefore, the kicking game could play a major factor in deciding this clash.

Baun ready  
What goes through a field goal kicker's mind as his team approaches three-point territory? "Along the sidelines, I watch and think a lot about the game," said Neshaminy Langhorne's Dave Baun. "I do get a little nervous when we get into field goal position."

Bensalem's Rich Fleming feels some of the tenseness, also. "I'm always thinking about us scoring," said the 5-7 junior. "I'm nervous only when a big kick comes up. I was a little nervous when the tie-breaker against Neshaminy Maple Point was coming up."

## Burly sorry he hurt Fran

CINCINNATI (UPI) — Cincinnati Bengal defensive end Gary Burley has sent a formal apology to Minnesota Viking quarterback Fran Tarkenton for the play in which Tarkenton was injured, putting him out for the rest of the season.

Burley, an intense 6-3, 262-pound lineman, sacked the star quarterback on a third-quarter play last Sunday and Tarkenton's leg was broken. The Vikings beat the Bengals, 42-10.

Tarkenton said of Burley's tackle, "It wasn't a dirty play." Nonetheless, Burley sent the apology which follows:

"Dear Fran,  
"My first season in the NFL, I was injured and out for the season. In your 17-year pro career, you have missed but one game. In my aggressive play Sunday, on a day in which you were superb, I injured you.

"Fran, I am truly sorry, for you have contributed so much to the National Football League. I wish you a speedy recovery and the best of luck in your future play.

Sincerely,  
Gary Burley, Cincinnati Bengals."

## Righetti ready to ruin Spinks

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (UPI) — Little-known but world-rated heavyweight Alfio Righetti thinks he will spoil Leon Spinks' plan for a February title shot at Muhammad Ali.

Righetti, an undefeated former traffic policeman from Rimini, Italy, who is ranked No. 9 by the World Boxing Council, meets the 1976 Olympic champion in a 10-rounder Friday night.

Promoter Bob Arum has assured the winner a crack at Ali's championship in the same ring as part of a triple-title bout card Feb. 15.

The 24-year-old Spinks, who is 5-0-1 with all victories by KO, is an overwhelming favorite to beat the 27-0 (14 KOs) Italian. But Righetti is confident as he wound down training Tuesday night.

"I will not change my style of boxing," the 220-pounder said through an interpreter. Righetti said he is a better fighter than countryman Lorenzo Zanon, who was knocked out in Las Vegas recently by Jerry Quarry and Ken Norton.

Trainer Elio Gagli said Righetti can score an upset "by using the brain. Spinks will always be coming to him but it's no problem for Alfio to go 10 rounds."

Advisor Mario Farri said Righetti will look better against Spinks than he has in sparring sessions.

"He gives more in the fight than in sparring," Farri said. "I hope Alfio makes a big surprise."

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# Bensalem, Langhorne to meet again

By Paul Davenport  
Courier Times Sports Writer

Nobody is taking the football playoff game between Bensalem Township High School and Neshaminy Langhorne lightly. They can't afford to.

Sure, the score was lopsided in Langhorne's favor in the regular league encounter between the Redskins and the Owls. But no one is expecting a replay of that game tonight at eight o'clock at Henry C. Morgan Stadium: when Bensalem and Langhorne square off for the Lower Bucks County Football League championship.

"We feel it's going to be a tough game. We think it will be a lot closer than that (first game)," Langhorne quarterback Bruce Cordelli said last night from his home. "In the first game, we forced some mistakes on them and they made some mistakes, and we jumped to a 28-0 lead at the half. I'm sure they're not going to commit the same mistakes again."

Langhorne is expecting a more poised Bensalem club this time around, Cordelli said. Some of the Redskins were on hand to watch the Owls down Neshaminy Maple Point on Saturday to force the playoff, and

Bensalem looked good. "They did have some letdowns, but they put the ball into the end zone when they had to," Cordelli said. Bensalem may have looked strong against Maple Point, but the Owls suffered some injuries in that must game. Defensive back Al Creamer was lost in that game, and several other players were hurt.

Bensalem coach Bob Hart was cautious talking about the contest. The Owls did not have much time to prepare for the playoff, and Hart felt uncertain. "We're not changing anything."

We're not going to use any new offensive sets or any new offensive plays. We're going to stay as basic as we've been before," Hart said.

"The big thing in a situation like this is just to calm things down. We're not a very emotional team anyway," he said.

First since '65

The players, however, cannot help being excited about the possibility of bringing a championship to Bensalem for the first time since 1965 when the Owls earned their fourth Section Two title in a row. Before that, Bensalem and Langhorne (then Neshaminy) were co-champions in 1953.

"Everybody is really hustling. I think it will be close," said Bensalem quarterback Bob Dietz.

Although rain would be an advantage for the powerful Redskins, Dietz said it would probably make no difference to Bensalem since the Owls have played half of their games this season in the rain and cold. It never seemed to slow down Bensalem running back Eric Price, whom Dietz said was "really looking good this week."

Both teams appear to be at their peaks as they go into their final game. Both squads are fired up, according to their quarterbacks.

Langhorne has the slight advantage of an extra day's rest going into tonight's action.

"We like to see a playoff because we don't want to be co-champs with them and they don't want to be co-champs with us. It makes it really exciting," Cordelli said.

Dietz echoed his rival's sentiments. "They're a good team. They're really going to want it," he said. "So are we."

# Game in hands (feet) of kickers?

Each booter credited his holder and center with being a major part of their success. Jody Gratton will snap for Bensalem, and Joe Fox will be responsible for the holding. Jim Smith and Craig Hill will do the honors for the Redskins.

"Kicking is only one part of it," said Baun. "You've got to get a good snap and hold, and a lot of blocking."

Fleming agreed. "They're the biggest part of the kicking game. Without that combination, nothing happens."

Eat up pressure  
Tonight's game is bound to be close to the very end, so the pressure upon the shoulders of these men will be quite weighty during that final period. It doesn't seem to bother them, though.

"I don't know if you have to be a different breed of person to be a kicker," Baun said. "You feel the pressure, but so does everyone else. I don't think I'll feel it any more than the other players."

"I really enjoy the pressure," said Fleming. "If you make it, your teammates run out to the field to congratulate you. But if you miss it, it's just something you have to live with."

The place kickers are both anticipating a close contest, nothing like earlier in the year when Langhorne romped, 42-14. "I certainly don't anticipate another blowout," Baun said.

Secretly, it seems like Baun is hoping for the game to be close, say, at least within three points. "I enjoy the thought that I could win the game. I'll be nervous and tense, but I wouldn't mind."

## Looking for football poll?

Looking for this week's Courier Times Football Poll? Stop right here.

The Poll, which normally runs in Wednesday's editions, has been pushed back a day in order to incorporate tonight's

Lower Bucks County League playoff game between Bensalem Township and Neshaminy Langhorne.

Find out how they stand in tomorrow's Courier Times.

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