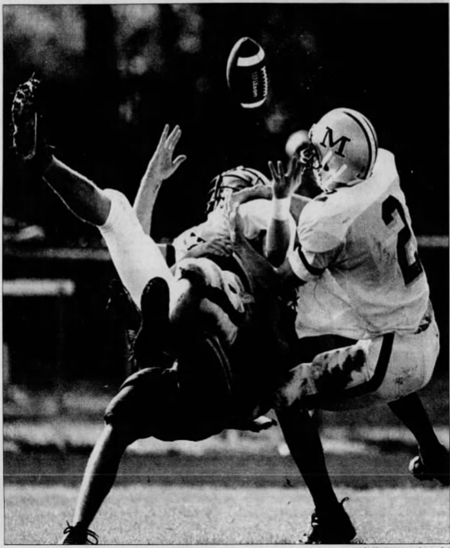
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Neighbors Sports

B8 — North

Monday, November 1, 1999



HINDA SCHUMAN / Inquirer Suburban Staff

Malvern Prep's Jim Judge (2) tries to salvage the play as teammate Bill Corbett is taken down by Germantown Academy's Chris Jordan.

Suburban One National

At last: Time for showdown

By Frank Bertucci
INQUIRER SUBURBAN STAFF

It's here.

When the 1999 football schedules were released last spring, the Nov. 5 date matching Central Bucks West and North Penn was a date to watch.

The two teams have fulfilled expectations, each beating its first nine opponents to get to this game undefeated, with first place in the Suburban One League National Conference and the first seed in the District 1 Class AAAA playoffs on the line.

"Everybody's been talking to these kids for weeks about North Penn," said West coach Mike Pettine after his team's 42-7 win at Pennsbury on Saturday. "We talked to them all week about Pennsbury, but two sentences later it was North Penn."

"It's human nature," said North Penn's Mike Pettine, son of the C.B. West coach. His team topped Truman, 42-13, on Friday night. "How could it not be on their minds? We announce ticket sales at the school every day, twice a day."

Even though the final scores don't show it, both teams had to battle for their wins over the weekend. Pennsbury's line was overpowering West through most of the first half, and North Penn led Truman by just 14-13 at halftime.

"I'd like to think Rondell Bradley had something to do with that," Pettine said after the Truman running back rushed for 179 yards. "It wasn't our guys' fault that he was faster than them."

"Pennsbury's the type of team we're playing next week — big and strong," West's Pettine said. "Even our coaches were disorganized, and that was a big part of it. Maybe it's a lesson in disguise."

Both coaches said one adjustment they would make for the game was having one of their offensive stars play both ways from the first snap. For West, that would be leading rusher Dustin Picciotti; for North Penn, it would be Penn State recruit Chris McKelvy, who will have to line up on defense.

This is reminiscent of the C.B. East-C.B. West game of 1996, when both teams were 9-0 and looking toward the playoffs. West won that game, 21-7, but both teams were upset in the first round of the playoffs the next week, East by eventual state champion Downingtown, West by longtime nemesis Plymouth-Whitemarsh.

"The scenario's the same, only the name of the school is different," said the elder Pettine. "East had some Division I [college] linemen, but North Penn is much, much stronger."

"When I played at West, we never had a game of this magnitude," said the younger Pettine, "not even the Thanksgiving games [with East]. But people are putting some ridiculous labels on this game, like Game of the Decade."

OK. It's only the Game of the Week.

Tickets. C.B. West athletic director Mike Gold was selling tickets for the North Penn game at a table on the track at Pennsbury on Saturday. He said general admission tickets are available at both schools, and that an announcement would be made on Thursday about whether any tickets would be on sale at War Memorial Field at the gate on Friday night.

100 for Ortman. Council Rock's 38-7 victory over Abington on Saturday was the 100th of coach Mike Ortman's career.

"I tried to keep it low-key," he said. "The things you remember are the past, the coaches, the players, all the memories."

The win brought Ortman's record at Council Rock to 72-50-2, following a 28-28 record as head coach at Morrisville.

"My first win at Morrisville was against ANC," he remembered. "We had a terrible team at Morrisville. We were 1-9 that year, and that one win was a gift. I think we had 12 men on the field when we scored the winning touchdown."

Ortman's one minor regret about Saturday's victory was that it came against his alma mater, Abington, which is now coached by Marshall Roberts Jr., the son of one of Ortman's Abington teammates.

"Marshall [Sr.] was waiting for me

See **NATIONAL** on B11

Slattery scares up six touchdowns in frightening display by Patriots

By Rich Fisher
INQUIRER SUBURBAN STAFF

FORT WASHINGTON — And first prize for the most realistic costume this Halloween goes to … Germantown Academy quarterback Jim Slattery, who looked so much like Superman that even Clark Kent would have done a double take.

The 6-foot-2, 195-pound senior engineered a stunning upset as the Patriots defeated Malvern Prep, 49-14, Saturday to put a new face on the Inter-Academic League race.

The fact that Germantown Academy beat Malvern, The Inquirer's fifth-ranked team in Southeastern Pennsylvania, was a mild surprise, considering that the Patriots had snapped Poly Prep's 34-game winning streak in Brooklyn, N.Y., two weeks ago. The shock was in how GA (6-2 overall, 1-1 league) dominated the Friars (6-1, 2-1) from start to finish, scoring on an 80-yard touchdown pass on the first play from scrimmage and never looking back.

"I didn't expect this at all," said receiver Steve Holmes, who caught six passes for 202 yards, including that first TD. "I knew we had a great shot to win and we were really confident. But something like this, I'm kind of at a loss for words."

Slattery's statistics said it all: He completed 9 of 15 passes for 292 yards and three touchdowns, and rushed for 92 yards and three touchdowns. Throw in a 25-yard interception return, and Slattery had 409 total yards.

Thanks to the effort, GA can claim at least a share of its first league title since 1973 if it defeats the Haverford School and Penn Charter in the final two games. Malvern must beat Penn Charter on Saturday to stay in the race.

The Patriots could have played out the string after losing to Episcopal Academy last week.

"We didn't say much this week," Slattery said. "We practiced hard, tried to pick each other up. We knew what we could do. We knew we had a chance today, but nobody thought we could come out and beat them this bad."

Working from the shotgun all day, Slattery was protected by linemen Brendan Kelly, Jace Graham, T. J. Wudarski, and Joe Fantini, and tight end Troy Holiday. When the protection broke down, Slattery hung tight in the pocket and either dodged pass rushers or shrugged them off.

"I can't expect my defensive backs to run around and cover guys for two minutes," Malvern coach Gamp Pellegrini said. "We were there; how many times did we miss him? He was getting away from people who were tackling, hanging on, but not able to put him down.

"We knew about [Slattery] and [Holmes], and we did a lot of things to try and combat them during the week. I think the only thing we did was confuse our kids. They beat you throwing the ball, and I made some changes up front to get more of a pass rush, and I don't think we were as sharp because we were playing a different-type game than we played the first six."

One week after surrendering a 100-yard return on the opening kickoff to the Haverford School, Malvern was again burned the first time its opponent touched the ball. Holmes' interception in the end zone thwarted the Friars' opening drive, which reached the Patriots' 24, and GA set up at the 20.

On the first play, Holmes was all alone on the right sideline. He caught the ball at the 45 and went in untouched.

"We saw some things we could exploit, and figured we could run that play and it should come wide open," Holmes said. "I didn't expect it to be *that* wide open. It was a big play. It set the tone for the whole game."

"We planned that play on Wednesday, straight from film work," GA coach Bill Caum said. "Right after I called the play, I looked at the defense. They were in exactly what I thought they would be in, and it was right there. That's what you call living right."

Soon the Patriots were living it up. On the next possession, Slattery went up the middle on third and inches and ran untouched 65 yards into the end zone to make it 14-0. He repeated the play in the fourth quarter for a 47-yard score.

"At first we tried to run that outside and they stopped it," Slattery said. "On the first [touchdown], they didn't have anybody on center and there were no linebackers. On the second, Brendan Kelly made a great block on the linebacker and I kept going."

Malvern's only sign of life came with 4 minutes, 27 seconds remaining in the first half, when Mike Ambrose scored on a 25-yard run to make it 14-7. GA regained the momentum immediately, though, when Slattery danced around the pocket before hitting John Nejman with a 65-yard touchdown pass on first down. It was the first of three Nejman TDs; the running back caught two and rushed for one.

The Patriots ran up more points against Malvern in a league game than any team had since anyone could remember. The defense was also solid, holding an explosive Malvern offense to 317 yards, many after the game was in hand. Kelly, Fantini and Wudarski helped spearhead the formations used by coordinator Paul Henry.

"He runs the whole show," Caum said. "We wanted to stop the run — they're big up front and I've seen them run over people. They couldn't do that today because Paul was moving people all around. That was a total credit to him."

Malvern Prep	0	7	0	7	—	14
Germantown Academy	14	14	7	14	—	49

GA: Holmes 80 pass from Slattery (Morgan kick)
GA: Slattery 65 run (Morgan kick)
MP: Ambrose 25 run (Carney kick)
GA: Nejman 65 pass from Slattery (Morgan kick)
GA: Nejman 1 run (Morgan kick)
GA: Nejman 8 pass from Slattery (Morgan kick)
MP: Brennan 10 pass from Ryan (Carney kick)
GA: Slattery 47 run (Morgan kick)
GA: Slattery 15 run (Morgan kick)

Bucks and Montgomery County Football Top 10

Rk.	Team	Rec.	Comment
1.	Central Bucks West	9-0	The showdown is finally here. It's the Bucks …
2.	North Penn	9-0	… vs. the Knights, Friday night at Doylestown's War Memorial Field.
3.	Ply.-Whitemarsh	8-1	The Colonials have their own playoff showdown with Pennridge on Friday.
4.	Norristown	7-1	The Eagles rebounded from the Upper Dublin embarrassment with a shutout of Souderton.
5.	Pennridge	8-1	The Rams have scored more than 40 points in three games since the Norristown loss.
6.	Neshaminy	7-2	The Redskins topped Tennent to take over third place in the Suburban One National.
7.	Council Rock	6-3	Matt Verbit passed for school records of 308 yards and 5 TDs against Abington.
8.	Bishop McDevitt	7-1	The Lancers lost the battle of unbeatens, 3-0, to Archbishop Carroll.
9.	Quakertown	7-2	The Panthers' win streak reached six with the 27-23 victory over Methacton.
10.	Germantown Ac.	6-2	The Patriots' 49-14 slaughter of Malvern was as shocking as Norristown's upset.

Resilient Redskins down the Panthers

By Rick O'Brien
INQUIRER SUBURBAN STAFF

WARMINSTER — The crossroads in Neshaminy High's football season came early last month, after consecutive lopsided losses to area powers Central Bucks West and North Penn.

The bubble linked to the team's 4-0 start to the 1999 campaign was burst by West, The Inquirer's top-ranked team, in a 38-0 drubbing in front of an overflow crowd at Harry E. Franks Stadium on Oct. 1. A week later, No. 2 North Penn pinned a 29-6 defeat on the visiting Redskins.

With a berth in the PIAA District 1 Class AAAA playoffs all but gone, Neshaminy was either going to plummet in the Suburban One League National Conference standings or convince itself and its supporters that its impressive beginning to the season wasn't a mirage.

"We had no choice but to come out and play hard every game, play each game like it was our last," senior cocaptain Jason Delp said. "Not one player on this team gave up or quit. We're not quitters."

The Redskins' resiliency showed again Friday night as they downed host William Tennent, 21-14, at Claude Lodge Memorial Field to pick up their third consecutive victory since losing to North Penn.

Neshaminy (7-2 overall, 6-2 conference) and Tennent (5-4, 5-3) had entered the game tied for third place in the National Conference, behind undefeated front-runners West and North Penn.

"It's hats off to our kids," Neshaminy coach Mark Schmidt said. "We've really tried to challenge them in our last couple of games, and they've lived up to that challenge."

Delp, a two-way lineman, registered six tackles, including four solo stops, to help spark Neshaminy's defense. He recorded two sacks in the first half, when the Redskins limited the Panthers to 72 yards of total offense.

The 6-foot-3, 235-pound Delp, who usually plays end on defense, switched to tackle for the game against Tennent.

"I knew earlier in the week that I would have a chance to cause some havoc in this game," Delp said. "Our defensive coordinator [John Chaump] put me in a better position to get some sacks, put a lot of pressure on their quarterback."

Neshaminy's Joe Szymanek returned the opening kickoff 76 yards to give the visitors a 7-0 lead after the successful extra-point kick. Tennent evened the contest in the final minute of the first quarter when Neil Norman blocked Rob Fryer's punt attempt and Jose Rodriguez recovered the ball in the end zone.

The Redskins took a 14-7 advantage midway through the second on senior quarterback Kamal Woodson's 1-yard sneak. The score capped a 15-play, 73-yard drive keyed by senior tailback Chris Vincent, who finished the evening with 75 rushing yards on 21 carries.

"They blocked and tackled better than we did, and they won the game," Panthers second-year coach Dave Sanderson said. "Football is that simple. That's how you win games."

Sophomore Jamar Brittingham's 5-yard touchdown run around right end made it a 21-7 game with less than three minutes to play in the third quarter.

Tennent pulled to within a touchdown on senior quarterback Andre McLaurin's 4-yard, left-side keeper with 4 minutes, 24 seconds remaining in the game. Neshaminy, however, registered three first downs on its next series to end Tennent's comeback bid.

The Redskins' defense was led by lineman Tim Krusen (five tackles, one sack), linebacker John Knauth (eight tackles), and back Szymanek (team-high 10 tackles, eight solo stops).

For Tennent, McLaurin carried 14 times for 60 yards. Senior linebacker Nick DeCecco notched seven of his team-high eight tackles, including an 11-yard sack of Woodson, in the first half.

Neshaminy	7	7	7	0	—	21
William Tennent	7	0	0	7	—	14

N: Szymanek 76 kickoff return (Fryer kick)
WT: Rodriguez recovered blocked punt in end zone (Caseino kick)
N: Woodson 1 run (Fryer kick)
N: J. Brittingham 5 run (Fryer kick)
WT: McLaurin 4 run (Caseino kick)