

Neighbors Sports

B6 — North

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Neshaminy puts up wall late in game to remain undefeated

By Joe Fite

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NEWTOWN — Neshaminy line-backer Bill Crompton celebrated his birthday in a big way on Saturday.

In a game he said he would never forget, Crompton made the biggest hit of his career and helped preserve the Redskins' 14-12 win over host Council Rock in a Suburban One League National Conference battle of teams that had yet to lose this season.

Neshaminy appeared to have the game in hand late, but the Indians staged a furious rally only to fall short. Crompton, who had celebrated his birthday on Friday, and Tim Kruson led a Redskins charge that stopped Rich Bedesem as he attempted to tie the score on a two-point conversion with 58 seconds

remaining, allowing Neshaminy to take the victory.

Chris Vincent gave the Redskins (3-0 overall, 2-0 conference) a 7-0 lead with a 7-yard scoring run to cap Neshaminy's opening drive with 5 minutes, 49 seconds remaining in the first quarter. Matt Stapleton answered with a 36-yard field goal with 1:53 to play in the second quarter, and that's the way it stayed until the decisive fourth quarter.

Stapleton added a 26-yard field goal with 7:45 left in the game, cutting the Redskins' lead to 7-6. That meant that if Council Rock could drive down the field again, Stapleton could possibly win it with another field goal. Vincent had other ideas, though.

On third and 5 from his own 21-yard line, Vincent went off right tackle and sprinted 61 yards to the

Indians' 18. The drive eventually ended on fourth down at the 3, when Matt Verbit tackled Nick Farnsworth for a 2-yard loss as he tried to score. Council Rock then had to go 97 yards to score, however.

With 1:57 remaining and facing fourth down from his own 6-yard line, Verbit had no choice but to go for the first down and was sacked by Sherman Brittingham at the 4.

Neshaminy took over and Vincent, who rushed for 170 yards on 25 carries, needed just one shot to score for a 14-6 Redskins lead with 1:52 remaining.

Verbit, who was 14 for 34 for 224 yards, made a last-ditch effort to bring his team back. He found Bedesem for 23 yards on the right side, then hit Bill Wellen with a 48-yard pass to the Redskins' 8-yard line with 1:23 left. His next three passes

fell incomplete, but on fourth down, Bedesem hauled in an alley-oop pass in the right corner of the end zone for a touchdown with 58 seconds to play. That led to the crucial two-point conversion.

"It was now or never," Crompton said. "I've been through three years of watching them put us away like that. It was time. It was time for us and everybody knew it, and we got down and dirty. It was just an all-out war, and warriors bleed. Luckily, it was red and blue that bled."

The Indians lined up for the two-point conversion, and Verbit took the snap and handed off to Bedesem. He tried the left side of the line but was met by Crompton, Kruson and several other defenders. Verbit was pushing Bedesem from behind, but to no avail. Bedesem went down under the pile and Neshaminy cele-

brated.

"We saw them line up in heavy," Crompton said. "We knew where we were going. We were going everybody in the middle. It was a pinch call. They came out in heavy and we came with that. It was who was going to hit harder. And we've got a few guys this year that really want to hit."

The stop on the two-point conversion impressed Redskins coach Mark Schmidt, who was happy to get the win even though he thought his team didn't play up to its potential.

"They went right at our strength," Schmidt said. "Their strength against our strength. Our guys just said, 'Hey, we're going to play hard. Those cats you see over there, now they've worked their butts off.' They're 500-pound squatters, all 260s power lifters, and we decided to go

get after it."

It had been a tough stretch for the Redskins against Council Rock (2-1, 1-1). Neshaminy won, 26-14, in 1996, but lost by 17-14 in 1997 and by 14-13 last season. Crompton had never beaten the Indians as a varsity player.

"This is one of the biggest wins for seniors," Crompton said. "I haven't beaten Council Rock, a huge rival. This is my birthday. You're not going to get a better present. ... Senior year. I couldn't ask for anything more. This one will be in my head forever."

Neshaminy	7	0	0	7	-	14
Council Rock	0	3	0	9	-	12

N: Vincent 7 run (Fryer kick)

CR: FG 38 Stapleton

CR: FG 26 Stapleton

N: Vincent 4 run (Fryer kick)

CR: Bedesem 8 pass from Verbit (run failed)