

# Top 20 High School Football Rankings

## Southeastern Pennsylvania Football

Featuring District 1, 12, the Philadelphia Catholic League and the Inter AC

September 25, 2005

(All teams are 4A unless indicated otherwise)

- 1. Saint Joseph's Prep (3-1)** The Hawks routed Roman 41-0 in their Red Division opener. Roman was held to 44 yards rushing, while the Hawks rushed for 219 yards. Guess the empire isn't going to strike back this year. Divisional action continues Friday against Archbishop Ryan who's on a 2 game winning streak after opening losses to Pennsbury and Neshaminy. Ryan (2-2) beat Carroll last week 6-0 after defeating Wood the week before. The Hawks won last year's encounter 28-10.
- 2. North Penn (4-0)** North Penn exposed Pennridge last week with the 42-21 romp in Lansdale. Undefeated Pennsbury is up next Friday in another important National Conference game. The Knight's won last year at home 25-8. This one's at Pennsbury.
- 3. Cardinal O'Hara (3-1)** It wasn't impressive but it was a win as the Lion's edged combative Father Judge 13-7. O'Hara had numerous injuries but held on for the win. Another north Philly team visits Saturday when winless North Catholic comes in after a 0-4 start. North is in the Red Division this year. Things got off to a bad start in the divisional opener last week where LaSalle took them apart 35-0. O'Hara and North did not play each other last year.
- 4. Neshaminy (3-1)** Neshaminy asserted itself big time in Abington last week with a 50-17 pounding of the Ghosts. The Skins exploded for 36 points in the middle 2 quarters to break the game open. They get their second undefeated opponent in a row Friday when Truman (4-0) arrives for another SOL National contest. The Skins shutout last year's 2-10 team 37-0.
- 5. Conestoga (4-0)** Conestoga got their 2<sup>nd</sup> critical win in the Central League by defeating possibly the last barrier to their repeating as Central League champs. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> game of the season they beat Strath Haven in overtime 18-12. Last week they got past a talented Upper Darby team 14-7, in a game that could have gone either way. It didn't, so credit the Pioneers for defeating a formidable opponent in a hard hitting contest. Stoga's home again Friday for dangerous Ridley, a team they edged last year in Folsom 14-7.
- 6. Strath Haven (3-1, 3A)** The Panther's stayed on Conestoga's heels with a 28-15 win against a tougher than expected bunch of Red Raiders from Radnor. Another surprise, Haverford (3-1), is up next. The Fords are on a 3 game winning streak since the opening loss to Chichester. Chi's having quite a season themselves at 4-0. We'll see what they have this weekend in West Chester against East High's improving team. Haven beat Haverford last year 56-0.
- 7. Coatesville (3-1)** No surprise here as Coatesville dominated Conestoga Valley 42-7. Ches-Mont action begins Friday at home against Bishop Shanahan. The Eagles (1-3, 3A)

opened last week with a narrow 10-7 loss to West Chester East. Coatesville won last year 56-14.

**8. LaSalle (4-0)** That's 4 straight for these Explorer's who just keep rolling over everybody. North Catholic fell last week in LaSalle's 1<sup>st</sup> shutout of the year, 35-0. Father Judge (1-3) comes in Saturday, probably feeling the effects of last week's battle with Cardinal O'Hara, where they lost in the last minute of play 13-7. They're in a 3 game losing streak that should continue here. LaSalle won last year's game 12-7.

**9. Malvern Prep (3-0)** After last week's research and write up it shouldn't come as a shock that Malvern Prep beat another Ches-Mont team. Last week's 23-20 win against Downingtown East combined with the preceding week's win over Henderson elevates Prep's won-loss to 16-6 against Ches-Mont teams since 1999. The Friar's are at Peddie School, NJ next week. Peddie School has to be reeling after their 24-23 loss to Penn Charter in the closing seconds last week. Malvern and Peddie did not face each other last year.

**10. Downingtown East (3-1)** With starting quarterback Pat Devlin injured for much of the young season, the Cougars haven't found their rhythm. That caught up to them last week when they ran into a team that was good enough to take advantage of their shortcomings. Malvern Prep edged them 23-20 on a 28 yard field goal with 7 seconds left to play. That's not good news for Interboro who is in for a game Friday. East won last year at Interboro 45-33.

**11. Ridley (3-1)** Ridley bounced right back from the 28-6 loss at Strath Haven the week before to just pound Penncrest 31-8. Their quick defense held the Lion's to 27 yards rushing! Up next is a long night in Berwyn Friday against Conestoga's big team. The Raider's are always dangerous, even this year's young team, so Stoga can't take them lightly. And they are coming off a physical encounter with Upper Darby that may have softened them just enough for Ridley to keep it close.

**12. West Catholic (3-1)** West Catholic recovered well from the O'Hara loss by defeating Bishop McDevitt on the road 21-0. They'll get more of the same against outmanned Cardinal Dougherty, who is winless at 0-4 with the 24-14 loss last week to Conwell Egan. The Burr's won last year 37-0.

**13. Pennridge (2-2)** The Rams have played 2 high caliber teams this year, Central Dauphin and North Penn. They were overwhelmed by both, losing to CD 42-7 and last week on the road to North Penn 42-21. They're clearly no longer a Top 10 team. This week's game against Abington will tell us if they're a Top 20 team. Pennridge won last year at Abington 35-6. This one's Saturday at Pennridge where it will be interesting to see how both respond following a devastating loss.

**14. Lansdale Catholic (4-0, 2A)** Catholic is rolling now with another dominating win against a PAC opponent, Spring-Ford, who went down hard last week 35-7. Their next opponent, Pottsgrove, is likely the only real comp left in the PAC since they already beat

Boyertown. LC won last year 30-12. But this year they catch the Falcons off a bye week, giving them 2 weeks to prepare.

**15. Pennsbury (4-0)** In a game that was anyone's to win, Pennsbury did what they had to do to eke out a 27-24 win at home against Council Rock North. That was a nice test but it gets a lot tougher Friday in a division game against North Penn. Cardinal O'Hara is the only team that has been competitive against the powerful Knights. The Falcons lost last year's game 25-8, but get them at home this year. Pennsbury must play the perfect game to keep up with these Knights.

**16. Tennett (3-1)** Except for the Downingtown East loss (34-7), Tennett has been blowing others away by an average score of 45-14. The competition hasn't been the strongest with wins against Cheltenham, Dougherty and Central Bucks South, but they have been blow outs. So they did what they were supposed to do against weaker opposition. That changes Friday at home against Norristown in a key SOL-Continental Conference match up. Norristown is a good team who fell out of the Top 20 with their home loss to a team they should have beat, Quakertown. Last year's 8-3 Tennett team got a big 21-17 win at Norristown last year. If they're not careful, the Panther's will turn the tables on them here.

**17. Upper Darby (3-1)** Upper Darby's road performance at Conestoga last week helped them in the rankings this week. Conestoga was supposed to have a near invincible defense. Someone forgot to tell the Royals who dented it for 215 rush yards (4.5 ypc), and another 62 through the air. One of the best tailbacks in this part of the state, Simoni Marco Lawrence, was unstoppable with 31 carries for 170 yards (5.2 ypc). He was worth the price of admission. But when you don't score on 3 visits to the red zone, you usually lose. And so it was with the Royals who went down in a nail biter, 14-7. Wow, great game between 2 exciting teams! Lower Merion (1-3) is up next Friday at Upper Darby. They're in a 3 game losing streak following a season opening win against Harriton. Darby won last year 22-16.

**18. Abington (3-1)** Ouch! Hey, it's a young and talented team, so don't write the Galloping Ghosts off just yet. The thought stated here in the Preseason Listings was that there are 4 super teams in the area, with everyone else playing 2<sup>nd</sup> fiddle. Although SJP, CO, even North Penn have suffered injuries, that's still pretty much the case with the top 4 teams. Neshaminy's veteran team gave Abington a stiff dose of reality last week with the 50-17 win in Abington. A win at Pennridge in a SOL-National Conference game would give the Ghosts a real push for the rest of the season. But this may be something like Council Rock North's game at Pennsbury last week where it was too much to expect the road team to come away with a win between equals. Pennridge won last year 35-6.

**19. Council Rock North (3-1)** The Indians suffered a disappointing loss last week at Pennsbury, 27-24, and fell just 1 position in the rankings after their decent road showing. A win in Friday's homer against Bensalem provides the chance to stay in the National and post season race. The Owls edged them last year 9-7.

## **TIE**

**Pottsgrove (2-1, 3A)** Pottsgrove had a bye week last week. They needed it following the hard match and upset by Boyertown 14-10, the week before. They are also home this week giving them about as good a situation and setting as possible for the encounter with Lansdale Catholic. LC ripped them last year 30-12.

**20. Truman (4-0)** Right, they're going to get pounded at Neshaminy Friday, but they've earned this, especially with the 14-7 road win last week in Bensalem. 4-0 is sweet for any school, especially one with a won-loss of 6-29 the last 3 year. They've won more games this year than in the 2 preceding years where they went 2-22.

## **Honorable Mention**

**VFMA (2-0)**

**Interboro (3-1, 3A)**

**Henderson (1-3)**

**Norristown (3-1)**

**Central Bucks East (3-1)**

**Souderton (3-1)**

**Boyertown (1-2)**

**Chichester (4-0, 3A)**