

# Top 20 High School Football Rankings

## Southeastern Pennsylvania Football

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

November 14, 2006

All teams are 4A unless indicated otherwise

### The East:

#### **AAAA District 2/4/11/Sub Regional Playoffs:**

A quick hit here on what's happening around the state. The winner of the District 2/4/11 sub regional plays the District 12 winner. That winner plays the District 1 champ in the Eastern Final with the victor going to Hershey for the State Final. District 12 is covered below. Here's a quick update about District 2/4/11 results from last week. Top seeded, undefeated Parkland (11-0) got past stubborn East Stroudsburg South (8-3) 21-7 after being deadlocked 7-7 at the half. Nice try by the Cavaliers who were given little chance as the 8<sup>th</sup> seed. 4<sup>th</sup> seeded Easton (10-1) returned to their old ways by shutting out another opponent, Wyoming Valley West (9-2) 28-0, for their eighth shutout of the year. Valley West was the 5<sup>th</sup> seed. Their coach George Curry said Easton had one of the best defenses he had ever seen. The Red Rovers move on to play Parkland in the semifinal. In the other bracket, 3<sup>rd</sup> seeded Bethlehem Liberty (10-1) had no trouble with 6<sup>th</sup> seeded Delaware Valley (9-2), winning 42-13. They advance to play 2<sup>nd</sup> seeded Abington Heights (10-1) who beat 7<sup>th</sup> seeded Hazelton 14-7. Easton and Liberty in a rematch?

### The West:

#### **AAAA Districts 3, 6, 7, 8 and 10 overview:**

Erie Cathedral Prep (10-1), whose only loss is to Pittsburgh Central Catholic 21-7, won the District 10 crown by defeating city rival McDowell (5-6) 35-14. The win earns them a bye this week where they await the winner of the District 8 (Pittsburgh Public League) title match between Pitt Brashear (8-3) and Pitt Oliver (9-2). That will be some game with Oliver taking the regular season game 7-6. In District 7, undefeated Upper St. Clair (11-0) plays North Allegheny (9-2), while Penn Hills (9-1) plays Pittsburgh Central Catholic (10-1). Those two winners play next week with the winner advancing to play whoever emerges out of the District 8- District 10 game. The Upper St. Clair-North Allegheny game is a rematch of a game USC won in the regular season 16-7. To get here, they beat North Hills last week while North Allegheny eliminated one of the favorites, Woodland Hills, 24-17. Pitt CC recovered from the mid-season loss to Woodland Hills to beat last year's gold medalist McKeesport 24-13 last week. Penn Hills got here by beating a feisty Gateway bunch, 44-37. In District 3, four of the eight teams are from the Mid Penn Conference. The other half of the bracket has three teams from the Lancaster-Lebanon League and a Berks Inter County League rep. From the LL, Wilson (10-1) and J.P. McCaskey (7-4) face off for the second time this year. JPM already avenged an earlier loss by bouncing Manheim Township in the opener but will have a tougher time here against red hot Wilson who is on a ten game winning streak. Governor Mifflin (10-1) beat Penn Manor (5-6) in the opener and plays Conestoga Valley (9-2) this weekend. Conestoga Valley has won nine straight after opening the season 0-2. Along the way they

gave powerful Manheim Central their only loss. Out of the Mid Penn, bitter Harrisburg rivals Bishop McDevitt (8-3) and Harrisburg High (10-1) tangle for the second time this year. When the Black and Silver are on, they're awesome. They were "on" earlier in the year when they beat McDevitt 29-7. Not sure where that team went against Archbishop Moeller (Cincinnati), losing 25-0 five weeks ago. The final bracket has another Harrisburg team, Central Dauphin (9-2), surprising everyone with their 8-0 run after opening the year with losses to Harrisburg 41-7 and State College 28-7. The Rams get another shot at State this weekend. District 3's champ will face whatever comes out of the "historic" west.

*\* The number following a team's won-loss is the seeding order for the playoffs.*

**1. St. Joseph's Prep (8-2, 7-0, #1 CL Red)** For many teams, there's nothing like a bye week at this time of the year. But for this group, with the roll they are on, it's probably the last thing they needed or wanted. The opponent this week is the upstart from northeast Philly, North Catholic. They beat Father Judge in the opening round of the Red Division playoffs last week 30-27 and face a monumental task this week against a team they lost to in the regular season 28-0. It's looking bleak for any of the contestants still standing knowing the Hawk's beat LaSalle 42-14 and Roman Catholic 40-0 in the regular season.

**2. West Chester East (10-1, 7-0, #5)** West Chester East got a reality check when 12<sup>th</sup> seeded Tennett stepped up to give them a great football game last week. After East raced out to a 21-0 second quarter lead, things were looking grim for the Panthers. That's when they pounced on the Vikings, getting a 56 yards TD strike with 9 seconds left in the half. From there on it was all about offense with both sides registering a total of 48 points! The final score was 42-34. Tennett gave a good account of them selves but just couldn't keep up with East's multifaceted attack. The Vikings got 234 yards on the ground and another 217 through the air. (High School!) That's what Pennsbury has to deal with Friday, a versatile, balanced attack that has proven difficult to stop. No one has stopped Pennsbury's Jackson Fagan either so this may just get down to the D that makes the critical stop.

**3. Ridley (11-0, 9-0, #3)** After going through the latter half of the season without a challenge, Ridley was forced into overtime to put away a team that played nothing like a 14<sup>th</sup> seed. Suburban One League, American Conference runner up Plymouth Whitmarsh manhandled the Raider's well into the second quarter, building their lead to 22-7. They so dominated the line of scrimmage that two of their scores were set up by blocked punts. Further, Ridley was held to minus 11 yards rushing to Whitmarsh's 185 rush yards! A late Ridley score breathed new life by narrowed the margin to 22-13 at the half. The Colonials came out in the second half to grab the momentum with a score to take a 29-13 lead. That would be their last as the Green Raiders went on a 16 point scoring binge (plus 7 in OT) with quarterback Al Humes completing 25 of 38 passes for 285 yards, 4 touchdown tosses and no interceptions. Along the way, the Raiders made two 2 point conversions to knot it at 29. In the overtime period, QB Humes hit wide receiver Marcus Payton (8 for 123) on the first play. Then Whitmarsh did a strange thing by passing or attempting to on two of their three OT opportunities. It's strange since their fullback

Romie Tribble ran at will for most of the game, netting 145 yards on 20 carries. QB Lance Wilson was sacked on the first play in OT while running back Dossie Washington was also nailed in the backfield on a sweep. On the third play from scrimmage, 6-4, 205 WR/DB Marcus Payton read it perfectly, stepped in front of his man and made the pick. PW wasn't as big as Upper Darby but they played bigger, giving Ridley a stern test. Hatboro Horsham is up next. Here we'll get a chance to see a team similar to Ridley. They have a variety of weapons and good skill players. Because they have a decent running game, they'll represent the most balanced opponent Ridley's played since Upper Darby.

**4. North Penn (9-2, 7-0, #7)** The score was 8-7 Interboro with three minutes left in the first half when North Penn exploded for 21 unanswered points to blow the thing open. In the second half, the Knights outscored the Bucs 21-13 to take home a convincing 49-21 first round win. Tyrece Ervin was outstanding, running for 215 yards on 22 attempts. Quarterback Kyle Feiser had another impressive performance in completed 10 of 16 passes for 175 yards and two touchdowns. All totaled, they generated 485 yards of total offense to Interboro's 294. The Bucs scored more points on them since Archbishop Wood at the top of the season, but had no answers defensively. Next up is a road trip to 2<sup>nd</sup> seeded Downingtown West.

**5. Pennsbury (10-1, 6-1, #4)** Pennsbury buried 13<sup>th</sup> seeded Wissachickon under the weight of 388 rushing yards and 52 carries, while holding the Trojans to 84 yards rushing. The final score was 43-7. Jackson Fagan ran for 181 yards on 12 carries and sat early, as did fullback Josh Parkes after gaining 75 yards on the ground. Fagan's rushing total for the year is 1704 yards. Parkes is at 689 yards. Up next is the largest, most balanced attack they've faced this year, West Chester East. North Penn was more physical, but East is more versatile with more weapons. See game stats above verses Tennett. By more than holding their own against Downingtown West and Coatesville, winning 35-24 and 31-14 respectively, they showed they can go with teams like Pennsbury. After seeing both teams this year, this is still a hard call. Some edge goes to Pennsbury with the home field. A further disadvantage to East is in not having played a tough opponent on the road since Newark in game 2. One thing is certain, Pennsbury doesn't want to get behind on this team.

**6. Downingtown West (10-1, 5-1, #2)** Downingtown West had no trouble in the rematch with Boyertown last week, winning 35-6. If you think Council Rock North faced a tough 16<sup>th</sup> seed in Abington, how about Downingtown West pulling North Penn as the 7<sup>th</sup> seed? But they match up well with North in terms of size and speed. A very well kept secret is running back Roshann McCain, 5-11, 180 pound senior supported by senior fullback Rhett Bull, 5-10, 210. There are experienced linemen like OT/DT Jeff Howie, 6-3, 305, Shawn DeHaven, 6-5, 235, Cory Coulter, 6-1, 290 and Adam Ferguson, 6-0, 245. North won't throw these guys around. Quarterback Nolan Kearny is a double threat at 6-5, 220 to run or pass effectively. North's last loss was to Cardinal O'Hara in game two, almost a season ago as they've since won nine straight. West's only loss was to West Chester East. Since then they've won three in a row so something has to give! Downingtown West is similar to Pennsbury, except that they have a passing attack. It will

be interesting seeing if the Knights can handle that, and if the Whippets can handle Tyrece Ervin.

**7. Souderton (9-2, 5-2, #8)** No one is surprised Souderton beat Downingtown East, but few expected the margin to be so great, 42-7, with or without East's injured quarterback Pete O'Connor playing. He played. The last team Souderton beat by a similar score was a struggling 2-8 Central Bucks West team, 49-6. Wow! This one got ugly quick with the Indians storming out to a 35-0 lead in the third quarter. The Dtown offense was held to one score, with the other coming by way of a recovered fumble run in for 6. Souderton moves onto second round action against Abington in another home game. As the 16<sup>th</sup> seed (see last week's write ups) the Ghosts pulled the shocker last week by winning in Newtown against top seeded Council Rock North, 21-20. You might think this one's a lock for Abington since earlier in the year CR North won in Souderton 26-10. The only thing worse than comparative scores is more comparative scores because they will lead you astray. In the second game of the year, Abington lost at Plymouth Whitemarsh 26-9, the same Whitemarsh team that lost at AAA Upper Merion, then took Ridley to overtime last week before losing 36-29. Use comparative scores at your own risk! Souderton's big line anchored by 6-5, 324, Aaron McGlynn will spring Ronnie Powell for some long gainers as they have all year. Abington's a fine team with QB Kevin Morton healthy, but there is nothing like an upset to get the attention of your opponent *this week*.

**8. Archbishop Wood (8-2, 6-1, #2 CL Blue)** Archbishop Wood ended the regular season tied for first place with West Catholic. They got the two seed after losing the regular season final to WC 13-12. After a bye week, they play Saints Neumann Goretti who edged Archbishop Carroll in last week's Blue Division playoff opener 13-12. Wood beat Neumann in the regular season 28-13. A win here puts them in the final where they'd go after their 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive Blue title.

**9. Council Rock North (10-1, 7-0, #1)** How far do you drop a team like Council Rock North after losing by a point against Abington? Certainly not out of the Top 10 after so fine a year. Some would say the 21-20 loss to the Ghosts was a result of a missed extra point. Unfortunately for the kicker it seems that way. But those who played the game know there are numerous instances throughout the game where a momentum crushing penalty, a turnover, or missed assignment and so forth, were equally devastating. Every year you can see countless missed tackles making the difference in a game. The team lost that game, not the kicker. At the end of the day, didn't Council Rock North take us fans of the game on a great ride? Well done!

**10. Hatboro Horsham (9-2, 5-2, #6)** How about these Hatters! Really felt Upper Darby might just muscle them out of the stadium but the Hatters hung tough and pulled out a 27-26 1<sup>st</sup> round win against their talented adversary. Upper Darby beat them in total yardage 419-314 and first downs 20-14, but missed conversions for 1, 1 and 2 points. A fumble recovered in the end zone cost them 7 points so again, it wasn't all on the kicker. It does make you wonder if there was something in the air that night with Archbishop Carroll also going down by one point to Neumann Goretti. Upper Darby's quarterback, Blaine Fox had a night for the ages, completing 16 of 21 for 286 yards and 3 TD strikes.

Wide out Brandon Robinson finished with 9 catches for 198 yards and two scores. Jared Johnson was the big gun for Hatboro, rushing for 131 yards on 8 carries. This one wasn't decided until the final minute with the Royals scoring on a 69 yard Fox to Robinson touchdown. Coach Gentile went for 2 points and the win, but couldn't convert. The Hatters move on to play another Central League opponent in 2<sup>nd</sup> round action at Ridley Friday night.

**11. Roman Catholic (8-2, 5-2, #2 CL Red)** Roman earned a bye week by beating LaSalle 27-21 in two overtimes at the end of the regular season and must beat them again if they hope to advance to the finals in the Red Division playoffs. How difficult will that be beating the Explorer's in back to back encounters?

**12. Tennett (6-4, 5-2, #12)** Despite outscored West Chester East 34-21 from the last few seconds of the second quarter to the end of the game, Tennett could not overcome a 21-0 deficit and lost to the Vikings 42-34. It has been one of those years for the Panther's, losing to Downingtown East 23-21, to Souderton 21-17 and the 10 point loss to CR North. While these were disappointing losses, you've got to admit this is one heck of a decent 6-4 team.

**13. LaSalle (7-3, 4-3, #3 CL Red)** LaSalle beat Cardinal O'Hara in the Red semifinal last week 39-38, in overtime. The week before that they lost to Roman in two overtime periods. Except for St. Joseph's, the Red Division hasn't seen this level of parity in years! So look for another nail biter this week when LaSalle and Roman face off again for the right to play in the Red final.

**14. Penn Charter (8-2, 5-0)** Penn Charter closed out the season atop the Inter-Ac with a 21-10 win at Germantown Academy. So often this conference ends up with a co-winner. This year Penn Charter won it outright, their first in four years. That concludes the season so congratulations to the Quakers for another fine campaign.

**15. Malvern Prep (7-2, 4-1)** Malvern Prep got a good fight at combative Chestnut Hill Academy (7-3) but pulled it out to come home with a 18-17 win. Talk about close, the Friars only losses came to undefeated Salesianum in overtime, 22-15, and to Inter-Ac champ Penn Charter, 23-19. They have one game to go on November 22<sup>nd</sup> at Villanova against Monsignor Bonner. What a great venue and field and to play on.

**16. Abington (7-4, 4-3, #16)** Been hearing some interesting hoops analogies about 16<sup>th</sup> seeded teams winning and all I can think to say is, football ain't hoops! Isn't it strange attempting to make Abington's win analogous with a 16<sup>th</sup> seeded college basketball team winning their game against the top seed? Our *very flawed* format gave us Abington at Council Rock North last week where the Ghosts pulled out a 21-20 win over the top seed. That's not a statement for or against Abington or CR-North, but a complaint that they met at all, in the 1<sup>st</sup> round. Maybe they'll get it worked out. Abington moves on to play 8<sup>th</sup> seeded Souderton.

**17. Frankford (8-1, 5-0)** District 12's top seeded Frankford beat Dobbins last week 32-6 to advance to the Pub Final against George Washington. How often have these two gone at it? GW (9-2) beat Northeast 19-10 after routing Bartram in the first round 43-0. Frankford beat GW in the regular season 28-13. Whoever wins here gets the dubious honor of advancing to play the District 2/4/11 sub regional winner.

**18. West Catholic (6-4, 6-1, #1 CL Blue)** West Catholic was idle last week awaiting the winner of the Conwell Egan-Bishop McDevitt game. CE won 27-7. Although they are 5-6, one of those wins came against West in the regular season, 26-12. In fact, that's the last time West lost. That should help them stay focused and not look ahead to a likely rematch with Archbishop Wood.

**19. Downingtown East (7-4, 4-2, #9)** Downingtown East was unceremoniously ejected from postseason action by a Souderton team that administered the worst defeat of the once promising season on the Cougars, 42-7. After that kind of a game, you wish there was a Thanksgiving Day game, anything to remove the lingering effects of a loss like that. There is the suggestion of a strong season next year so look for these Cougars to focus on that to again field an exciting team.

**20. Plymouth Whitemarsh (6-5, 5-2, #14)** Plymouth Whitemarsh's efforts against Ridley were rewarded here by their re-installment as a Top 20 team after a 9 week hiatus. Their first visit came after beating Abington 26-9 in week two. Last week's game was a tough one for PW after playing their hearts out against the Raiders only to come up short in overtime. But they can take some solace knowing they ran for more yards and scored more points than any team did this year against the Raiders. Prior to the game, Ridley allowed an average of 81.3 rushing yards per game. The Colonials got 184. This was a great game by teams of contrasting styles.

## **Honorable Mention**

**North Catholic (7-4, 4-3, #4 CL Red)**

**Chestnut Hill Academy (7-3)**

**Interboro (8-3, 4-0, #10)**

**Upper Darby (7-3, 6-2, #11)**

**3A Upper Moreland (9-1, 6-1, 1 seed)**

**3A Garnet Valley (9-1, 5-1, 2 seed)**

**3A Marple Newtown (8-3, 7-2, 3 seed)**

**3A Unionville (9-2, 6-1, 4 seed)**

**3A Upper Perkomen (8-3, 7-1, 5 seed)**

**3A Strath Haven (7-3, 7-2)**