

Quick Start Helps Vikings

Daily Local News

September 5, 1997

By TERRY COOK, Staff Writer

BERWYN—West Chester East needed only two plays to take a 6-0 lead, and only one half to score 27 points in its 27-20 non-league win over Conestoga Friday night at Teamer Field.

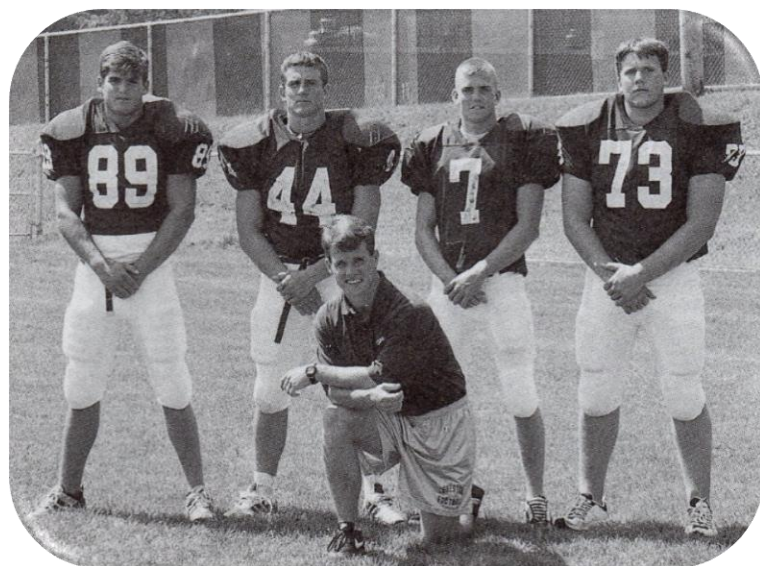
Less than a minute into the game Babineez broke through two defenders to score a touchdown for East. Conestoga matched the score when sophomore running back Marquis Weeks ran for a 30-yard touchdown.

Three minutes later, East went up for good when Gonzalez ran for 14 yards through the middle to score. Conestoga scored again early in the second quarter before East scored twice more to make the game 27-13 at halftime.

Conestoga stepped up its defense in the second half to hold East scoreless. The Pioneers scored midway through the third quarter on a 36-yard touchdown run by Weeks. Conestoga came close to tying the game when it drove to the 21-yard line with less than two minutes to play. But quarterback Matt Diamond couldn't connect with his intended receiver, Matt Walters, on fourth down and 13, and Conestoga lost possession.

"We had some real assignment breakdowns in the first half," Conestoga coach Tim Donovan said. "The mistakes can be fixed."

Of the final chance to score, Donovan said, "The kids didn't give up, they played hard, but we shouldn't have put ourselves in that position."



1997 Captains

Chris Bickel, Scott Cappelli,
Matt Diamond, Chris Vaughn;
Kneeling: Head Coach Tim Donovan

Weeks Sparks Conestoga Past

Lower Merion, 28-15

Daily Local News
September 14, 1997

By KEVIN SCOTT, Staff Writer

ARDMORE—It's hard to say that a running back who gained 101 yards on 19 carries and scored a touchdown didn't have a good game. But much more was expected of Lower Merion's Deshawn Goddard as he and his teammates opened their home schedule against Conestoga.

Instead, Pioneer running back Marquis Weeks went on to steal the show as he ran for 269 yards on the ground, leading the Pioneers to a 28-15 victory that upped their record to 1-1.

"It was unbelievable," Conestoga head coach Tim Donovan said of Weeks' gritty, 26-carry performance. "He's a good runner," Lower Merion head coach Paul Petrillo said of Weeks, "a real patient runner. He kept slowing up the drifting in and our guys were getting sucked in every time he did that. When I scouted him, I was really worried about that."

The battle between Goddard and Weeks got off to a great start, as both backs ran for touchdowns on their team's first series. Goddard broke off right tackle and was off on a 32-yard touchdown run, while Weeks' was a 26-yard burst through the middle of the defensive line to bring the Pioneers within one point at 7-6.

Just before half, with Weeks already past the century mark on just 10 carries, the Pioneers had a chance to drive for the go-ahead score, as they started

from their own 17-yard line. On the third play of the drive, Weeks fumbled at his own 40 and Conestoga was forced to put up a defensive stand in the final seconds to keep the deficit at one point.

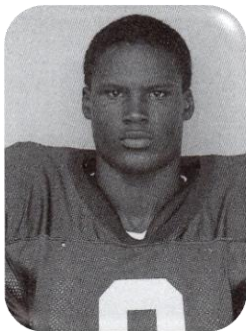
"I didn't really let it bother me," Weeks said of the fumble. "My coaches told me to blow it off, and that it was a mental mistake and just keep two hands on the ball in the second half."

On their opening drive of the second half, the Pioneers showed confidence in the youngster after the miscue and went right back to him. He didn't disappoint, either.

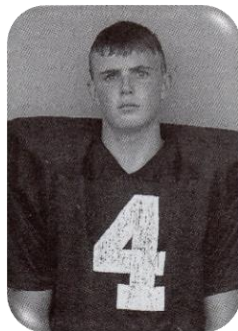
Facing a crucial third-and-seven on their own 46, McCrory handed the ball to Weeks and he scampered to the outside and broke away from the pack for a 54-yard touchdown romp. This gave the Pioneer sideline a confidence boost that it desperately needed.

After the kickoff, Donovan urged his defense to make a stand and force the Aces' to go three-and-out. They did so with a big tackle in the backfield by Chris Vaughn. The Pioneers got the ball back, but they didn't do much. They did, however, get a bit lucky. On third down the Aces were called for a late hit, which gave Conestoga a fresh set of downs at its own 41.

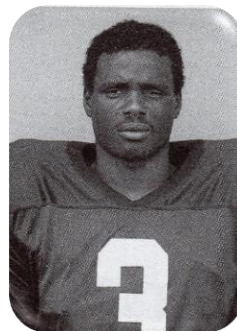
The Pioneers eventually scored on a four-yard touchdown run by Taiwan Cunningham, who carried the ball five times for 26 yards, and proved to be a great change of pace.



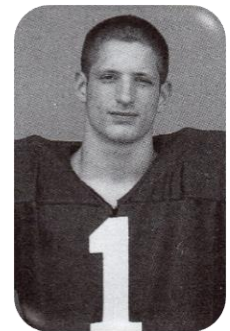
MARQUIS WEEKS
Sophomore 6-0, 190
Running Back
Defensive Back



GAVIN MCCRORY
Senior 6-2, 180
Quarterback
Defensive Back



TAIWAN CUNNINGHAM
Senior 5-4, 145
Tailback
Defensive Back



HARRY CAMPANESE
Senior 5-7, 145
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back

Late Radnor rally falls short
Conestoga takes 29-27 decision

Pioneers Hold on for a Win

Daily Local News
September 24, 1997

By KEVIN SCOTT, Staff Writer

BERWYN—When the outcome of a game rests on the final play, it often means that both teams played very well and were evenly matched. This was the case in Friday evening's Central League football game in which Conestoga defeated Radnor, 29-27.

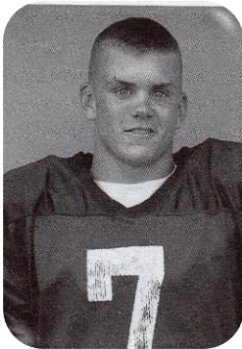
Chris Vaughn's block of an extra point that would have tied the game at 21 with only 3:49 to go, was just the beginning of a whirlwind final three minutes. The Pioneers subsequently drove down the field with relative ease on seven plays as Marquis Weeks ran in for a one-yard touchdown, apparently sealing the game. A two-point conversion made the lead nine points.

But the Red Raiders moved to within three points. On the next play, Radnor's Keith McManimen recovered an on-side kick to give the Raiders one last chance. The recovery of the kick did just that. Quarterback Pete Brigg took over at his teams' own 46-yard line for the final attempt.

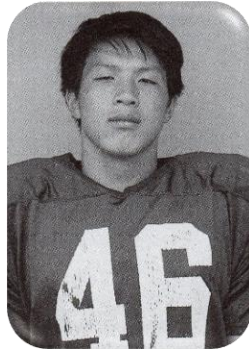
He dropped back to pass and lofted the Hail Mary, which was intercepted inside the 10-yard line by Matt Diamond to end the Pioneers' potential nightmare and improve to 2-0 in the league, 2-1 overall. Conestoga captured a 7-0 lead on one of Gavin McCrory's two touchdown passes for the game, as he hit Charlie Wu for the 11-yard score.

Radnor tied it up a little over two minutes later. The Red Raiders took their only lead of the game in the second quarter. But the lead didn't hold up. With only 38 seconds left in the half, Conestoga took over on its own 31. With the clock running and no timeouts, McCrory knew that he had to work quickly. It took only two plays to tie the score. McCrory found Dave Brennan down the left sideline for the back-breaking score.

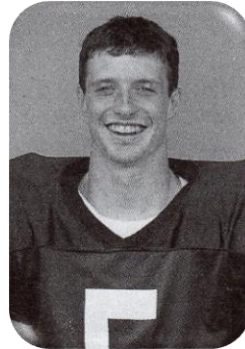
In the second half, the Pioneers defense kept Young in check on the ground as he rushed for only 11 yards, but when he moved out to the wide receiver spot, the defense couldn't get a handle on him.



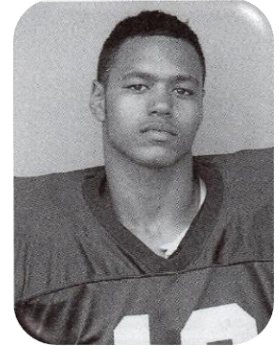
MATT DIAMOND
Captain
Senior 5-9, 170
Quarterback
Defensive Back



CHARLIE WU
Senior 5-10, 170
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back



ED MCCANN
Senior 5-10, 165
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back



KEVIN STROMAN
Senior 6-3, 185
Wide Receiver
Strong Safety

Pioneers Win Again

Daily Local News
September 28, 1997

By KEVIN SCOTT, Staff Writer

SPRINGFIELD—For the second time in as many weeks, the fate of the Conestoga High School football team rested on the final play of the game.

“I was thinking that we could get blown out or I could find out a lot about my team,” Donovan said of his thoughts after Springfield’s two quick scores. “We took their best punch and the kids really responded.”

The Pioneers sensational sophomore Marquis Weeks got Conestoga back in the game midway through the second quarter with a nine-yard run for a touchdown. Diamond dumped off a short little pass to Weeks, who scampered 80 yards down the left side of the field for the score.

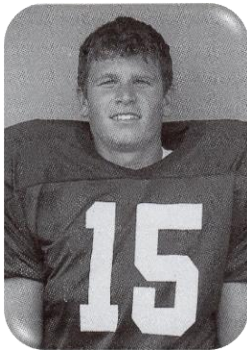
“The way that their defense was playing, they were packed in the middle, so they didn’t really have anybody back (to make the tackle),” Weeks said of the reception.

At the start of the fourth quarter, the Conestoga defense stepped up its play and stuffed three consecutive Cougar runs, forcing a punt. But on the first play after the punt, Diamond was intercepted by Lockley.

However, the Pioneers defense forced another punt, giving the offense an opportunity that it didn’t squander. Weeks was the big play man again. This time his score came on the ground, a 65-yard burst off of right tackle, to give Conestoga a one-point lead.

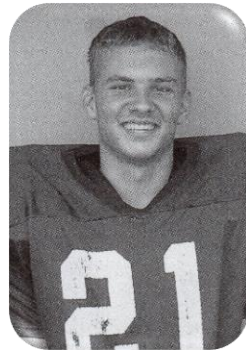
“I think two plays in particular were key for us,” Donovan said. “The long pass to Weeks was huge as well as our defense stand after we threw that interception. We stuck them three-and-out and then we come back and turn the ball right over. That could have been a huge momentum swinger.”

In the last two games, Conestoga has been able to make plays when they were needed and Donovan felt that, that has done much more than secure them two wins. “Probably it has helped this team develop an identity,” he said.



MATT TIEDE

Senior 6-1, 210
Punter
Place Kicker



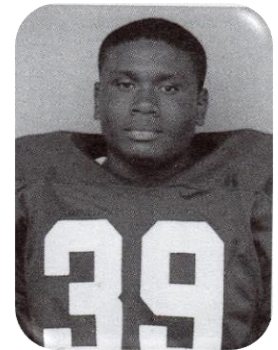
JUSTIN MASSIMIANO

Senior 6-0, 175
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back



ADAM MCNABB

Senior 5-7, 170
Fullback
Linebacker



ARTHUR FARQUHARSON

Senior 5-8, 190
Tight End
Defensive End

Pioneers fall to Haverford

Daily Local News

October 5, 1997

By SCOTT PAIDA, Staff Writer

HVERFORD—Saturday evening's Central League football game between Conestoga and host Haverford had a little bit of everything, particularly in a wild and wide-open first half.

But the one thing it did lack from Conestoga perspective was focus. And that was a big factor in a 38-20 Haverford victory. The Pioneers (3-2) got a 200 yard performance from sophomore Marquis Weeks and were right in the game at halftime, trailing by eight points.

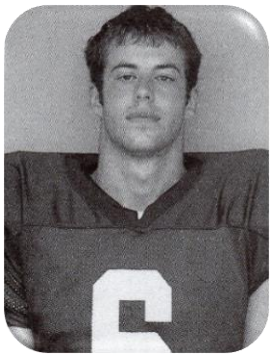
But the Fords (3-2) pitched a shutout in the second half while adding 10 more points to their lead and that

enabled them to snap Conestoga's three-game winning streak.

"Unfortunately, I don't think they focused on Haverford as much as they should have." Weeks got off to a blazing start for Conestoga rushing for 118 yards on his first three carries of the night. Two of those carries were for touchdowns, the second a 66-yard run that gave the Pioneers a 14-7 lead with 5:52 to play in the first quarter.

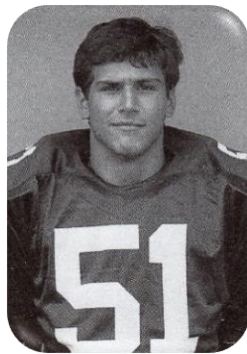
The wide-open pace continued in the second quarter, as Conestoga reclaimed the lead on a reverse, with Kyle Wildemore finding Dave Brennan for a 29-yard scoring strike.

The Pioneers missed the extra point, however, and Haverford went in front to stay.



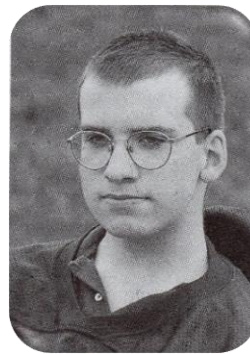
KYLE WILDEMORE

Junior 6-0, 175
Quarterback
Defensive Back



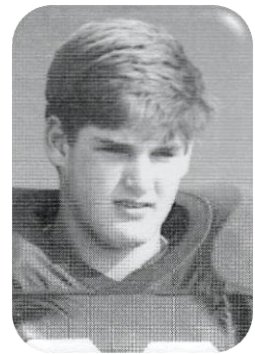
MIKE MOZZONE

Senior 5-11, 195
Offensive Lineman
Linebacker



WILLIE KEECH

Senior 5-3, 180
MVP



CHRIS BICKEL

6-2, 210
Offensive Lineman
Defensive End

Pioneers shut out by unbeaten Strath Haven

Daily Local News

October 11, 1997

By SCOTT PAIDA, Staff Writer

BERWYN—Even on a beautiful October Friday afternoon, it was hard not to notice the storm clouds circling around the Conestoga High School football team early on in its Central League game with visiting Strath Haven.

Two lost fumbles on their first two possessions turned out to be only the beginning of a long, dreary

day for the Pioneers as they dropped a 31-0 decision to the unbeaten Panthers.

Strath Haven (7-0) limited Conestoga to 108 yards in total offense and used a balanced attack of its own to send Conestoga (3-3) to its second straight loss.

“Our game plan was to run the ball and to try and keep their offense off the field and to try and get some momentum going...But we weren’t able to do that because their line handled our line pretty handily,” said Conestoga coach, Tim Donovan.

Penncrest downs Conestoga

Daily Local News

October 18, 1997

Marquis Weeks rushed for 326 yards and two touchdowns for the visiting Pioneers, but Penncrest still earned a 28-20 Central League victory over Conestoga. Penncrest improved to 5-3 while Conestoga dropped to 3-4.

Conestoga shows well despite 33-15 loss to Royals

Daily Local News

October 25, 1997

By SCOTT PAIDA, Staff Writer

BERWYN—The Conestoga High School football team managed to bring some positives out of Friday evening’s Central League game with visiting Upper Darby, even if one of them wasn’t the final score.

Despite dropping a 33-15 decision to the Royals, the Pioneers battled all the way and put forth a good showing against one of the league’s better clubs.

In the end, however, size and ball control made the difference for Upper Darby as it improved to 7-1 while sending Conestoga (3-5) to its fourth straight loss. “I thought this was one of our best efforts all year,” said Conestoga head coach Tim Donovan. “We played against a very good team, we were over-matched in certain positions and I thought our kids played extremely hard and I’m really proud of them.”

Conestoga bounced back late in the period and drew to within 12-6 with the help of a pair of big gains by running back Marquis Weeks as well as an Upper Darby penalty. Weeks picked up 15 yards on a screen pass from quarterback Matt Diamond and a pass

interference call against the Royals after an incomplete pass on third down set Conestoga up at the Upper Darby 14.

Two plays later, Weeks scored on a 16-yard run. Hannold’s 4-yard run gave the Royals some breathing room again at 20-6, but Conestoga’s Matt Hildenbrand kicked a 27-yard field goal with just three seconds remaining in the first half to keep the Pioneers within striking distance.

Once the third quarter got under way, however, Upper Darby didn’t waste any time tightening its grip on the game.

Conestoga took advantage of a bad punt snap to score the final points of the game. After the Royals were hit with a 31-yard loss on the miscue, Weeks scored his second touchdown of the night on a 31-yard run with 6:53 to go.

Donovan said he hopes the Pioneers can have a similar showing in terms of effort in the next game against Ridley. “We challenged them this week and they really responded well,” said Donovan. “It was a gut check and we’ll learn from it and move on.”

Special teams key, Ridley tops 'Stoga

Daily Local News

November 1, 1997

By SCOTT PAIDA, Staff Writer

BERWYN—The Conestoga High School football team didn't see anything in the way of surprises from visiting Ridley on Friday evening. It saw more than enough in the execution department.

"I thought Ridley's special teams really did a great job against us," said Conestoga head coach Tim Donovan. "Their special teams forced a lot of that (good) field position."

Donovan said the Pioneers worked on stopping Ridley's reverses in practice and were expecting them, but that it came down to simple execution. Conestoga broke in front 3-0 on a first quarter 20-yard field goal by Matt Hildenbrand but Ridley came right back.

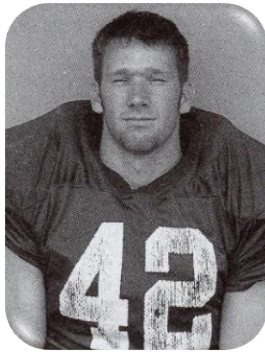
Conestoga fared much better in the second half, but the damage had already been done by the Green Raiders special teams. The Pioneers scored their only touchdown of the night with 2:21 to play in the third quarter.

Matt Walters made a nice catch on a 17-yard touchdown strike from quarterback Matt Diamond to bring the Pioneers to within 28-10. The Pioneers need to win their final three games, against Boyertown, West Chester Henderson and Marple Newtown, to get to .500.

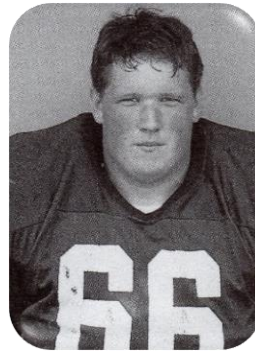
"They're three teams we match up with," said Donovan. "And we can salvage a .500 season if we win all three. We'll have to see what the kids are really made of."



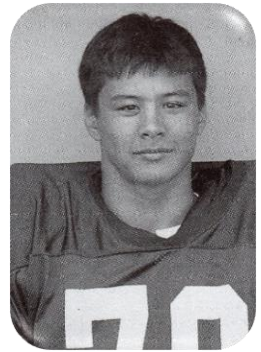
MATT HILDENBRAND
Sophomore 5-7, 150
Wide Receiver
Punter/ Kicker



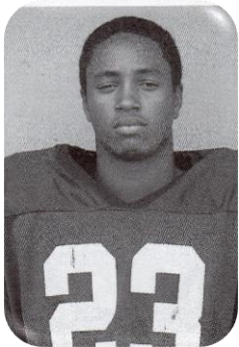
MATT WALTERS
Junior 6-1, 200
Tight End
Linebacker



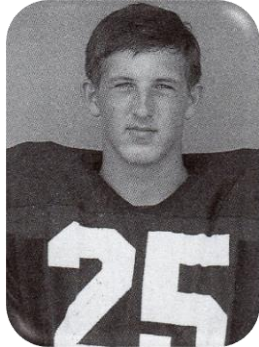
PAT EFFGEN
Senior 6-3, 240
Offensive Lineman
Defensive Lineman



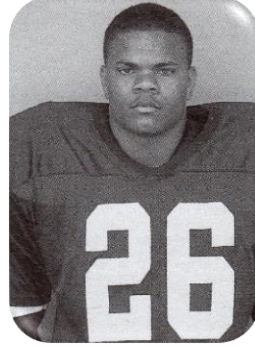
DAN LOVELL
Senior 5-11, 195
Offensive Lineman
Linebacker



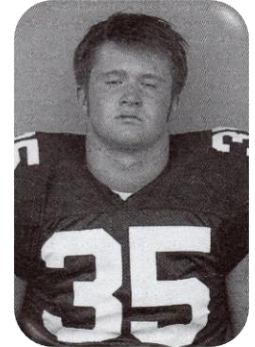
DANTE ALSTON
Junior 5-9, 180
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back



TOM WIMER
Junior 6-1, 180
Running Back
Defensive Back



BRANDON SMITH
Junior 5-8, 175
Fullback
Strong Safety



BRAD STANLEY
Junior 6-2, 210
Fullback
Linebacker

Weeks sets mark, Pioneers get win

Daily Local News

November 8, 1997

By CAROLYN CANDELORI, Staff Writer

BOYERTOWN—Marquis Weeks is just a sophomore but don't be fooled. The 10th-grader running back for the Conestoga High School football team is putting up numbers just like a veteran.

Weeks rushed for 212 yards on 26 carries Friday night and became the school's all-time leader rusher as the Pioneers bounced Boyertown 32-13 for a non-league win.

"I didn't want to think about (the record). I just wanted to get this win to get a good feeling again," said Weeks. Weeks scored three touchdowns Friday which included a 77-yard sprint, a nine-yard scamper, and a six-yard push. "Weeks is something special. If someone would have told me that he would have broken the school rushing record as a sophomore this year, I would have been in shock," said Conestoga coach Tim Donovan.

"I thought that he was very good, but I never thought that he could be this good. He's surpassing my expectations." Weeks and Donovan, and the entire Pioneer squad for that matter, wanted Friday's win as bad as if it were a playoff game. Conestoga was on a five-game losing skid prior to beating the Bears. Surrendering to the season was not an option.

"We've got to get back to .500. We've got to win two more games," said Weeks. "I don't know what to say about the season. We've had a lot of ups and downs, a lot of adversity."

After 3-and-out on their first possession, the Pioneers gave up a quick seven to the Bears (3-7) when Eric Babb, who reached the 3,000-yard career rushing mark, scrambled 16 yards into the end zone. But Conestoga (4-6) responded even quicker as Taiwan Cunningham weaved his way 95 yards on the kickoff to pull the Pioneers to within a point, 7-6.

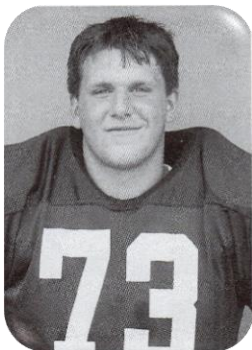
Weeks, behind the pushing and shoving of his line that included Chris Vaughn, Pete Keller, and Tom Aichele, rattled off his 77-yard TD run followed by senior quarterback Matt Diamond's one-yard surge into the end zone, putting Conestoga ahead, 18-7.

Conestoga held a comfortable 25-13 lead at the half and seemed to be in control until the Bears orchestrated a lengthy drive in the third quarter. But before they could reach pay dirt and swing the momentum, Conestoga's Andy Shea put an end to the drive, picking off Matthew Biehl's pass. Shea returned it 79 yards but had most of that called back on a clipping penalty.

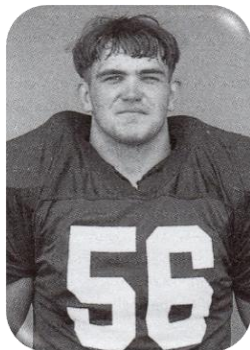
"That was a huge, huge play," said Donovan. "I'm really happy for him. He's a sophomore that's getting better each week. He really stepped up."

The Pioneers did not let Shea's great defensive effort go for naught. Diamond, Weeks, and senior fullback Scott Capelli made their way down field, capping off the drive, the scoring, and the victory with a six-yard TD run by Weeks.

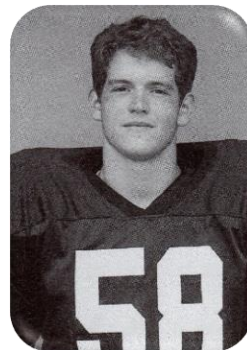
For Donovan, there was nothing more to say than, "After a five-game losing streak, it sure does feel good to win; it feels real good."



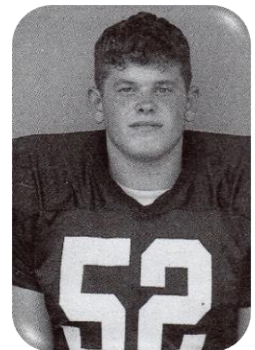
CHRIS VAUGHN
Captain
Senior 6-2, 245
Offensive Lineman
Defensive Lineman



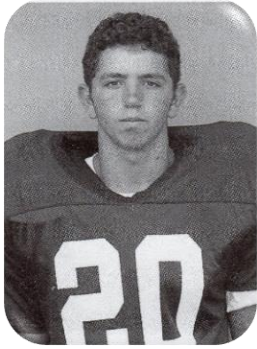
PETE KELLER
Sophomore 6-0, 220
Offensive Lineman
Defensive Lineman



TOM AICHELE
Senior 6-2, 210
Offensive Lineman
Defensive Lineman

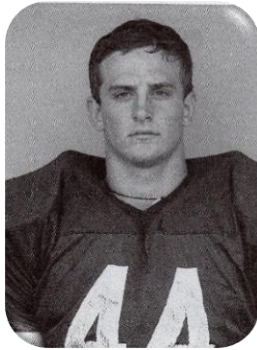


TRAVIS ALLRED
Junior 5-9, 185
Offensive Lineman
Linebacker



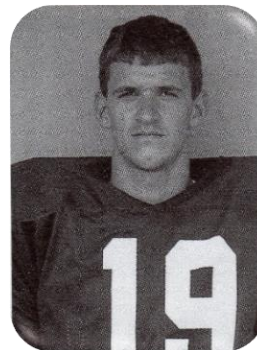
ANDY SHEA

Sophomore 5-10, 160
Wide Receiver
Defensive Back



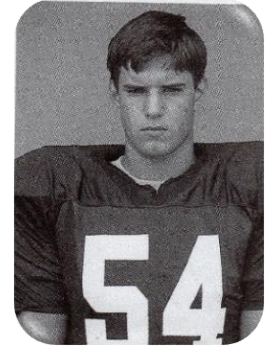
SCOTT CAPPELLI

Captain
Senior 6-1, 215
Fullback
Linebacker



DAVE BRENNAN

Junior 6-4, 180
Wide Receiver
Linebacker



ERIK TIFFT

Junior 6-0, 215
Offensive Lineman
Defensive Lineman

20-13 Victory

Conestoga Holds off Henderson Rally

Daily Local News

November 18, 1997

By MARK DALTON, Staff Writer

BERWYN—After Friday's foul weather forced West Chester Henderson and Conestoga High to stage a rare Monday night football contest, the Warriors and Pioneers put on an entertaining show worthy of the prime-time spotlight.

Conestoga (5-6) held off a late charge from Henderson to slip away with the 20-13 non-league victory. Pioneers running back Marquis Weeks rushed 16 times for 106 yards and scored twice while junior Gavin McCrory threw for 120 yards on 7-for-16 passing, including the game winning touchdown late in the fourth quarter.

With just under five minutes remaining and the score tied at 13, McCrory, who is the son of Phillies

center fielder Lenny Dykstra, fired a 51-yard scoring strike to receiver Dave Brennan for the go-ahead score.

"At halftime the coaches pointed out that their free safety was cheating a little bit toward the middle," said McCrory. "If we had the chance, we wanted to beat them with a pass on the back side and that's what happened on that play."

"Gavin made some big plays in some clutch situations for us and I'm really happy for him," said Conestoga head coach Tim Donovan.

On the third play of the second half, Weeks took a pitch from McCrory and ran wide right before breaking four tackles en route to a 51-yard touchdown run that put Conestoga up 13-6.

Conestoga can salvage a .500 season with a Thanksgiving win at Marple-Newtown while Henderson closes its campaign on Thanksgiving eve at East.

Pioneers finish strong

Pioneers earn .500 record

Big third quarter helps Conestoga top Marple-Newton, 48-34

Daily Local News

November 28, 1997

By KEVIN SCOTT, Staff Writer

NEWTOWN SQUARE—Despite the fact that the Conestoga High football team hit some rough patches this season, its Thanksgiving Day visit to rival Marple Newtown offered a chance for some redemption.

After the lead changed hands four times in the first half, the Pioneers used the halftime break to make adjustments on both sides of the ball. Everything clicked in the second half, as Conestoga posted 36 points—including 23 unanswered points in the third quarter—to capture a 48-34 victory and close out its season at 6-6.

“We started the season off 3-1, and the next thing you know, we were down 3-6,” Conestoga head coach Tim Donovan said. “So we wanted to right the ship and finish the season at .500.

The victory, which evened the series at 10-10-1, was the highest-scoring affair ever between the two teams on Thanksgiving.

Conestoga running sensation Marquis Weeks was his usual highlight-film self, rushing for 209 yards on 19 carries with three touchdowns. He finished the season with 2,090 rushing yards, becoming the first area back to eclipse the 2,000 yard mark in his sophomore season.

Trailing by two points at the start of the third quarter, Conestoga took its opening possession and marched 70 yards on six plays, finishing it off with a Matt Diamond 27-yard touchdown reception to take a 20-14 lead.

From there, the Conestoga defense held tight, forcing a pair of Marple punts on two straight possessions. The Pioneers then took advantage of the way the tired Tiger defense was setting up as Weeks

broke an 82-yard touchdown run. Marple (3-9) was unable to recover.

“We were in an unbalanced line and (Marple) really over-shifted to the unbalanced side, and we noticed that in the first half,” Donovan said of Weeks run. “So we made an adjustment to go back to the unbalanced side and when they over shifted, I knew that it was a touchdown.” “That was definitely the turning point,” Weeks said of the score. “It snapped them.”

Weeks added another score on the ground before the Tigers finally got on the scoreboard in the second half with a Rob Itri 63-yard touchdown reception from Keith Gornish as time ran out in the third quarter, cutting the lead to 35-21.

But the Pioneers upped their lead to 48-21 after a 57-yard touchdown run by Taiwan Cunningham and a 1-yard rumble by fullback Scott Capelli.

The Pioneers ran for only 82 yards in the first half, in the second half Weeks felt that the reason for this was that the Tigers’ defense was just worn out. “We knew that they were going to get tired because they had a lot of guys going both ways. We wore them down with the pass and it opened up the run,” Weeks said.

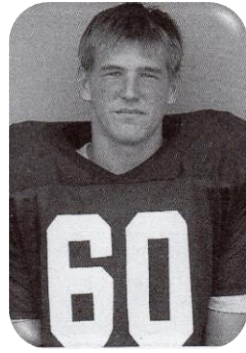
Conestoga quarterback Gavin McCrory showed great patience throughout. The patience was evident early when he avoided the oncoming rush and found Weeks in the flat for a 14-yard touchdown reception.

“To be honest, I expected maybe a 1,000 yard season and for him to have a learning experience each game,” Donovan said of his expectations for Weeks before the season. “But he came in his first game and played like he has been starting three years.”

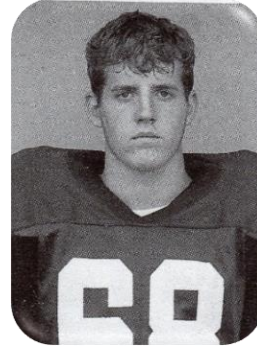
“I wasn’t looking for 2,000 (yards), but I was looking for at least a thousand,” Weeks said of his goal prior to the season. “I doubled that one up. Surprise, surprise.”



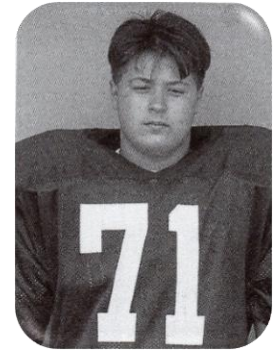
MIKE DESJADON
 Junior 6-1, 200
 Offensive Lineman
 Defensive Lineman



BOB BJORHUS
 Junior 6-3, 195
 Offensive Lineman
 Defensive End



TENCH TILGHMAN
 Junior 5-11, 185
 Offensive Lineman
 Defensive Lineman



KENT YARUZ
 Junior 5-9, 180
 Offensive Lineman
 Defensive Lineman

Sophomores



LARRY CABRELLI
 Junior 6-2, 205
 Tight End
 Linebacker



Front Row: Andy Siravo, Matt Hildenbrand, Chris Murphy
 Gordon Rose, Albert Lee

Middle Row: Miles Bower, Eddie Rogers, Andy Shea, Chris DeMaskey
 Mike Wham, Matt Milnes, Rich Watson

Back Row: Marquis Weeks, Pete Keller, John Thach, Chris Gohean,
 Andrew Bradley, Joe Leonard, Kevin Nacios

The 1997 Pioneers finished the season strong earning a 6-6 record. Tim Donovan was the Head Coach. Captains were Matt Diamond, Chris Bickel, Chris Vaughn and Scott Cappelli. Wins were recorded vs. Radnor, Springfield, Lower Merion, Boyertown, West Chester Henderson and Marple Newtown. Outstanding members of the team were Marquis Weeks, Chris Vaughn, Gavin McCrory, Taiwan Cunningham, Matt Diamond, Charlie Wu, Dave Brennan, Kyle Wildemore, Matt Hildenbrand, Matt Walter, Pete Keller, Tom Aichele, Andy Shea, Scott Cappelli.