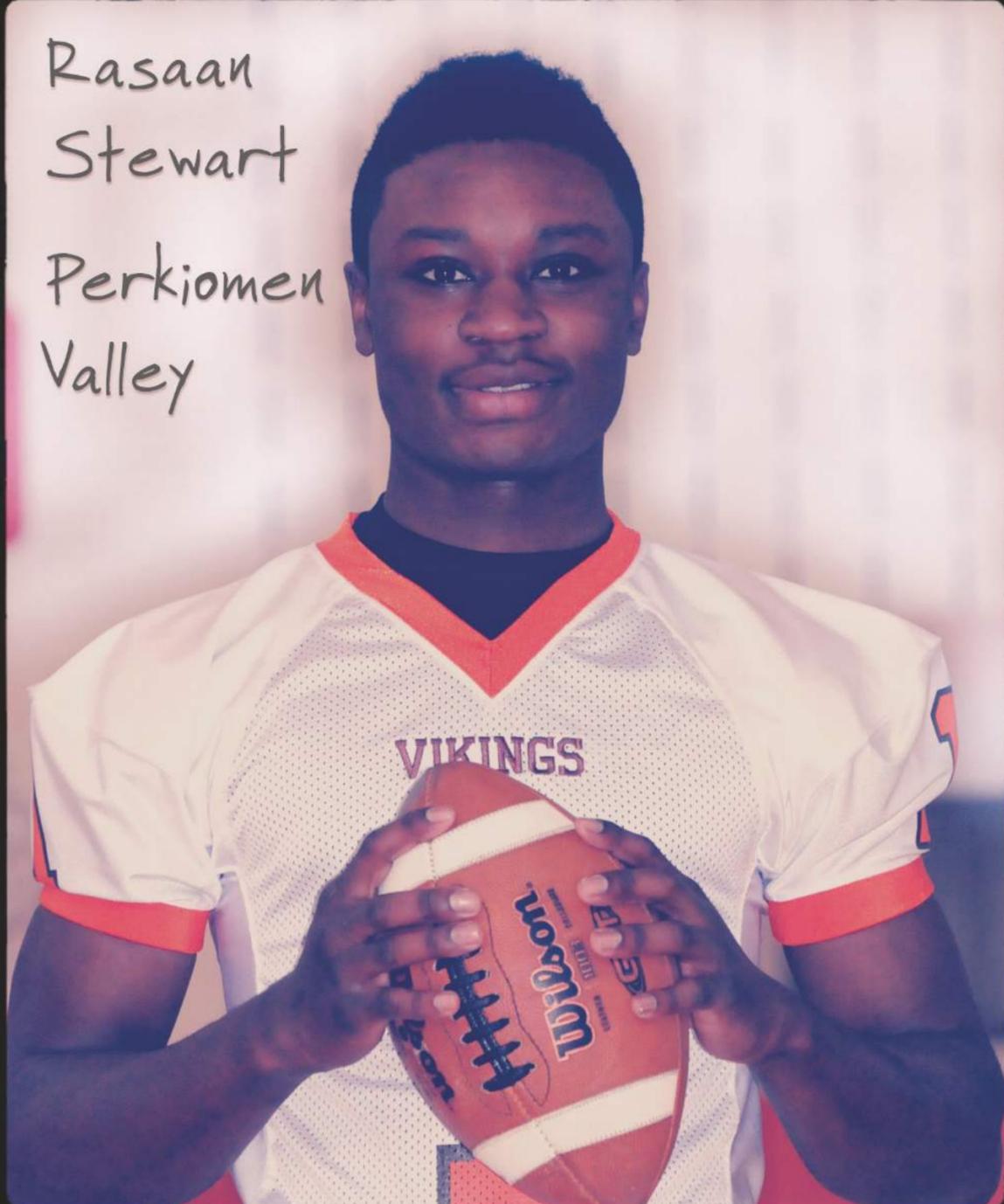




2 THE MERCURY 2013 FALL ALL-AREA

FOOTBALL

Rasaan
Stewart
Perkiomen
Valley



2 RVP100

INSIDE: ALL-AREA TEAMS, COACH OF YEAR

Like a Rock

Stewart carries Vikings to new heights, repeats as area's top athlete

By Darryl Grumling
dgrumling@pottsmmerc.com

When Perkiomen Valley football coach Scott Reed first laid eyes on Rasaan Stewart, some five years ago, it ironically enough wasn't on the gridiron.

It was on the basketball court, and Stewart made an indelible initial impression on Reed, who was officiating the game.

"He seemed very aggressive, athletic and intense," Reed said. "I remember thinking

he should be playing football with all that intensity."

Stewart eventually wound up not only playing high school football, but playing it about as well as anyone in Perkiomen Valley (and area) history.

After a breakout junior year in which he was named The Mercury's All-Area Player of the Year, many wondered what Stewart could do for an encore.

Please see **STEWART** on C2



NFL

Bears not just a warmup for Cowboys

By Bob Grotz

bgrotz@21st-centurymedia.com

PHILADELPHIA — To understand how far the Eagles have come under Chip Kelly and how far they need to go, simply tune in Sunday night when they take on the Chicago Bears (8:30, Channel 10, WIP 94.1-FM).

It's the ultimate test of Kelly's "one-game season" mantra in that the Eagles will know before the kickoff whether they're playing for the division title and a playoff berth or for nothing more than potential, repeat, potential playoff seeding.

If the Dallas Cowboys (7-7) knock off the Washington Redskins (3-11) in an early game Sunday, the Eagles' result with the Bears would mean nothing more than possibly a better seed in the playoffs. That's because the Eagles (8-6) would have to win at Dallas, which triumphs via the head-to-head tiebreaker if the teams finish with the same record, in the last week of the season just to reach the playoffs.

If the Cowboys lose and the Eagles win, the Birds clinch the NFC East championship. They also could secure the No. 3 seed in the playoffs with a Green Bay Packers loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers Sunday.

Sound simple? Cary Williams was the only player who admitted it, but the Eagles were trounced last week by the crippled Minnesota Vikings partly because they got caught looking ahead.

Level-headed safety Nate Allen helped put the dynamic in perspective without the use of "It is what it is."

"Everybody has been asking about Dallas but it doesn't matter what they do," Allen said. "I mean it does but we can't worry about it. That's why these two games are important for us. If we handle our business we'll be able to let everything just fall into place.

"It is a one-game season ... But it is (also) a two-game season."

The Bears (8-6) are in the same kind of boat. Their game with the Eagles could be strictly for potential seeding if the Detroit Lions lose to the New York Giants and the Packers win. In the latter scenario the Bears might rest key players.

The Bears would clinch the No. 3 seed in the playoffs Sun-

Please see **EAGLES** on C6

PIONEER ATHLETIC CONFERENCE BOYS BASKETBALL

Balanced scoring leads PJP over Pottstown

By Dennis Weller
sports@pottsmmerc.com

POPE JOHN PAUL II 58
POTTSTOWN 54

UPPER PROVIDENCE—A couple of the usual high scorers for the Pope John Paul II boys were shut down pretty well by Pottstown's defense on Saturday afternoon. But that certainly did not mean that the Golden Panthers were lacking players who could put the ball in the basket.

Tim Tadros helped pick up the slack with 17 points, James McKen scored 12, and Nick Giampietro chipped in 10 for PJP in a 58-54 Pio-

neer Athletic Conference Frontier Division win. Rich Duvivier scored 22 for the Trojans, who knocked an eight-point deficit with two minutes remaining all the way down to one before the hosts hit four straight from the line to wrap up the win.

"On any given day, one of us can go out and be the leading scorer," said Tadros, who grabbed a big rebound in the final seconds to end the last chance for the Trojans. "We're

balanced. We've all been playing together. We all have talent."

"For us to be successful, we have to be a balanced team," added Panther coach Jack Flanagan. "Even when we're not seemingly balanced, we are. Our shot distribution is balanced."

Pottstown (1-2, 2-4) led by as many as six points in the first half when Duvivier hit two straight three-point shots for a 20-14 advantage with 3:15 to go. But Pope John Paul

Please see **PJP** on C6



Kevin Hoffman/
The Mercury
Pope John Paul II's Tim Tadros attacks the basket for an easy layup during the first half of the Golden Panthers' victory on Saturday.

Rasaan Stewart: Mercury All-Area Player of the Year

FALL ALL-AREA

FOOTBALL FIRST TEAM

Jeff Adams, Pottsgrove
Linebacker ... 6-3, 205 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Spiritual leader of stingy defense that helped Falcons bring home their second straight PAC-10 title ... Finished with 90 tackles, 2.5 sacks and two fumble recoveries.

Marquis Barefield, Pottsgrove
Running back ... 5-8, 150 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Finished third in area with 1,578 rushing yards and 23 rushing TDs ... Ran for a career-best 294 yards and four touchdowns in a 62-29 Week 10 victory over Boyertown and had a 201-yard, five-TD game against Phoenixville.

Mike Cassidy, Methacton
Punter ... 6-1, 220 ... Senior ... Mini Max award winner ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Was a key special teams weapon, unloading punts of 54 and 52 yards in Week 1 against Bayard Rustin, averaging 53 yards on four punts in a Week 3 victory over Boyertown and booming a 60-yarder in Week 7 against Owen J. Roberts ... Averaged an area-best 39.2 yards per punt.

Dakota Clanagan, Perkiomen Valley
Athlete ... 5-10, 172 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Primarily a slot receiver, led area with 12 touchdown grabs ... Had 39 receptions for 628 yards, highlighted by a 151-yard, four-catch, three-TD performance in a 60-20 District 1-AAAA quarterfinal win over Central Bucks West.

Clay Domine, Perkiomen Valley
Wide receiver ... 6-3, 195 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Registered a team-high 44 receptions for 723 yards and 11 touchdowns for the Vikings ... Had nine catches for 112 yards and three TDs in a 26-6 win over Bayard Rustin in a District 1-AAAA tourney opener.

Luke DiElsi, Perkiomen Valley
Defensive tackle ... 6-0, 221 ... Senior ... Second team PAC-10 selection ... Recorded 87 tackles, seven tackles for loss, one sack and two forced fumbles to help the Vikings pitch four shutouts and hold opponents to seven points or less on nine different occasions.

Patrick Finn, Pottsgrove
Offensive/defensive lineman ... 6-3, 251 ... Junior ... Two-way first-team PAC-10 selection ... Anchored area's best offensive line and led Falcons in pancake blocks ... Had a 20-yard fumble return in a 62-29 Week 10 win over Boyertown ... Had 56 tackles, including 2.5 sacks.

Mike Fowler, Pottsgrove
Cornerback ... 6-0, 171 ... Junior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Considered the area's top cover man ... Had two interceptions, while shutting down the opposition's top target throughout season for area's No. 1-ranked pass defense.

Dave Gulati, Spring-Ford
Kicker ... 5-8, 155 ... Senior ... Led area kickers with 55 points, including six field goals ... Booted three field goals, including a 36-yarder, in a 30-7 Week 7 win over Methacton.

Austin Jacobs, Boyertown
Offensive line ... 6-4, 290 ... Senior ... Second team All PAC-10 selection ... Big, strong tackle who cleared holes for feature back Cody Richmond and protected quarterback Griffin Pasik to help the Bears lead the area in total offense ... Three-year starter.

Seth Jonassen, Perkiomen Valley
Offensive line ... 6-3, 251 ... Junior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Stalwart in unit that was key in 1,000-yard rushing seasons of QB Rasaan Stewart and FB Mark Bonomo as well as 2,000-yard passing season of Stewart as Vikings matched school record with 10 wins.

Jarred Jones, Spring-Ford
Running back ... 5-11, 195 ... Senior ... Second team PAC-10 selection ... Mini Max award winner ... Piled up area-bests of 1,861 rushing yards, 29 touchdowns and a 10.2 yards-per-carry average ... Had three 200-plus-yard efforts, including a 243-yard, four TD outburst against Boyertown in Week 4 ... Ran for 231 yards and five TDs in 43-21 District 1-AAAA first-round win over Downingtown West.

Travis Kline, Upper Perkiomen
Wide receiver ... 6-4, 178 ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Led the PAC-10 with 46 receptions and 855 receiving yards to go along with five touchdown grabs ... Had 10 catches for 137 yards and one TD in Week 8 against Pottstown and nine grabs for 185 yards and a score in Week 10 vs. Perkiomen Valley.

Danny Light, Perkiomen Valley
Linebacker ... 6-0, 201 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ...

Racked up a team-high 149 tackles for a defense that allowed an area-low 10.0 points per game ... Also had five tackles for loss, one sack, three forced fumbles and one fumble recovery.

Tyrone Parker, Pottsgrove
Linebacker ... 6-2, 175 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Turned in monster season highlighted by team-high 103 tackles, 5.5 sacks and two blocked punts ... Had 13 tackles and three sacks in a 14-7 win over Spring-Ford, and 11 tackles in 23-12 victory over Perkiomen Valley.

Sene Polamalu, Pottsgrove
Linebacker ... 6-0, 220 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Amassed 53 tackles and six sacks in helping Falcons run PAC-10 regular season winning streak to 23 games ... Mini Max award winner.

Anthony Pond, Pottsgrove
Offensive/defensive lineman ... 5-11, 200 ... Senior ... Two-way first-team All PAC-10 selection ... Key element in O-line that helped Falcons average an area-best 287 rushing yards per game ... Collected 38 tackles and 2.5 sacks.

Cody Richmond, Boyertown
Fullback ... 6-0, 180 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Mini Max award winner ... Amassed 1,625 rushing yards on 302 carries, including a school and Berks single-game record 46 in a Week 10 loss to Pottsgrove, when he also ran for a career-high 268 yards.

Mason Romano, Spring-Ford
Defensive end ... 6-0, 210 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Totalled 69 tackles, including 17 for loss and an area-high eight sacks ... Also had nine hurries, three forced fumbles, three passes defended and one interception while causing major disruption in the opposing backfield.

Tom Sefhakis, Pottsgrove
Offensive lineman ... 5-10, 255 ... Senior ... Second team PAC-10 selection ... Two-year starter ... Rock-solid presence at center who contributed to a unit that averaged an area-best 42.7 points per game.

Kyle Schutt, Boyertown
Offensive tackle ... 6-4, 295 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Most physical and consistent blocker on the team, according to Bears coach Mark Scisly ... Paved the way for an offense that averaged an area-best 415 total yards per game ... Three-year starter who blocked for four 1,000-yard rushers during his career.

Grant Smith, Hill School
Wide receiver ... 6-4, 200 ... Senior ... Hauled in a school-record 66 receptions for 1,078 yards and five touchdowns ... Had 13 catches for 197 yards in Week 2 against Episcopal Academy and 13 catches for 207 yards in Week 6 vs. Blair Academy.

Rasaan Stewart, Perkiomen Valley
Quarterback/safety ... 6-1, 182 ... Senior ... First team All PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Threw for 2,068 yards and 26 touchdowns while rushing for a team-high 1,204 yards and 17 TDs in helping Vikings (10-3) reach the District 1-AAAA semifinals ... All-Area Player of the Year.

Robby Varner, Spring-Ford
Defensive tackle ... 6-1, 220 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Repeat All-Area pick ... Collected 68 tackles, including 15 for loss and three sacks ... Also had 12 hurries and two interception returns for touchdowns and was a major force in the Rams' third straight double-digit victory season.

Akeem Walcott, Methacton
Cornerback ... 5-9, 180 ... Junior ... Second team PAC-10 selection ... Shared area lead with five interceptions, including one four a touchdown ... Notched 34 tackles (23 solo) ... Good open field tackler and the team's best cover guy, according to Warriors coach Paul Lepre.

Tyler Zilen, Boyertown
Tight end ... 6-4, 240 ... Senior ... First team PAC-10 selection ... Collected 25 receptions for 381 yards and three TDs ... Had six catches for 102 yards and a TD in a season-ending 50-28 win over Northampton ... Very physical blocker.

Coach: Rick Pennypacker, Pottsgrove
Guided the Falcons to an 11-1 campaign highlighted by their second straight Pioneer Athletic Conference championship and District 1-AAA semifinal appearance ... Falcons qualified for postseason for eighth straight year, notched seventh straight season with double-digit victories and ran their PAC-10 regular season winning streak to 23 games.



Adrianna Hoff/ 21st Century Media

Perkiomen Valley quarterback Rasaan Stewart runs against North Penn in the District 1-AAAA quarterfinals. Stewart erupted for an 81-yard touchdown run on the first play from scrimmage in the loss.

This fall, he answered the question with a scintillating senior season that helped the Vikings carve out an historic campaign.

The 6-foot-1, 182-pound Stewart racked up an area-best 2,068 passing yards and 26 touchdowns while also rushing for a team-high 1,204 yards and 17 touchdowns for the Vikings (10-3), who matched a school-record for wins in a season, won their first District 1-AAAA playoff game in school history and advanced to the District 1 semis.

Those accomplishments made Stewart — the son of Chris and Cynthia Stewart of Collegeville — an easy choice to repeat as All-Area Player of the Year.

Back in ninth grade, Stewart actually started out as a running back.

"I was just looking for a sport to play," he recalled. "Something to kill some time and have some fun."

Reed and PV assistant Rob Heist envisioned so much more, and so began the process of transitioning Stewart to QB.

"Rob and I felt he was the best athlete in our program, and we wanted the chance to have a three-year quarterback," Reed said. "It was slow going at first, but he worked so hard to be a good QB. I think he took ownership over the position. He wanted to prove to his coaches, teammates and opponents that he could be a good QB."

And so Stewart began the journey from diamond in the rough to dazzling gem — one that certainly didn't happen overnight.

"I've definitely improved greatly from where I started," Stewart said. "My sophomore year, I could barely throw a spiral 20 yards, but I just kept working."

After being primarily a running QB two years ago, Stewart came into his own as a junior, when he ran for 1,210 yards and 21 touchdowns and completed 61 percent of his passes for 1,636 yards and 12 touchdowns.

"What really motivated me was the fact that they gave me an opportunity to play at that (starting QB) level at a young age," Stewart said. "I realized I had to take advantage of it, and ever since that day I've been trying to give it all I have to the best of my ability."

Stewart's physical traits are well-documented. He has the speed to take a quarterback draw 81 yards to the house (as he did in the first play from scrimmage of the Vikings' district semifinal against North Penn) and the arm strength and precision to put intermediate and deep throws right on the money to big-play receiving threats Clay Domine and Dakota Clanagan.

But to run PV's no-huddle offense, it takes more than a gifted athlete.

"Rock (Stewart) is very cerebral, especially when it comes to football," Reed said. "He loves watching film, whether it's opponents, his teammates or himself. He knew our offense inside and out. He knew exactly what his receivers were doing — when they were going to make their breaks, and where the ball needed to be thrown."

"He and his teammates would do a lot of extra work when no one was around. We would have 7-on-7 scrimmages and they would go throw some more when it was over or when we got home from traveling. He loves the game of football and I think it rubbed off on everyone around him."

Stewart also loves to compete with a zealot-like fervor. A mild-mannered, soft-spoken sort off the field, he seemingly transforms into a wild animal between the lines.

Please see STEWART on C3

High School
SPORTS.
Anytime.
Anywhere.



GAMETIMEPA
YOUR HOME FOR HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS IN SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Web. Mobile. Facebook.

Rasaan Stewart: Mercury All-Area Player of the Year

FALL ALL-AREA

FOOTBALL ALL-AREA

SECOND TEAM

Offense
Wide receivers: Dillon Alderfer, Methacton; Nick Brough, Boyertown; Gary Hopkins, Spring-Ford.

Tight end: Jeff Adams, Pottsgrove.

Offensive linemen: Josh Boyer, Spring-Ford; Brock Johnson, Boyertown; Jalonte Lighty, Pottstown; Steve Myers, Owen J. Roberts; David Pettine, Boyertown; Max Wickward, Pottsgrove.

Quarterback: Conner Derrickson, Methacton.

Fullback: Mark Bonomo, Perkiomen Valley.

Running backs: Kyle Myers, Daniel Boone; Wyatt Scott, Daniel Boone.

Kicker: Jon Klinger, Pottsgrove.
Athlete: Riley Michaels, Pottsgrove.

Defense

Lineman: Nico Demetrio, Pottsgrove; Darius Hinton, Daniel Boone; Paul Hossler, Phoenixville; Austin Jacobs, Boyertown; Tony Pachella, Perkiomen Valley; Alec Vagnozzi, Spring-Ford.

Linebackers: Anthony Borzillo, Boyertown; Mike Cassidy, Methacton; Austin Gansz, Perkiomen Valley; Jake Leahy, Spring-Ford; Nick Torcini, Methacton.

Backs: Dillon Alderfer, Methacton; Kurrin Holland, Perkiomen Valley; Kyle Lowery, Methacton; Riley Michaels, Pottsgrove; Jarred Shoemaker, Spring-Ford; Justin Siejk, Boyertown.

Punter: Cole Luzins, Phoenixville.

HONORABLE MENTION

Offense
Wide receivers: John Charles, Pottstown; Mike Fowler, Pottsgrove; Kyle Lowery, Methacton; Tom Pufnock, Daniel Boone.

Tight end: Zack Gallow, Phoenixville; Ja'ren Hampton,

Perkiomen School.

Offensive linemen: Jeremy Bartman, Daniel Boone; Justin Bossard, Methacton; Jeremy Cuadrado, Pottsgrove; Austin Gansz, Perkiomen Valley; Tyler German, Spring-Ford; Paul Hossler, Phoenixville; Colin Mea, Phoenixville; Liam Steiert, Pope John Paul II; Chase Stine, Spring-Ford;

Quarterback: Griffin Pasik, Boyertown.

Fullbacks: Mike Cassidy, Methacton; Kirk Cherneskie, Pope John Paul II, Sene Polamalu, Pottsgrove.

Running backs: Tom Aaron, Perkiomen School; Nick Howarth, Pope John Paul II; Aidan Schaffer, Upper Perkiomen.

Kickers: Matt Genuardi, Perkiomen Valley; Elijah Giorgio, Boyertown; Drew Kresge, Daniel Boone; Taylor LeSage, Methacton.

Athlete: John Bildstein, Pope John Paul II.

Defense

Linemen: Will Dawson, Owen J. Roberts; Bido Gouda, Methacton; Kolten Hainsey, Owen J. Roberts; Zack Gallow, Phoenixville; Dylan Marquette, Daniel Boone; Kyle Schutt, Boyertown; Tyler Zilen, Boyertown.

Linebackers: Devin Bradley, Methacton; Kirk Cherneskie, Pope John Paul II; Andy Lovre-Smith, Spring-Ford; Mike Murphy, Boyertown; Jon Passifione, Daniel Boone.

Backs: Joe Bush, Spring-Ford; Cody Davis, Spring-Ford; Derek Fosbenner, Perkiomen School; Paul Galanti, Daniel Boone; Liam Grande, Perkiomen Valley; Brad Kinckner, Owen J. Roberts; Jalen Mayes, Pottsgrove; Isaiah Smith, Perkiomen School; Xavier Smith, Daniel Boone; Brandon Tinson, Pottstown.

Punter: Andrew Bill, Boyertown.

— Compiled by DARRYL GRUMLING

STEWART, from C2

"I have a love for the game, a love for getting better and competing, and a hatred of losing," Stewart said. "On Friday nights, something changes inside of me and my competitive side comes out. That happens in basketball, ping-pong or anything else I compete in."

Three games into this season, Stewart's hopes of helping the Vikings bring home a Pioneer Athletic Conference championship were dealt a big blow after a 14-7 loss to Spring-Ford. Then in Week 9, Stewart and PV had a shot to earn a share of the league title but came up short again in a 23-12 loss to eventual league champion Pottsgrove.

That could have been where the story ended, but Stewart wasn't about to let that happen.

"After I knew we weren't going to win the PAC-10, I didn't want my senior year to end on that note," Stewart said. "Great players wind up winning big games and helping make history, and that was something I really wanted to do: to help my team get to that stage and bring something like that to my school before I leave."

Thanks to a memorable three-week trek through the District 1 Tournament, Stewart did his part to accomplish that mission.

First, he threw for 225 yards and three touchdowns as No. 15 seed Perkiomen Valley took down unbeaten No. 2 seed Bayard Rustin 26-6 in the first round.

Then, Stewart delivered a career-high 268-yard, four-TD passing outburst in a shocking 60-20 victory over traditional power C.B. West, while also rushing for 96 yards and two TDs and tacking on a kickoff-return score for good measure in what will be considered his career-defining performance.

A week later, in the semis, he scored three first-half touchdowns to put the fear of God into powerful North Penn as the Vikings took a nine-point second quarter lead, before the Knights countered with 30 unanswered points on the way to a 40-19

win that ended the PV season.

By that time, however, Stewart's legacy had been firmly secured.

Though he finished his career with 4,438 passing yards, 2,954 rushing yards and 96 total touchdowns, Stewart's gaudy numbers only tell part of his impact, according to Reed.

"The fuel to his fire this season was all team- and program-driven," Reed said. "He wanted to win the PAC-10, go to districts and win games in the postseason. He never missed a workout, never missed an off-season team day and never missed a conditioning or acclimation day. He deserves everything he gets. He has talent, but that wasn't enough for him. He nurtured his talent. So many guys have talent and no work ethic or work ethic with little talent. He is the rare occurrence where he had plenty of both."

"I think he can look back on his high school career with no regrets. He did everything he could to make himself and our program better. He is leaving with our football program in a better state than when he got here. Myself, the rest of the coaching staff and all of those who support PV football will forever be grateful for the time we had with Rasaan Stewart."

Stewart's football career will continue next year at the college level, and earlier this week he said he was getting close to making a decision — with schools such as Penn State, Pittsburgh, and Villanova topping his list.

"It's definitely going to be a new experience," said Stewart, who is projected by most schools as a defensive back. "I'm going to miss my teammates a lot, especially this senior class, but I'm looking forward to being able to make some new memories and showing everyone who supported me that you can do anything if you put your mind to it."

Stewart's fabulous final scholastic season was a perfect example of that.

Follow Darryl Grumling on Twitter @MercSmokinD.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM BLACKMANS CYCLES ALL YOUR POWERSPORTS NEEDS FROM BLACKMANS CYCLE CENTER

USE THE COUPON BELOW FOR YOUR NEXT PURCHASE



ski-doo

20% OFF
PARTS & ACCESSORIES ONLY

Bring in this Coupon for 20 % Off
Your Next Purchase.
Valid 12/14-12/31/2013 Not Valid
on Sale Priced Items.

Happy Holidays From



4911 Buckeye Road., Emmaus, PA 18049
Hours: Monday - Friday 9 to 7 • Saturday 9 to 4
www.blackmancycle.com 610-965-9865