



Salem at Beverly Thanksgiving football preview

Salem News

Salem (5-4) at Beverly (8-1)

Tomorrow at Hurd Stadium, 10 a.m.

What's at stake

The host Panthers, who are looking for their sixth straight win, can equal their best season since 1998 with a victory in tomorrow morning's 108th playing of "The Game." For the visiting Witches, it's a chance to snap a two-game losing streak and finish with a winning record for the first time since 1999's Super Bowl year. The grand daddy of all North Shore high school sporting events dates back to 1891, with Beverly holding a slim 51-49-7 all-time series lead.

3 keys to victory

Beverly

1. Stay multi-dimensional on offense. It's no secret that Beverly has its most success when running outside the tackles, whether it's tailback **Pat Bailey** breaking a long run off a toss or counter, or quarterback **Nick Tanzella** hooking up with receivers on swing plays. While they'll undoubtedly go to their bread-and-butter often, mixing things up and running inside - like the isolation plays that worked last week against Gloucester - is a must.

2. Don't over-commit defensively. Salem loves to run the jet sweep to the outside with **Melikke Van Alostyne**, and can also hurt opponents with their inside trap-and-belly plays behind its big, athletic offensive line. Beverly defenders have to remain balanced and fundamentally sound with their keys and reads, being able to recognize formations and plays as they develop and react to them accordingly.

3. Finish what they started. The current seniors entered Beverly High the same time **Dan Bauer** began coaching the Panthers in 2003. They've been through plenty of ups and downs together but culminated their high school careers with the best Panther football season in almost a decade. After all they've been through, nothing less than a holiday win against their arch rivals will suffice for the outgoing seniors.

Salem

1. Power the Panthers. Salem holds a distinct size advantage in the trenches, and it plans on playing power football to be successful tomorrow morning. Specifically, look for the visitors to try and put a "hat" (i.e., helmet) on Beverly's outstanding middle linebacker, **J. Michael Nardella**, on virtually every play in hopes of taking him out of a potential tackle and open up the running lanes.

2. Slow down Bailey by shutting down the perimeter. It's imperative that the Witches' defensive ends, outside linebackers and defensive backs find a way to slow down Bailey - admittedly, a tall task - any chance they get and keep him from breaking a long one down the sidelines. The ability to gang tackle the speedy Panther tailback and wrap him up at any and all opportunities is a must. (A wet, muddy field wouldn't hurt Salem's chances, either).

3. Relish its role as the underdog. Salem comes into Hurd Stadium tomorrow essentially with nothing to lose. Beverly has the better record, has won three straight in the series and is playing before its home crowd, so the Witches feel all the pressure lies with their Garden City hosts. Coach **Scott Connolly** wants his team to be loose, have fun and be ready to go - not walking on eggshells in this, the biggest game of their lives.

Individual Leaders

Scoring

Beverly

Player TD-PA-PTS

Pat Bailey 18 0 108

Greg Pierce 8 0 48

*Llazar Cuko 0 25 29

Pat Abate 3 0 18

** Includes two field goals*

Salem

Player TD-PA-PTS

MelikkeVan Alstyne 13 1 80

Dan Murray 2 1 14

Cris Chalmers 2 0 12

Mael Walkowiak 2 0 12

Rushing Yards

Beverly

Player Att. Yds. TDs

Pat Bailey 144 1,255 15

Greg Pierce 62 517 6

J. Michael Nardella 37 241 2

David Mock 14 183 2

Salem

Player Att. Yds. TDs

Melikke Van Alstyne 172 1,120 12

Dan Murray 101 432 2

Cris Chalmers 47 201 2

Mael Walkowiak 20 60 0

Passing Yards

Beverly

Player Comp. Att. Yards TDs

Nick Tanzella 39 71 439 4

Salem

Player Comp. Att. Yards TDs

Nick Charlton 22 48 335 5

Receiving Yards

Beverly

Player No. Yds. TDs

Sean Deady 12 122 0

Matt McAniff 6 115 0

Pat Abate 8 83 3

Greg Pierce 4 56 1

Salem

Player No. Yds. TDs

Franklin Abreu 8 183 1

Mael Walkowiak 5 61 2

Garrett Gilbert 3 30 1

Anthony Silva 1 26 0

Did You Know?

Beverly is going for its fourth straight win over Salem, something it hasn't accomplished since the Black and Orange won six straight against the Witches from 1950-55. The last time Salem won four in a row over the Panthers came between 1972-77, when it also captured six straight holiday meetings.

- Compiled by Phil Stacey

STARTING LINEUPS

BEVERLY (8-1)

OFFENSE

No.&Name&Yr.&Pos.

11%Matt McAniff%Sr.% WR

65%Nick Traicoff%Sr.% LT

52%Liam Blodgett% Jr.%LG

79%Brian Kureta%Jr.% C

57%Nate Verry%Sr.%RG

72%Nick Doig% Sr.%RT

87%Pat Abate%Jr.% TE

17%Sean Deady%Jr.% WR

12%Nick Tanzella%Sr.% QB

35%J. Michael Nardella%Sr.%FB

34%Pat Bailey Sr.% TB

DEFENSE

No.&Name&Yr.&Pos.

65%Nick Traicoff%Sr.%LE

73%Kevin Thomasson%Sr.%DT

79%Brian Kureta%Jr.%DT

87%Pat Abate%Jr.%RE

28%David Mock%Sr.%OLB

35%J. Michael Nardella%Sr.%ILB

57%Nate Verry%Sr.%ILB

30% Rashad Sims% So.% OLB

20% Chris Bushey% Jr.% CB

24% Greg Pierce% Jr.% CB

34% Pat Bailey% Sr.% FS

SALEM (5-4)

OFFENSE

No.&Name&Yr.&Pos.

21% Franklin Abreu% Sr.% TE

60% Jordan Fraczek% Sr.% LT

58% Chris Dunston% So.% LG

74% Kevin Tarr% Sr.% C

78% Cedric Ashley% Sr.% RG

56% Mike Cole% Sr.% RT

80% Anthony Silva% Sr.% WR

11% Nick Charlton% Sr.% QB

38% Danny Murray% Sr.% FB

24% Melikke Van Alstyne% So.% HB

2% Mael Walkowiak% Sr.% HB

DEFENSE

No.&Name&Yr.&Pos.

21% Franklin Abreu% Sr.% DE

78% Cedric Ashley% Sr.% DT

53% Felix Gomez% Sr.% DT

65% Neil Walker% Sr.% DE

2% Mael Walkowiak% Sr.% OLB

38% Danny Murray% Sr.% ILB

1% Cris Chalmers% Sr.% ILB

16% Kevin Holding Jr. OLB

40% Matt Paine Jr. CB

80% Anthony Silva Sr. CB

24% Melikke Van Alstyne So. FS

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