



## Moving The Chains football column: Family feud set to take place when Beverly meets Saugus tomorrow

**By Matt Williams**  
Staff Writer

October 24, 2008 12:49 am

Moving the Chains

Matt Williams

None of the 11 postgame handshakes Beverly captain Joe SantaMaria takes part in this season will be quite like tomorrow's.

When SantaMaria meets Saugus counterpart Anthony Barrasso at the 50-yard line at Stackpole Field, it won't be just another football player staring back at him.

He'll be eye-to-eye with his step-brother.

Barrasso and SantaMaria, who have known each other for 10 years, and officially became step-siblings just over 18 months ago when their parents married.

They share a love for football, college dreams and a roof. Everything, that is, except the mascot stickers on the sides of their helmets.

"Sometimes I'll wake up and Beverly's starting running back (Rashad Sims) is at my house. They're good friends, but I know I'll have to go out and play against them," said Barrasso, a two-way lineman for Saugus.

"It's going to be kind of strange. I was just with (Anthony) a few minutes ago, and pretty soon he'll be wearing a different uniform," added SantaMaria. "We've been talking about this game since the summer."

The step-brothers looked forward to the contest for obvious reasons, but the rest of the Northeastern Conference has been forced to take notice, too. The Panthers (5-1) and Sachems (4-1) have surprisingly strong records and are threatening for the Northeastern Conference's Small title.

"We're both really good teams — and that makes it sweeter," Barrasso said. "My freshman and sophomore years we struggled a little, but I'd still come into this game telling Joe we were going to win. Now I'm a little more serious."

There's another wrinkle in this family feud. SantaMaria's uncle, Giani Dicesare, happens to be a senior linebacker for the Panthers. The pair have been playing together since Pop Warner football and start on opposite sides at linebacker for

Beverly's stingy defense.

"Every year, every snap on offense and defense, Joe's been there with me," said Dicesare. "I love having him out there because I know if the ball goes the other way, he'll be there."

He also knows that if the Sachems should beat the Panthers for the first time since 1996, it could make for a long holiday season. Barrasso is itching to get a little payback for some of the good-natured 2-on-1 abuse he's absorbed over the years.

"Anthony was dogging on us a little bit when they were still undefeated and we'd already lost to Gloucester," Dicesare said. "It's really cool though, and we know a lot of other Saugus kids because of him. It makes this an even bigger game."

In between proofreading each other's college essays, SantaMaria and Barrasso trade tips on common opponents like Winthrop and Marblehead. That both were elected captains at different schools says a lot about the leadership qualities they've helped develop in each other.

"I love this. I think it's awesome," Barrasso said. "We really push each other. I want to beat him and he wants to beat me, but it's definitely healthy."

So healthy, in fact, that while SantaMaria admits that Barrasso might have had the upper hand during their Pop Warner days, he's quick to point out that he's never lost a varsity high school game to Saugus.

"It's a nice little rivalry," SantaMaria added. "I hope Anthony wins every other game he plays. But not this one."

¬¬¬

Ipswich is still looking for its first win of 2008, and the Tigers know that to get it they'll need to get ahead in a game — and stay ahead. That's mostly because the Tigers offense features a lot of running, clock chewing and chain moving action.

"When we get behind, we can get out of our game plan trying to get things done quicker than we want to. That just isn't our personality," said Ipswich coach Ted Flaherty.

That presents an interesting question for Flaherty and his staff when the Tigers trail late in a game. Does he air it out even though Ipswich has just 180 net passing yards all year, or put the ball in the hands of talented runner Jim Cadogan (499 yards, 8 TDs) and hope he breaks one before time runs out?

"It is a slippery slope. If you grind it out like you normally do, you might lose by the same score or worse," said Flaherty.

Taking a peak at the schedule, the Tigers best shot at a win comes Nov. 8 when they visit Lynnfield. They can play spoiler against favored Cape Ann Small contenders Georgetown and Amesbury the next two weeks.

¬¬¬

Big plays have haunted Peabody (2-4) all season, and they've really hurt the last two weeks. In losses to Gloucester and Beverly, the Tanners allowed six TDs of 25 yards or longer and also watched a fumble go back 51 yards for a score.

Of the 24 TDs scored against Peabody this year, three have come on offensive turnovers, and an eye-opening eight have been on big-gainers.

That has to concern Tanners coach Scott Wlasuk, who no doubt would like to see his team limit the "big play" ability of a

talented Lynn Classical (3-2) team tonight at Coley Lee Field.

¬¬¬

Bishop Fenwick's Joe Bona is one of the most efficient players in the area in terms of getting into the end zone. The receiver has six catches all season, and two of them have been for touchdowns.

Others making the most of limited touches include Salem's Ben Henderson (two catches, one score) and Hamilton-Wenham's Jeff McLean (two TDs on just three carries).

¬¬¬

Speaking of Hamilton-Wenham, the Generals (4-2) could get a lift in a crucial CAL Small game tomorrow against Newburyport. Jeremy Walton, the 6-foot-1, 290-pound nose tackle and center, was hurt on the third play of last week's 15-7 win over North Reading.

"He's a vital part of our team - a three-year starter, a captain and a leader," said H-W coach Andrew Morency. "He wanted to give it a go, but we'll watch him closely and make the final call."

Morency said that in NFL terms, Walton would be listed as questionable. His presence, especially defensively, would help the Generals create a pass rush against Clipper quarterback Joe Clancy, who tossed four TD passes against Ipswich last week. Newburyport is 2-5, but a perfect 2-0 in league play.

"We're expecting a dogfight," Morency said.

¬¬¬

Moving the Chains is a column on North Shore high school football that runs each Friday during the fall season in The Salem News. Contact staff writer Matt Williams at [MWilliams@salemnews.com](mailto:MWilliams@salemnews.com), or at 978-338-2669.

Copyright © 1999-2008 cnhi, inc.

Photos



Saugus football captain Anthony Barrasso is flanked by his step-brother Joe SantaMaria, left, captain of the Beverly team, and step-uncle Giani Dicesare, right. The boys will be on opposite sides of the line of scrimmage when the Panthers and Sachems battle tomorrow at Stackpole Field. Courtesy photo