

HS SPORTS MULTIMEDIA

2017 football playoffs: 35 players worth price of admission

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No. 18 St. Augustine (5-4) at No. 1 Bergen Catholic (7-2), Saturday at 1 p.m.

Non-Public, Group 4

Bergen Catholic has rattled off six straight wins to cap the regular season and finished its schedule against New Jersey competition unbeaten at 7-0 — not an easy task coming out of the NJSFC United Red Division. Now, the Crusaders begin their quest — their #Mission17 — to capture the program's 17th overall state championship and first since 2004. They have talent and experience on both sides of the ball, headlined by QB Johnny Langan and WR Dylan Classi on offense and DE Javontae Jean-Baptiste and LB Anthony Corbin on defense. RB Josh McKenzie's status this week is uncertain after suffering a head injury against Seton Hall Prep last week and the hope is he's back next week should Bergen Catholic get past St. Augustine. And the Crusaders will. **Bergen Catholic 41, St. Augustine 13**

Don Bosco Prep (2-7) at No. 2 St. Peter's Prep (7-2), Saturday at noon

Non-Public, Group 4

A win here can change the entire narrative for Don Bosco's season, but right now, the reality of the situation is that the Ironmen are going to finish with a losing record for the first time since in more than two decades. Still, Don Bosco can go from a team that went winless in its division to a team that can contend for the Non-Public, Group 4 title its redemption run starts in Jersey City. The health of standout running back Jalen Berger will be a storyline to follow for the Ironmen while St. Peter's Prep will try to stick to its winning formula -- applying pressure defensively until QB Maasai Maynor gets the offense rolling. **St. Peter's Prep 22, Don Bosco 20**



John Munson | NJ Advance Media from NJ.com

Shayne Simon, St. Peter's Prep, LB-WR, Sr.

The U.S. Army All-American and Notre Dame commit is always capable of taking over a game. Responsible for covering the best player on the opposing team, Simon makes the most of his matchups and is almost always on the winning end. As a receiver, Simon has the size and speed to take a slant and go the distance. He has 36 catches, for 681 yards and five touchdowns this season.



Andrew Mills | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

Jalen Berger, Don Bosco Prep, RB, So.

Is Berger the best sophomore in New Jersey? He very well might be. Don Bosco has struggled to find wins this season and will enter the state playoffs at 2-7 and as the No. seed in Non-Public, Group 4, but Berger has been one of the state's most electrifying backs against some of the toughest competition. He has racked up 1,155 total offensive yards and 13 total touchdowns and will need to be productive if Don Bosco wants to make a run at this year's state championship. Berger was banged up (elbow) in a loss to Bergen Catholic two weeks ago, but all indications from coach Mike Teel is that Berger will be uniform Saturday afternoon in Jersey City.

Javontae Jean-Baptiste Highlights



YouTube

Javontae Jean-Baptiste, Bergen Catholic, DE, Sr.

The sky is the limit for Jean-Baptiste, a disruptive 6-foot-5 force on the Crusaders' defensive line who holds 17 offers from the likes of Tennessee, Baylor, Boston College, Pittsburgh, Purdue and Rutgers. Developing a knack for making the biggest plays in the biggest moments, Jean-Baptiste has racked up 70 tackles, including a team-best 9.5 for a loss, and seven sacks — also a team-high. He has also forced one fumble and scored on one of the biggest defensive plays of the season, a 48-yard fumble return against then-No. 1 St. Peter's Prep.