

# *No Rest for Spartans*

By BILL O'CONNELL

Marian Catholic's football team has made a believer out of Coach Dave Mattio.

Mattio, totally discouraged after Marian's uninspiring performance in a 34-14 loss to Elgin two weeks ago, reached the height of his infant head coaching career last Saturday at Sarff Field.

But it's not the fact that Marian defeated powerful and longtime nemesis Joliet Catholic 16-6 for the first time in the seven-year rivalry that had rekindled Mattio's faith in the Spartans.

"THE BIG question mark in my mind going into the Joliet game was whether or not our kids believed in themselves," said Mattio, the first-year head coach who has guided the Spartans to a 6-0 Illini-8 conference record going into tomorrow night's game at Lockport.

"It's one thing to say you believe in yourself. It's another thing to go out and prove it. And I'm not talking about proving it by putting points on the scoreboard - just competitively. A lot of our kids talked about beating Joliet, but they never realized their full potential until last Saturday. They were super."

"It was the best game our offensive line had ever played," said Mattio, who earlier in the year preached the importance of controlling the line. "On some of our double teams we drove their lineman five yards off the ball and buried them. It was an excellent effort."

The lineman Mattio is referring to are Dave Goss, guards Jack Weishaar and Mike Wilczynski, tackles Todd Bruni and Tony Mitchell, and ends Shawn Janus and Kevin Daney.

QUARTERBACK Nick Calvi and running backs Tom Chisholm, Jeff Martin and Joe Zarlengo benefited from the excellent line play. Chisholm gained 96 yards and scored two touchdowns, while Calvi rushed for 25 yards and added a pair of two-point conversion runs. Martin chipped in 43 yards, while Zarlengo, also adding punch to Marian's defense at linebacker, picked up 22 yards.

Defensively, Marian's makeshift nine-man line, installed specifically to combat Joliet's potent rushing attack, was sparked by Janus, a middle linebacker who collected eight solo tackles and as many assists.

Janus teamed with linebackers Andy DeRosa and Jim Greer, tackles Leo Lindbloom and Mike Seibt, ends Mike Schilf and Kyle Shane, and defensive backs Don West, Matt Scott, Karl Volkman and Mark Fagan to form a defensive wall the Hill could not move.

The victory over Joliet marked Marian's first triumph over the Hillmen in seven meetings. The Spartans not only handed the defending Class 4A state champions their first loss of the year, but also their first regular season loss in 22 games.

DESPITE the satisfaction gained in knocking off the state's No. 2 ranked team, the Spartans don't have time to live on their past laurels if they want to obtain the first I-8 championship in the school's history.

There are teams like Lockport and Joliet Central waiting in the wings, ready to spoil Marian's finest season ever.

The Spartans hope to take their first step in preventing such an occurrence tomorrow when they travel to Lockport, which has suffered just one I-8 loss in six conference tests - a 14-8 set back to Joliet Central, Marian's final I-8 opponent in two weeks.

Central's only loss came at the hands of Joliet Catholic (22-8), which plays Lockport the final week of the season, creating an interesting battle for the title.

"Marian's never gone into a game this late in the season at the top of the conference," said Mattio. "We're leading the pack, the top rung on the I-8 ladder and there are a lot of people below us looking up. People will be after us."

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