

# *The Hot Corner*

By JOHN E. MEYERS

"We don't intend to lose."

Dave Mattio will explore all the ins and outs of Marian's game tomorrow night with Joliet Central. He will discuss the possibilities of a three-way tie for the Illini-8 championship and he will hold forth on the prospects for the state playoffs, but when he has done all that, he returns to the punch line.

"We don't intend to lose."

When Mattio speaks about what "we don't intend" to do, he isn't talking just about himself or about his aides.

HE IS TALKING about his players for when the whistle blows around 8 o'clock tomorrow night at Sarff Field, all of the coaching, all of the motivating will have been spent.

Once toe hits football, the game will belong to the players.

The coaches aren't going to win tomorrow night's game; neither are they going to lose it. The winning and losing will be in the hands of the players.

"We don't intend to lose."

EVERY PLAYER ON Marian's squad will in some way be echoing that sentiment tomorrow night. The Spartans have come this far, they cannot imagine that success will elude them now.

No Marian football team has come so far. No Marian team has ever before been on the verge of winning the football championship of a major conference.

No Marian team has stood on the threshold of a state playoff berth. Two weeks ago, this was the first Marian football team to defeat Joliet Catholic.

The irony of beating Joliet Catholic and losing a

spot in the playoffs will not be allowed to happen.

"WE DON'T intend to lose."

It is a battle cry, a vow, a dedication, a promise.

Marian left it all behind, beating Joliet Catholic? If not, how come a 17-14 squeaker over Lockport last week? The Porters lost twice before getting edged out by Marian, but nobody beat the Porters badly. Joliet Central had as much trouble as Marian, 14-8.

But what difference do comparative make now? None. The only score to matter will go up on the board tomorrow night at Sarff Field.

"WE DON'T intend to lose."

The championship, the state playoffs - Marian's first night football game at home - ever.

The crowd should be enormous. Half of the city of Joliet may be cheering in the east bleachers.

The bleachers on the home side should be overflowing.

JOLIET CENTRAL IS hot. Joliet Central wants this game just as much as the Spartans. The stakes are high on both sides.

Joliet Central is good, very good and very tough.

It will take one hell of a team to beat the Steelmen. Marian is one hell of a team.

"We don't intend to lose."

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