

# Steelmen Shock Spartans

By TERRY BOERS

Shawn Janus knelt in the back of the end zone crying. Only Coach Dave Mattio could comfort him.

Matt Scott sat on the small curb, staring at the cinder track which surrounds Sarff Field.

Others milled about, occasionally stopping to glance back at the field. Many sought the warmth of the bus.

DISCONSOLATE in defeat, Marian's quest for an undisputed Illini-8 championship and a berth in the 4A state playoffs ended in tears Friday night in Chicago Heights.

In a magnificent 48 minutes and then some tug-of-war, Joliet Central and a scrappy tailback named Andy Tomala scored an emotion-draining 16 to 14 overtime triumph.

While the Spartans can still claim a hunk of the I-8 pot of gold, along with Central and Joliet Catholic, an earlier loss to Elgin and a vote of the conference coaches to determine a champion and a playoff representative left Marian out in the cold. Right where it was Friday.

"Somewhere in the back of my mind I knew we just weren't executing when we needed it," Mattio said. "We came within an inch of a first down in the fourth quarter when we needed it and then we just ran out of time at the end."

THE END MATTIO spoke of came with 20 seconds to play in regulation time. The Spartans, starting from their own 23, constructed a 10-play trek all the way to Central 3.

With no timeouts left, Tom Foote lined up a 20-yard field goal on first down. Dave Goss' snap reached holder Dave Klupchak on the short bounce. Unable to control it, Klupchak tried to run. He was snowed under.

The clock continued to roll. By the time Marian and Foote were set again, time expired, although he did get his boot off... about one second too late.

"We had to try," Mattio said. "We couldn't afford another play from scrimmage. If we wouldn't have made it that would have been our last play."

THE STEELMEN won the coin toss and had the first shot in overtime from the 10.

To the surprise of no one, Central ran three consecutive dive plays, each time Tomala carried. His first two attempts netted four yards, but on third down he followed his blocks over Marian's right tackle and burst for the touchdown.

Now for some tricks on the two-point try, right? Hardly. Slanting slightly to his right, Tomala made it across the goal line with at least six inches to spare.

Marian's turn.

TWO YARDS from Tom Chisholm and three from Joe Zarlengo presented the Spartans with an almost identical situation.

Quarterback Nick Calvi, who makes the big play with the greatest of ease, faked a handoff into the line and then swept to his left.

Taking a cruel hit at the 4, the ball squirted out of Calvi's hands.

Halfback Mike Ciarlo, a main ingredient in the Spartans' backfield deception routine, appeared out of nowhere to fall on it.

"WE RAN FROM the same formation we'd used most of the night," said Mattio of the attempted pass for the game-tying two

points. "We just went to the other side." Janus, a brilliant two-way player, couldn't hang on.

"He said he had the ball in his hands," Mattio shrugged. "I couldn't really tell."

Offensive coordinator Gary Finnin echoed most Marian fans' feelings.

"AFTER ALL HE'S done for us this year; I can't say a bad word about him."

It was the same Janus who came up with an important first quarter interception. With the Spartans already trailing 8-0, Mark Hosey blocked Foote's punt, Cal Beckley recovering on the Marian 30.

Curtis Carson ran for one before Sam Suitea's pass found its way to linebacker.

The Steelmen had just taken advantage of a Tom Chisholm fumble on the game's first play from scrimmage. When Matt Buell pounced on the ball, Central was in business at the Marian 32.

SEVEN PLAYS later Tomala, who carried 35 times for 152 yards, punched over from the 3. The 5-foot-10, 176-pounder then ran for the two points.

The Spartans got the break back midway through the second quarter. Tomala, who also uses his feet to punt, plunked Carson, one of three blockers in front of him, right on the seat of his pants. By the time the scramble ended, Marian had possession at the Central 37.

An 11-yard run by Ciarlo, four from Zarlengo and 11 more by Ciarlo had the ball at the Central 11. Jeff Martin, Marian's leading rusher with 54 for the night, picked up two before Chisholm was stopped cold.

Then Calvi made the first of his big plays, high-stepping his way for a first down on the Joliet eight-inch line.

FROM THERE Chisholm blasted over and a determined Zarlengo was eight yards into paydirt before he was stopped on the two-point try.

That's where it stayed for the next 28 minutes. Joliet got as far as the Spartan 4 in the third quarter before Suitea was spilled for a yard loss by Scott.

Starting from its own 5, Marian ate up the rest of the time in the stanza and bullied its way to the Steel folks 25, where it came down to fourth and one. Zarlengo, who had just 23 yards, slipped as he took the handoff and his forward motion wasn't enough. That's the inch Mattio referred to.

Again using the off-tackle stuff, Joliet penetrated to the 22 of Marian. There Carson was nailed for no gain on yet another fourth-and-one situation.

SEVENTY-SEVEN yards away, Marian, on the strength of a 41-yard flea flicker from Scott back to Calvi had that last chance for victory.

Mattio, who maintained his composure, had to console his wife as well. "There'll be plenty more chances," he told her. "This is only the first one."

And one, he might have added, they'll be talking about for a long time.