

Marian Holds Line

By BILL O'CONNELL

"Football games," insists Marian Catholic Coach Dave Mattio, "are won and lost at the line of scrimmage. Ball control is the best defense."

And after Marian's two opening Illini-8 conference victories of this football season, it appears the first-year Spartan head coach knows what he's talking about.

Marian dominated the line play in a 20-0 victory over Bolingbrook to give Mattio a successful debut, before handing Joliet East a 28-6 setback last Saturday at Sarff Field.

MARIAN hopes to duplicate those performances tomorrow night when the Spartans travel to I-8 opponent Joliet West for an 8 o'clock kickoff.

"Our offensive line did an excellent job against Bolingbrook and we controlled the line again against East," said the 28-year old Mattio. "That's the name of the game."

With excellent blocking by center Dave Goss, guards Jack Weishaar and Mike Wilczynski, tackles Tony Mitchell and Todd Bruni, and ends Shawn Janus and Kevin Daney - the Spartans dominated both Bolingbrook and East at the line of scrimmage.

The Spartan offensive line has provided Mattio's power-attack offense - and specifically fullback Joe Zarlengo, plenty of running room. Zarlengo, a 5-10, 208-pounder who started at linebacker last season, gained 127 yards on 19 carries against Bolingbrook and added 115 yards on 17 carries against East.

THE powerful senior teamed with halfback Mark Blankenberger (103 yards) to give the Spartans a 316-98 rushing advantage against Bolingbrook and Tom Chisholm (67 yards) in a lopsided 299-28 margin over East.

Chisholm, a senior, has gained 114 yards in two games and scored three touchdowns - two against East. Zarlengo has scored a pair of touchdowns, while quarterback Nick Calvi has done a fine job engineering Mattio's offense.

Coach Frank Miller's Joliet West squad improved its I-8 record to 1-1 with a 28-8 victory over winless Argo last Saturday. The Tigers suffered a 12-8 setback to Romeoville in their opening game.

Marian's stingy defense unit, which has given up just one touchdown - an 84 yard halfback pass from East's Tim Edwards to Bobby Boyd - will meet one of the I-8 top running backs in Tom Cassels.

CASSELS, an explosive senior fullback, has rushed for 238 yards in 33 carries and scored two touchdowns, one on a 23-yard pass. Teammate Brian Boudouris rushed for 90 yards in 27 carries against Romeoville, while Tim Matichak had 72 yards in 14 carries against Argo.

Despite West's backfield talent, Marian's defensive line is just as potent as its offensive line. Just ask East Coach Mike Monken or Bolingbrook's Ron Wrathier.

"We played good defense against East, except for that halfback pass," said Mattio. "And when we went onto the field for that series, I told the kids to watch for that very play. But overall, we were consistent. The kids jelled and I'm happy with that."

For the third week in a row, Marian Catholic will attempt to cross the thin line which separates victory from defeat - the line of scrimmage.

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