

Marian Counts on Its Big Ten Grid Nucleus

By MARK SMITH

Marian high school is counting on the Big Ten this fall.

Ten lettermen, that is, around which a football power might emerge. This nucleus has Coach Dave Mattio "cautiously optimistic" about the upcoming season. "We've simply got to become more aggressive," Mattio emphasizes in regard to his team that was 6-3 last year under the now departed Bob Voss.

"We've got a real tough schedule. On any given day, if we don't have that aggressiveness, we could be in for a long afternoon," Mattio and his assistants, Bob Bergstrom (line) and Gary Finnin (backs) will get a preview of the Spartans' play today at 1 p.m. in the annual Black-White intra-squad scrimmage.

OFFENSIVELY, Mattio looks to Nick Calvi, a 5-11, 175 pound quarterback, for field leadership. Calvi is considered an excellent runner who has 10 flat speed in the 100 yard dash. He's improving fast as a passer, too.

"Nick's learning to recognize defenses and he's maturing as a quarterback," Mattio said of the crafty senior. The No. 2 quarterback figures to be junior Karl Volkman, also a good ball handler and a smart competitor.

Snapping the ball to Calvi will be senior letterman Dave Goss, a tough 6-0, 190 pounder whose physical strength and rapidly developing blocking techniques provide power up the middle for Marian. Another senior, Dave Bamonti, will be ready to step in at center as well.

Flanking Goss at the guard positions will be any of four standouts currently vying for the slots. Three seniors, Andy DeRosa, 6-0, 200; Jack Weishaar, 6-2, 205, and Mike Wilczinski, 5-10, 170, are all strong, capable performers at a position Mattio considers crucial. In addition, junior Peter Aleck, 5-11, 190 pounds, is available.

AT TACKLE, senior Tony Mitchell has been tabbed by Mattio to be a standout again this year. The 6-2, 215 pound lineman played every game last

year. Junior Todd Bruni, a 6-3, 225 pound raw talent returns after seeing brief action on the varsity last year. Jim Denman, 6-1, 205 is another strong candidate.

Perhaps the most versatile and capable player for the Spartans this year is Shawn Janus, a 6-3, 200 pound senior end. "I can't say enough about this young man," Mattio beams when this two-way performer's name is mentioned. "He's a very coachable and he's really worked hard. He will also be out middle linebacker," Mattio said.

Another strong end candidate is Kevin Daney, a hulking 6-2, 185 and Matt Griffiths, 5-10, 155 provide depth at the position.

Executing Mattio's power-set, ball-control offense this fall will be fullback Joe Zarlengo, 6-0, 208. Zarlengo should carry the ball some 20-25 times a game according to Mattio. He was a linebacker last year and is a rugged competitor. A smaller but resilient Jeff Martin will back up Zarlengo at fullback.

Halfbacks Tom Chisholm, Mike Cairlo, Mark Blankenberger, and Mike Petrarca have all shown well in early practices. "We'll need four to six capable backs in our ball-control offense, anyway," Mattio explains.

Handling the kicking for the Spartans will be, ironically, Tommy Foote. Foote did the punting last year with moderate success and will try his hand, err... foot at placekicking this fall.

Marian opens up the season Saturday at Bolingbrook, a team it beat 48-8 last year. However, Mattio warns that Bolingbrook returns several key lettermen this fall and should by no means be taken lightly. "Our people are kind of tired of beating up on each other in practice. Maybe they'll begin to show more aggressiveness against another team," Mattio said.

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