

# *Marian Enters New Phase*

By PETER TESTA

Phase three of Marian's up-and-down football season is apparently under way, and if Coach Dave Mattio has any say in the matter. Saturday's homecoming game against Illini-8 rival Romeoville at Sarff Field won't see the Spartans return to the events of a disastrous phase two.

The first phase of the campaign offered bright promise in a rout of Hillcrest, but injuries suffered by the offensive unit in particular led to the second stage resulting in losses to I-8 leader Joliet Catholic and second-place Lockport.

This period was summed up by a 101 minute, 51 second scoreless streak that wasn't broken until the beginning of part three, and 8-6 triumph over Joliet Central last Saturday that ruined tomorrow night's showdown between the Steelmens and the Hilltoppers.

"THE most effective defense we can have is a ball-control offense," said Mattio, who directed senior quarterback Karl Volkman to keep the ball on the ground last week, the Spartans rushing on 41 of their 46 plays from scrimmage.

But it was the stop unit, with help from assistant coaches Bob Bergstrom and Gary Finin that registered one of its best games of the season, in both yardage allowed and in points against in the decision over Joliet Central that kept the Spartans in a fourth-place deadlock with their upcoming opponent.

Junior John Velo, a 5-foot-8, 165 pound defensive back, turned himself into Marian's designated pass interceptor, picking off a pair of throws by Steelmens signal-caller John Baloy.

Another junior, 6-2, 205 pound end Mark Panozzo, helped the Spartans dominate both

lines of scrimmage last Saturday, getting in on 15 tackles, six unassisted. Panozzo also contributed from his tight end position offensively. "He did a good job of blocking to make our offense move on our first drive," declared Mattio.

ONE of the prime candidates to represent the Spartans on the all-Illini-8 team, 6-3, 240 pound Todd Bruni, was singled out for praise from Mattio, along with Jim Denman, a 6-2, 220 pound senior tackle and junior Mike Bartolomei, who contributed his 5-11, 190 pound frame for the first time to Marian's attack unit, from a slotted line post one yard off the line of scrimmage. "All three of them really moved out Central," Mattio stated.

The penalty problem has Mattio more concerned than the amount of turnovers. Volkman's first of two completions to senior Mark Blankenberger, who was switched from his usual wide receiver station to running back for the Steelmens game, was stifled by a holding penalty.

A complicated set of circumstances would allow the Spartans to wind up in a three-way tie for the runner-up spot in the I-8, but Marian needs a win over the namesakes Saturday in the final home game, coupled with victories in the last two away contests, a Joliet Central loss to Joliet Catholic tomorrow night, and a Steelmens triumph over Lockport next week to complete its campaign at 5-2.

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