

Marian Holds its Share of Illini-8 Lead

By PETER TESTA

Life among the leaders of the Illini-8 apparently agrees with Marian, as it comfortably held onto its one-third portion of the conference lead by sailing past Romeoville 29-0 yesterday at Sarff Field.

The guests, who had won their only league game of the season just last week over cellar-dwelling Bolingbrook, were obviously in dire straits even before the game began. Only 24 players suited up for Romeoville, and one of the missing was its ace fullback Tim McCarthy, who ranks among the league's rushing leaders.

Thus depleted, Romeoville could net merely two yards on its first three plays before punting, and safety Bob Klupchak gave Marian a chance to capitalize in short order by returning the boot 23 yards down the left sideline.

MARIAN PICKED up five yards without any effort when Romeoville jumped off side, then senior quarterback Mike Matchinis added six more by taking a keeper up the middle, earning the first of Marian's 16 first downs.

After senior fullback Tom Zarlengo moved Marian to the eight, halfback Jim Schreiber burst the remaining distance off the right side, capping the 22-yard march after just 3:13 of action.

The score marked the third straight game in which Marian tallied on its opening offensive opportunity. Going for a two-point conversion, halfback Bill Ranieri went across for an 8-0 edge.

Stopping Romeoville's attack on three plays and a punt moments later, Marian enjoyed another chance just inside midfield as the first quarter was winding down.

ON THE second snap, junior Greg Murray was met behind the line of scrimmage, and looked to be stopped for a loss. Murray broke free from trouble though, and turned the play around by taking off around a wide-open right end for a 19-yard advance, delivering Marian to the 25-yard strip.

Matchinis, Zarlengo, Ranieri and halfback Tom Klupchak alternated the next five downs, with Klupchak's burst of seven yards setting Marian up on the three with a fresh set of plays.

Marian was whistled for 50 penalty yards, and was hit with five of them to retreat back to the 8, but two plays later, Matchinis

skirted left end and fell over the goal line for his second touchdown of the year. Another bonus run, this one by Schreiber, extended Marian's command to 16-0 with 8:39 left in the initial half.

Marian didn't waste any time increasing its margin in the second half, marching 75 yards in seven plays with Romeoville's kickoff. Schreiber swept right end for 35 yards on the second snap of the drive, and Ranieri continued on for 12 additional yards with the next snap.

AT THAT point, the surge stalled, and Marian was faced with fourth down and three yards to go from the 19. Matchinis rolled out and spotted Jeff Boylan breaking free downfield. Boylan reached out with one hand and pulled in the pass on the run, and then the senior end completed a spectacular effort by racing into the end zone with his first scoring reception of the season.

With 8:28 remaining in the third period, Marian led 22-0 as a run for two extra points was stopped short.

Relinquishing possession to Marian has proven to be risky for Marian's foes latterly, and after Romeoville signal-caller Brian McKay fired incomplete on fourth down to end his side's deepest penetration midway through the final period, Marian rolled for a 10-play drive to pull out of trouble. Junior Paul Plomin gained the majority of his team-high 74 rushing yards on the march.

Marian linebacker Pete Bartolomei's interception presented another opportunity and Plomin needed just one play after the turnover to convert, blasting off right guard for a 25-yard touchdown run with just 2:19 left. Rich Fordon kicked Marian's 29th and final point.

Eight separate runners shared in Marian's 272-yard rushing total, and with Matchinis' pair of completions for 41 yards. Marian accumulated 213 yards on 16 first downs. Romeoville was limited to merely 37 plays, 64 yards and four first downs.

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