

PREP BOWL: Marian Catholic 32, St. Viator 12

Kickoff: 5 p.m. Wednesday at Spartan Stadium.

Where: Joe Orr Road and Ashland Avenue, Chicago Heights

Records: St. Viator 8-3; Marian Catholic 8-3.

Last week: Riverside-Brookfield 29, St. Viator 28; Richards 24, Marian 20.

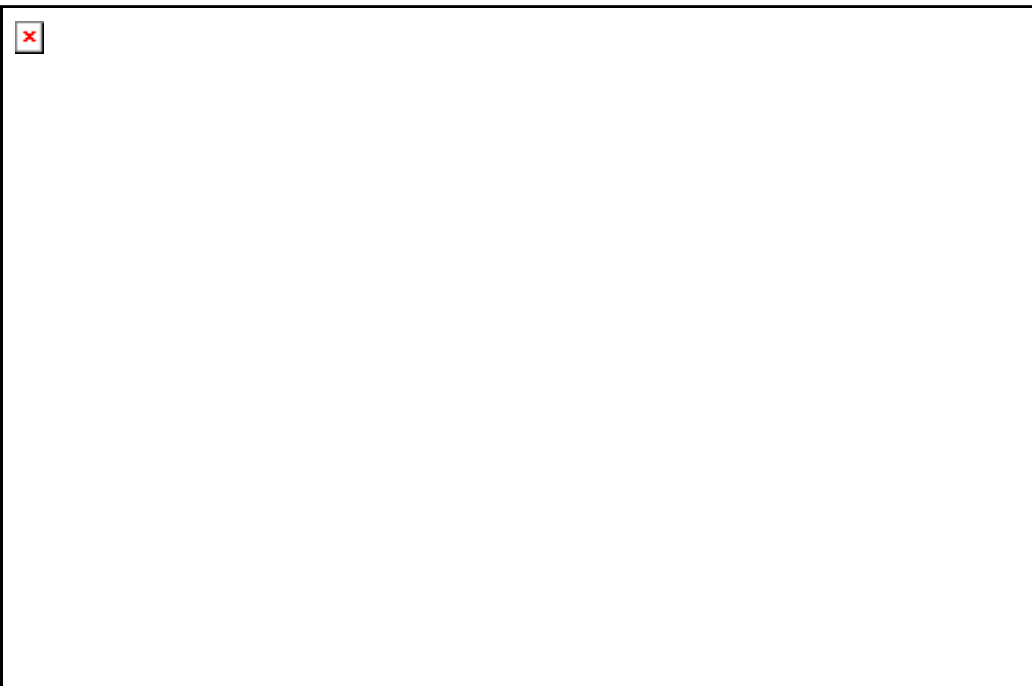
Winner: Advances to play at TBA.

Last meeting: Marian Catholic 45, St. Viator 6 in 1993.

The series: The Spartans have prevailed in seven of the eight meetings, including the last six in a row. The lone Lion victory came with a 14-6 decision in 1967.

History: Marian Catholic has participated in the Prep Bowl playoffs on three previous occasions, compiling an overall record of 4-3. The Spartans' last visit was 1997 when they advanced to the Prep Bowl title game at Soldier Field.

Nov. 8	1	2	3	4	Final
St. Viator	0	0	0	12	12
AT MARIAN CATHOLIC	7	12	7	6	32



The Marian Catholic defense shut down visiting St. Viator's high-powered offense in the opening half Wednesday, en route to a 32-12 Prep Bowl playoff victory.

Spartans (9-3) bounce St. Viator

Marian Catholic's key to success was twofold Wednesday when it hosted St. Viator in Prep Bowl playoff action:

Limit damage by the Lions' vaunted passing game by pounding the ball on the ground for points on the home scoreboard.

The Spartan offensive front of Matt Bartolini, Nick Betts, Ryan Cyrkiel, Mark Rueth, Chris McDonnell and Tom O'Brien assured that the mission was accomplished.

With that group opening holes consistently, Deon Bradley rambled for 223 yards and four touchdowns to ignite Marian Catholic (9-3) to a 32-12 victory. The Spartans will await their next foe depending on results of this weekend's IHSA playoffs.

"We had to control their quarterback (Brett Basanez) because he makes some great throws," McDonnell explained. "Our emphasis was to pound the ball and keep them off the field. The offensive line did a great job and Deon Bradley did an excellent job running the ball. We also picked up the tempo of our game."

Marian scored the first three times it had the ball to take a 19-0 halftime lead, twice hitting paydirt on 89-yard drives. Bradley found the end zone twice in the opening half, while quarterback Mike Gavin (nine of 12, 159 yards) connected with Devon Clark for another score.

Ignited by strong play from Jonathan McMahon, Quentin Sykes and Duane Harrigan, the Spartan defense held its own. Although the Lions had 12- and 15-play drives in the opening half, both came up empty. The visitors were also thwarted by interceptions from Eric Papp and Sergio Flores.

By the time St. Viator dented the scoreboard in the fourth quarter, Bradley had added a 28-yard scamper for a 26-0 command. Bradley's final touchdown came from 3 yards away with 1:25 to play.

Basanez finished 19 of 35 for 197 yards, but the Spartans were never threatened. The strong ball-control offense provided necessary breaks and Marian did damage through the air as well. Clark finished with four catches for 81 yards, while fullback Mike DiGiulio pulled in three aerials for 45 yards.

The quick turnaround was welcome after Marian's Friday playoff loss at Richards.

"It was very important that we came out and did what we did," McDonnell said. "We have a lot of pride. We knew that this would probably be the last game for our seniors on this field, so the Marian Catholic pride took over tonight."

CATEGORY	St. Viator	Marian
First downs	20	20
Rush att./yards	28-110	36-257
Passing yards	197	159
Pass completions	19	9
Pass attempts	36	12
Had intercepted	2	0
Fumbles/lost	1-0	1-1
Penalty yards	6-58	3-25
Next	season over	P. Bowl TBA

SCORING

MC- Deon Bradley 5-yard run (Sergio Flores kick), 1:11, first quarter.

MC- Bradley 2-yard run (run failed), 11:10, second.

MC- Devon Clark 7-yard pass from Mike Gavin (pass failed), 0:56, second.

MC- Bradley 28-yard run (Flores kick), 4:04, third.

SV- Nick Schey 5-yard run (pass failed), 11:54, fourth.

SV- Matt Criscione 4-yard pass from Brett Basanez (pass failed), 3:37, fourth.

MC- Bradley 3-yard run (kick failed), 1:25, fourth.

INDIVIDUALS

Passing: SV- B. Basanez 19 of 35, 197 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT; K. Basanez 0 of 1, 1 INT.

MC- Gavin 9 of 12, 159 yards, 1 TD.

Rushing: SV- B. Basanez 11-51, Schey 14-50 (TD), Mike Cloud 2-10, Kyle Basanez 1-(minus 1); MC- Bradley 28-223 (4 TD), Gavin 4-30, Eric Papp 1-3, Mike DiGiulio 2-1.

Receiving: SV- Brian Hare 7-78, Cloud 5-70, Criscione 4-38 (TD), Brendan Petrandò 2-19, John Kenyon 1-7. MC- Clark 4-81 (TD), DiGiulio 3-45, Dave Carcelli 1-17, Tom O'Brien 1-16.

Interceptions: Eric Papp, Sergio Flores (both MC).