

GAME 3: Carmel 37, Marian Catholic 22

Kickoff: 7:30 p.m. Friday at Spartan Stadium.

Where: Joe Orr Road and Ashland Avenue, Chicago Heights.

ESCC records: Carmel 2-0; Marian Catholic 2-0.

Last week: Carmel 21, Benet Academy 14; Marian Catholic 53, St. Joseph 6.

Last meeting: Carmel 43, Marian Catholic 7.

Week 4: Notre Dame at Carmel (Fri.); Marian Catholic at Nazareth Academy (Sat.)

The series: Despite back to back victories for the Corsairs, Marian still owns the overall series advantage at 9-5.

Notes: Marian will feature a tribute to former teams and cheerleaders with its [Decade of Champions](#) at halftime. Carmel is rated #1 in Chicagoland by the *Chicago Tribune*. The Spartans seek their fourth 3-0 start in the last five years.

Sept. 12	1	2	3	4	Total
CARMELEL CORSAIRS	7	10	7	13	-37
MARIAN CATH. SPARTANS	0	7	0	15	-22

Marian (2-1) stumbles vs. top-ranked Carmel

There were times on Friday night that host Marian Catholic looked like it could play right with powerful Mundelein Carmel, ranked No. 1 in the Chicago area by the *Chicago Tribune*.

The Spartans came up with big sacks, got a huge offensive night from senior tailback Chris Rodriguez and forced a pivotal fumble and turnover on the Corsairs' initial possession.

But an inability to translate a handful of big plays to points on the scoreboard allowed Carmel (3-0) to walk away with a 37-22 East Suburban Catholic Conference victory.

After spotting the Corsairs a 14-0 command, Marian (2-1) used a 26-yard touchdown run from Rodriguez to pull within a touchdown. Yet, in what may have been the Spartans' most productive quarter when the contest was still on the line eventually resulted in a 10-7 Carmel advantage and a 17-7 halftime lead.

The result of two special teams plays proved to be the back-breaker for Marian in the second half.

After Spartan punter Brad Wisowaty pinned in the Corsairs at their own 6-yard line, the visitors drove 94 yards in 10 plays for a 24-7 lead. Then, Carmel recovered the ensuing onside kick. Five plays later, Jon Popovitch rambled into the end zone for one of his four touchdowns to give the Corsairs total command at 31-7.

"Their offense is just so well run," praised Marian lineman Tim Kelly, who had two sacks on defense and paved the way for 18 Marian first downs and 342 total yards on offense.

"They carried their fakes very well and they were deceptive. It was hard to tell where the ball was at times. There were a lot of times when we had them and just let them get away."

After the Carmel lead swelled to 37-7, the Spartans finally got some offense going. Reserve quarterback Mike Jedlicka hooked up with Rodriguez on screen passes for scores of 57 and 15 yards, the initial touchdown sprung by a block from fullback Evan White.

Jedlicka finished 5 of 7 for 117 yards. Rodriguez pulled in four passes for 77 yards to go with 139 rushing yards on 18 totes for all three Spartan scores. Bryan Smith added six receptions for 87 yards.

Starting on its own 12 after the opening-possession fumble, Marian drove to the Carmel 30 before turning the ball over on downs. Sacks by Kelly and Brian Aldeza hinted at a turn in momentum, but a pair of interceptions kept the Marian offense quiet until the final moments of the contest.

The Spartans also tried a pair of onside kicks, both executed well- but resulting in Carmel possession.

A setback against a squad nationally ranked by *USA Today* should not deter Marian from its focus on a playoff berth.

"Nazareth (next Saturday) is a quality opponent and we can let down in any way," Kelly concluded. "We just need a few more wins and we'll get to our first goal: qualifying for the playoffs."

The Marian **freshmen** improved to 3-0 with a 27-7 decision over Carmel as Derek Middleton tossed touchdown passes to Marcel Ward and Kendall Greer. Clifford Gordon and Don Settle added rushing scores and Justin Rosandick booted three conversion kicks. The defense was ignited by Jack McCormick, Josh Haive, Nick Lococo and Sam Izguerra.

CATEGORY	Carmel	Marian Catholic

First downs	20	18
Rush attempts / yards	53-306	23-166
Passing yards	98	176
Pass completions	7	12
Pass attempts	13	22
Had intercepted	1	2
Fumbles / lost	1-1	2-0
Penalty yards	3-22	1-15
Next	NOTRE DAME	at Nazareth

SCORING

C- Jon Popovitch 6-yard run (Chris Miller kick), 3:42 first.

C- Mark Venegoni 1-yard run (Miller kick), 11:07 second.

MC- Chris Rodriguez 26-yard run (Matt Harris kick), 8:10 second.

C- Miller 22-yard field goal, 0:00 second.

C- Popovitch 22-yard run (Miller kick), 0:19 third.

C- Popovitch 3-yard run (Miller kick), 11:10 fourth.

C- Popovitch 2-yard run (kick blocked), 8:32 fourth.

MC- Rodriguez 57-yard pass from Mike Jedlicka (Harris kick), 7:53 fourth.

MC- Rodriguez 15-yard pass from Jedlicka (Jedlicka to Malcolm Parker), 2:19 fourth.

INDIVIDUALS

Passing: C- Venegoni 7 of 13, 98 yards, 0 TD, 1 INT. MC- Joe Grubisic 7 of 15, 59 yards, 0 TD, 2 INT; Jedlicka 5 of 7, 117 yards, 2 TD, 0 INT.

Rushing: C- Popovitch 15-140 (4 TD), Mike Serio 11-98, Venegoni 19-50 (TD), Pat Kimener 1-16, Jack Simmons 1-5, Billy Mazlow 1-1, Anthony Powers 1-0, Steve Hironimus 2-0, Nate Erskine 1-(minus 1), Darren Davis 1-(minus 2). MC- Rodriguez 18-139 (TD), Grubisic 3-17, Sean Whitfield 2-6, Daniel Johnson 2-4.

Receiving: C- Simmons 4-67, Serio 2-26, Miller 1-5. MC- Bryan Smith 6-87, Rodriguez 4-77 (2 TD), Andy Lietz 1-7, Steve Busse 1-5.

Interceptions: Simmons (C), Kimener (C), Collin McKillip (MC).