

GAME 9: St. Patrick 26, Marian Catholic 6

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

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

ESCC records: St. Patrick 7-1; Marian Catholic 3-5.

Streaks: Shamrocks- 4 wins; Spartans- 3 losses.

Week 8: St. Patrick 37, Nazareth 7; Benet Academy 35, Marian Catholic 13.

Week 10: St. Patrick in IHSA Playoffs; Marian- season over.

Last year: Marian Catholic 21, St. Patrick 17.

The series: The Spartans have won the last two contests in the series to take an overall command of 9-4.

Notes: Marian used a come-from-behind victory last year to knock St. Patrick out of a playoff berth... Prior to last year's contest, each team had prevailed with a shutout victory... The Spartans will break streaks of two straight playoff appearances and four in the last five years... This will represent just Marian's third losing campaign in the last 34 years.

Oct. 22	1	2	3	4	Total
ST. PATRICK SHAMROCKS	7	19	0	0	-26
MARIAN SPARTANS	0	0	0	6	-6



Marian fell behind visiting St. Patrick by a 26-0 score at halftime on Friday and never recovered in a 26-6 ESCC setback.

Marian falls to St. Patrick in season, ESCC finale

Four was the magic number for St. Patrick on Friday in Chicago Heights.

The Shamrocks needed just four plays for their first three scoring drives en route to a 26-6 East Suburban Catholic Conference victory over the Spartans.

Four also represents Marian's losing streak after a 3-2 start to the year as the Spartans will miss the IHSA playoffs for the first time in three years with a 3-6 final mark.

Marian's defense actually turned in a solid effort for much of the night, but couldn't overcome an average first-half drive start for the Shamrocks of the Marian 39-yard line.

With solid play up front from Nick Clark, Noe Arroyo, Steve Ajdinovich, Ron Freeman and Jovon Dixon, the Spartan defense held St. Patrick in check and kept matters scoreless despite the Shamrocks starting their first two drives at the Spartan 26 and 20.

However, a Marian offense that produced only 25 first-half yards couldn't take any pressure off the Marian defense.

Following the two initial holds, St. Patrick used short fields to score on four of their last five possessions of the first half and take a 26-0 command into halftime. The visitors needed just four plays on their first three scoring drives of 24, 41 and 42 yards.

St. Patrick applied a back-breaker at the close of the half with its lone lengthy drive of the evening. Taking possession at their own 41 with 2:36 to play in the half, the Shamrocks concluded a 12-play drive when quarterback Thomas Barrett hit Jason Genova with a 6-yard score with five ticks remaining in the half for the 26-0 margin.

At the half, Marian's offense had produced just 25 yards on 24 snaps. The futility continued to start the second half, as the Spartans first 30 plays from scrimmage for the night netted just 24 total

yards.

Marian didn't notch its third first down of the contest until 1:15 remained in the third quarter. However, it wasn't until late in the final quarter that the Spartans dented the scoreboard.

Using five of its eight first downs for the night, Marian utilized its passing game to march 80 yards in nine plays for a score. After Zach Denny hit Malcolm Parker for 17 yards and Michael Brooks for 11 yards to get to the Shamrock 2-yard line, tailback Sean Whitfield followed Jon Scudella and Jack Taffe into the end zone for the score.

The scoring drive was literally the only highlight of the night for the Marian offense, which never did reach the century mark in yardage. Connecting on just eight of 29 passes, the Spartans threw for just 67 yards and gained only 28 rushing yards in 21 attempts.

To its credit, an injury-plagued Marian defense led by linebackers Josh Howe, Jack McCormick and Mike Buxbaum played with heart despite the large deficit and blanked the playoff-bound Shamrocks in the second half.

St. Patrick finished with 273 total yards, led by tailback Mark Dietz with 124 rushing yards and two scores. Marian actually had the longest scoring drive of the night by a longshot.

Marian also fended off a pair of field goal attempts by St. Patrick, as one sailed left and the other was blocked by Joe Siegert.

However, the Spartans did not help themselves by committing the only two turnovers of the contest.

Freshmen: A strong defense and kickoff return for score by Mark Scott were all visiting Marian needed in a 9-0 victory over St. Patrick. Zack Roszach added a conversion kick for Marian and Matt Marquez recorded a safety.

CATEGORY	St. Patrick	Marian
First downs	12	8
Rush attempts / yards	47-161	21-28
Passing yards	112	67
Pass completions	10	8
Pass attempts	17	29
Had intercepted	0	1
Fumbles / lost	0 / 0	3 / 1
Penalty yards	8-75	6-63
Next	Playoffs	Season over

SCORING

SP- Mark Dietz 8-yard run (Chris Gasiorek kick), 2:22 first.

SP- Nick Infante 20-yard pass from Thomas Barrett (kick failed), 7:07 second.

SP- Dietz 32-yard run (pass failed), 3:33 second.

SP- Jason Genova 6-yard pass from Barrett (Gasiorek kick), 0:05 second.

MC- Sean Whitfield 2-yard run (pass failed), 4:58 fourth.

INDIVIDUALS

Passing: SP- Barrett 10 of 17, 112 yards, 2 TD. MC- Zach Denny 8 of 27, 67 yards, 1 INT; Zack Stevenson 0 of 2, 0 yards.

Rushing: SP- Dietz 12-124 (2 TD), Dan O'Donnell 10-19, Kevin Golden 6-12, Pat Cradick 1-9, Barrett 2-5, Adrian Mendoza 2-1, John Zayas 1-0, Brian Felke 9-(minus 3), Genova 1-(minus 6). MC- Whitfield 10-21 (TD), Denny 11-7.

Receiving: SP- Infante 3-43 (TD), Genova 3-40 (TD), Matt Ledenbach 1-11, George Hickey 1-10, Luke Scanlon 1-9, Joe Nee 1-8. MC- Michael Brooks 3-33, Malcolm Parker 2-22, Clifton Gordon 1-6, Matt Swanson 1-5, Whitfield 1-1.

Interceptions: Brian O'Connor (SP).