

GAME 3: Joliet Catholic 57, Marian Catholic 7

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

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

2005/ESCC records: Joliet Catholic 2-0; Marian Catholic 0-2.

Streaks: Hilltoppers- 21 wins; Spartans- 6 losses.

Week 2: Joliet Catholic 54, Benet 16; St. Viator 52, Marian Catholic 21.

Week 4 (Fri.): Notre Dame at Joliet Catholic; Marian Catholic at Marist.

Last year: Joliet Catholic 21, Marian Catholic 14.

The series: The Hilltoppers have captured five straight to take a 23-8 command in the longtime rivalry. Marian's last victory came with a 26-14 decision in 1994.

Notes: Marian will honor 30-year head coach **Dave Mattio** in a brief pre-game ceremony

Friday at approximately 6:30 p.m. . . The Spartans celebrate **Decade of Champions** Friday as well with halftime recognition and post-game in the East Gym. . . The Hilltoppers have won 12 state titles, while Marian captured the Class 4A state crown in 1994. . . Last year's seven-point margin was the closest call Joliet Catholic had in a 14-0 campaign. . . Marian has captured six consecutive home openers.

Sept. 9	1	2	3	4	Total
JOLIET CATHOLIC HILLMEN	21	14	15	7	-57
MARIAN SPARTANS	0	0	7	0	-7



The Marian defense had its hands full on Friday night, as visiting Joliet Catholic handed the Spartans a 57-7 ESCC setback.

Spartans foiled by JCA in home opener

Marian Catholic clearly made some positive adjustments at halftime on Friday night when the Spartans hosted Joliet Catholic.

The Spartan defense came out and held the explosive Hilltoppers on the first possession of the half and the offense looked completely different than an anemic one that produced just 86 yards in the opening half.

However, Marian was still faced with that issue of a 35-0 halftime deficit.

Despite stronger play in the second half, Joliet Catholic (3-0) spoiled things on a night that Marian Catholic honored head coach Dave Mattio on the start of his 30th home season, as the Hilltoppers rambled to a 57-7 ESCC victory.

Marian (0-3) looked like it might fight back into the contest after halftime.

After holding JCA on a fourth-and-two, the Spartans took their first third-quarter possession on the Hilltopper 42.

Marian quickly gained a first down on 7-yard gainers, a pass to Mike Brooks and a scramble by quarterback Zack Stevenson. Then Stevenson hit Clifton Gordon over the middle on a 22-yard gain to a first-and-goal at the 6-yard line.

After Josh Howe picked up 3 yards, Stevenson scored on a 3-yard sneak behind the blocks of Jeremy Hess and Marc Novak. The conversion kick by Derrick Middleton pulled the host squad to

within 35-7 with 7:46 to play in the third quarter.

The Marian offense continued to show some sparks, but Joliet Catholic continued to use big scoring plays to pull away to its 22nd consecutive victory.

The Hillmen scored on their first three possessions to take a quick 21-0 lead and operated their offense at peak efficiency. Of the eight times JCA found the end zone, none of the drives consumed more than five plays.

Joliet Catholic scored on plays of 58, 61, 64, 59, 72, 63 and 69 yards before adding its final score from 5 yards out.

All of that added up to a second straight monster yardage total against the Marian defense.

The Hilltoppers completed just one pass for 61 yards and a touchdown. However, their rushing offense generated 516 yards. Joe Benson bolted for 266 yards and four scores on just nine carries. Bill McKeon added 138 yards and a rushing score to go with his touchdown pass. Dan Hrvatin added 75 yards and one score.

Other than running out the clock each half, the JCA punter visited the field just twice in addition to the strong Marian hold on downs to open the third quarter.

For the third straight contest, Stevenson put up solid passing numbers. He was just 11 of 31, but totaled 175 yards through the air. Gordon pulled in four passes for 100 yards, Evan Williams had two catches for 25 yards and Middleton had a pair of grabs for 23 yards.

However, the Marian rushing offense didn't gain a yard per carry. With three sacks of Stevenson, the Spartans had 15 rushing yards on 18 attempts. After averaging more than 150 yards in the first two contests, Gordon rushed nine times for 13 yards.

Having faced two of the league's most potent offenses in the last two weeks, the Spartans will next visit Marist for a 7:30 p.m. kickoff on Friday.

Sophs: Despite a 55-yard touchdown pass from Evan Watson to Ikem Anadumaka, Marian fell to Joliet Catholic 53-7 in the East Suburban Catholic Conference Friday night in Chicago Heights. Hugh Reynolds recorded a sack and Mike Berens recovered a fumble for Marian (1-2).

Frosh: Dan Roque tossed touchdown passes to Joe Swanson (20 yards) and Armando Lopez (7) to key a 13-7 win at Joliet Catholic, while Mario Ernest added a conversion kick. Dave Brost, Darryl Pugh and Nick Payne excelled for the Spartans (2-1).

CATEGORY	Joliet Catholic	Marian Catholic
First downs	12	9
Rush attempts / yards	38-516	18-15
Passing yards	61	175
Pass completions	1	11
Pass attempts	5	31
Had intercepted	0	0
Fumbles / lost	0-0	3-0
Penalty yards	6-60	2-10
Next	Notre Dame	at Marist

SCORING

JC- Joe Benson 58-yard run (kick failed), 10:07 first.

JC- Dan Hrvatin 61-yard pass from Bill McKeon (Benson run), 5:10 first.

JC- Hrvatin 64-yard run (Shane Keane kick), 2:07 first.

JC- Benson 59-yard run (Keane kick), 8:24 second.

JC- Benson 72-yard run (Keane kick), 5:17 second.

MC- Zack Stevenson 3-yard run (Derrick Middleton kick), 7:46 kick.

JC- Benson 63-yard run (McKeon to Benson), 6:42 third.

JC- McKeon 69-yard run (Keane kick), 4:36 third.

JC- Doug Roof 5-yard run (Keane kick), 9:37 fourth.

INDIVIDUALS

Passing: JCA- McKeon 1 of 2, 61 yards, 1 TD; John Ruettinger 0 of 3, 0 yards. MC- Stevenson 11 of 31, 175 yards.

Rushing: JCA- Benson 9-266 (4 TD), McKeon 13-138 (TD), Hrvatin 4-75 (TD), Roof 4-23 (TD), Will Roth 3-20, Ryan Piechocinski 1-6, Jeff Peterson 2-0, Ruettinger 2-(minus 12). MC- Gordon 9-13, Howe 1-3, Stevenson 8-(minus 5, TD).

Receiving: JCA- Hrvatin 1-61 (TD). MC- Gordon 4-100, Evan Williams 2-25, Middleton

2-23, Howe 1-14, Michael Brooks 2-13.

Interceptions: none.