

**GAME 1: Homewood-Flossmoor 42, Marian Catholic 28**

**Kickoff:** 7:30 p.m. Friday at Homewood-Flossmoor High School.

**Where:** 999 Kedzie Avenue, Flossmoor.

**2005 records:** Marian Catholic 2-7; Homewood-Flossmoor 6-4.

**Streaks:** Spartans- 1 win; Vikings- 1 loss.

**Week 2:** Marian at Bloom Township (Fri., 6 p.m.); H-F at Thornwood (Sat, 1 p.m.).

**Last meeting:** Homewood-Flossmoor 20, Marian Catholic 19 in 2OT (1995).

**The series:** The Vikings have won the last three meetings to take a 6-2 command in the series with Marian's last triumph coming with a 14-6 decision in 1987 in Flossmoor.

**Notes:** Six of the teams' eight meetings have been decided by no more than one score, including the last five... The Spartans open their season vs. two neighborhood rivals as they visit Bloom Township on Sept. 1 at 6 p.m... In each of the last four seasons the schools have met, H-F and Marian have both advanced to the IHSA state playoffs... Marian has dropped back-to-back season openers, the first time that has happened since season-opening sweeps at the hands of H-F in 1994 and 1995.

August 25	1	2	3	4	Total
<b>MARIAN SPARTANS</b>	0	6	0	22	<b>-28</b>
<b>H.-FLOSSMOOR VIKINGS</b>	14	14	8	6	<b>-42</b>



Marian's Elliott Echols prepares to rush the quarterback Friday in Flossmoor, where the Spartans dropped their opener, 42-28, in front of about 4,000 fans.

## H-F's big plays thwart Marian in season opener

Although the final score may not be as close as any of the last five meetings, visiting Marian Catholic looked poised to pull off the greatest comeback in its neighborhood rivalry with Homewood-Flossmoor on Friday.

The Spartans were 6 yards and a successful onside kick away from pulling off a miracle in front of an estimated 4,000 fans in Flossmoor.

Instead, H-F used a 98-yard opening kickoff return to start things and a 99-yard interception return to essentially seal things, as the Vikings won their fourth straight in the series with a 42-28 nonconference decision.

Testing out a new Wing-T look on offense for the first time, Spartan senior tailback Clifton Gordon took full advantage. Had Marian not been chasing a 36-6 deficit midway through the third quarter, his numbers would've looked much gaudier than the eventual 171-yard effort on 27 carries.

"We did well with the new offense tonight," assed Gordon, who scored on runs of 1 and 6 yards to go with a pair of conversion dashes. "The offensive line did a good job and Nnanna (Alozie) and Derrick (Middleton) had some great blocks. I saw the holes pretty well and most of the time had to make only one cut. I like to the look of this new offense."

Although H-F's offense was outgained by the Spartans, 358-278, the Vikings made big plays- especially in the opening half. Even with the big returns, H-F biggest play probably occurred

late in the opening half.

Taking possession on its own 42 with less than a minute to play in the half, H-F quarterback Mark Wade hit Russell Ellington on a 49-yard fly pattern. The aerial set up Wade's 9-yard touchdown run with one second remaining and sent the Vikings into the locker room with a 28-6 halftime command.

Another Wade touchdown toss gave the Vikings a 36-6 lead midway through the third quarter, but Marian's offense was gaining confidence and momentum.

The Spartans churned out 14 first downs in the second half to the Vikings' three. While Gordon was Marian's only offense in the first half (67 of 80 yards), the Spartans became a threat after halftime.

Quarterback Jack Krause (seven of 24, 115 yards) hit Aaron Evans with a 9-yard scoring toss on the first play of the final quarter to complete an 80-yard drive. Two possessions later, Gordon ended a 45-yard scoring drive with a 6-yard romp to pull Marian within 36-20 with 4:04 to go.

Marian wasn't done. After forcing a punt, the Spartans used a 31-yard scamper from Gordon and a 24-yard connection from Krause to Nnanna Alozie to get to the H-F 6. That's when Viking Ellington jumped in front of a Spartan pass and raced 99 yards with the interception.

Again chasing three scores, Marian gained a consolation score with a final 75-yard drive, as Krause hit Middleton with a 36-yard touchdown pass with five ticks remaining on the clock.

A Marian offensive line of Jason Bruno, Ben McDonnell, Richard Wilson, Rudy Rinas, Jon Jack and Dennis Kelly did a superb job of opening holes for 233 yards on the ground. However, H-F and Wade hurt the Spartans through the air with 189 yards- most coming when the game was still in the balance.

Marian will take its new offense to phase two of the neighborhood rivalry portion of the schedule next Friday when the Spartans visit Bloom Township (1-0) at 6 p.m.

"We've just gotta get it together starting on Monday," Gordon explained. "The offense showed some great things tonight, but we also gave up a lot of points. We just have to work and put it all together as a team."

CATEGORY	Marian Catholic	H-F
<b>First downs</b>	18	13
<b>Rush attempts / yards</b>	40-243	27-89
<b>Passing yards</b>	115	189
<b>Pass completions</b>	7	13
<b>Pass attempts</b>	24	16
<b>Had intercepted</b>	1	0
<b>Fumbles / lost</b>	0-0	1-1
<b>Penalty yards</b>	4-40	11-91
<b>Next</b>	<b>at Bloom</b>	<b>at Thornwood</b>

#### SCORING

**HF-** Mark Franklin 98-yard kickoff return (Andrzej Skiba kick), 11:41 first.

**HF-** Russell Ellington 27-yard pass from Mark Wade (Skiba kick), 4:16 first.

**MC-** Clifton Gordon 1-yard run (kick failed), 10:36 second.

**HF-** Akeem Campbell 10-yard pass from Wade (Skiba kick), 3:54 second.

**HF-** Wade 9-yard run (Skiba kick), 0:01 second.

**HF-** Supo Sanni 27-yard pass from Wade (Wade run), 4:03 third.

**MC-** Aaron Evans 9-yard pass from Jack Krause (Gordon run), 11:55 fourth.

**MC-** Gordon 6-yard run (pass failed), 4:04 fourth.

**HF-** Ellington 99-yard interception return (kick blocked), 1:04 fourth.

**MC-** Derrick Middleton 36-yard pass from Krause (Gordon run), 0:05 fourth.

**Passing:** MC- Krause 7 of 24, 115 yards, 2 TD, 1 INT. HF- Wade 13 of 16, 189 yards, 3 TD.

**Rushing:** MC- Gordon 27-171 (2 TD), Krause 3-63, Nnnann Alozie 4-5, Middleton 6-4. HF- Wade 14-45 (TD), Franklin 10-31, Ellington 2-15, Aaron Phillips 1-(minus 2).

**Receiving:** MC- Alozie 3-54, Middleton 2-46 (TD), Evans 2-15 (TD). HF- Ellington 7-131 (TD), Sanni 1-27 (TD), Campbell 2-16 (TD), Franklin 3-15.

**Interceptions:** HF- Ellington (TD).

