

GAME 8: Marian Catholic 34, Benet Academy 3

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

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

2007 records: Benet Academy 2-5; Marian Catholic 4-3.

ESCC records: Benet Academy 2-3; Marian Catholic 2-3.

Streaks: Redwings- 1 win; Spartans- 1 win.

Week 7: Benet 23, St. Patrick 20; Marian Catholic 31, Marist 10.

Week 9: Notre Dame at Benet (Fri., 7:30 p.m.); Marian at St. Patrick (Fri., 8 p.m.).

Last year: Marian Catholic 34, Benet Academy 13.

The series: Marian has won six of the last eight, giving the Spartans a 15-6 overall advantage in the series.

Notes: Marian is seeking its 33rd season of .500 or better in 37 years with a victory on Friday... the last meeting in Chicago Heights saw the Redwings capture a 29-20 victory... A Spartan victory should secure a second straight IHSA playoff bid... Marian is seeking its third straight victory in a regular-season home finale... The Spartans have forced a turnover in six of seven games this season.

| Oct. 12 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total |
|---------------------------|---|----|---|---|------------|
| BENET ACADEMY | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - 3 |
| at MARIAN CATHOLIC | 7 | 20 | 7 | 0 | -34 |



Marian's Andres Rodriguez picked off a pass Friday to help Marian to a 34-3 ESCC victory over visiting Benet Academy.

Marian rolls past Benet to secure IHSA playoff berth

Early on, it looked like Malcolm Allen would have to be a workhorse on Friday night when Marian Catholic hosted Benet Academy.

Instead, a powerful offensive line and opportunistic defense made it an easy night for Allen—however, a very productive one.

Gaining short fields on several occasions, Allen rushed for 91 yards and four scores to ignite the Spartans (5-3, 3-3) to a 34-3 ESCC romp over the Redwings. The victory secures a second-straight playoff berth for Marian, which will conclude the regular season on Friday vs. St. Patrick at Chicago's Hanson Stadium.

"It was all the offensive line tonight," said Allen, giving credit to the likes of Marc Bartolini, Bryan Zavala, John Holzhauser, Dennis Julliano, Richard Wilson and Dennis Kelly. "You could have driven a truck through some of those holes tonight. They've been doing a great job all year and we had no trouble getting it done tonight."

The offensive line wasn't the only group that made it easy on Allen and the offense on Friday. The Spartans scored on four of their first five possessions to take a 27-3 halftime command, but never had to travel more than 57 yards to score.

Scoring drives of 14 and 15 yards were set up by interceptions by Joe Swanson and

Andres Rodriguez.

"The defense played great tonight," Allen praised. "We really didn't have to drive very long tonight. They put together a great effort tonight and they basically put up a goose egg other than the one field goal drive."

A great defensive effort left Marian with short fields, and therefore, modest offensive numbers.

However, the numbers by the Spartan defense were consistent. The Redwings barely managed 3 yards per carry, as 10 of the visitors' rushing attempts went for zero or negative yards. Benet went to the air 18 times, but managed just seven completions amid great Marian pressure up front from Kirk Roberts, Dominick Corsiglia, Matt Marquez and Josh Forney (sack).

Marian's longest drive (in time) was its first, as the Spartans went 55 yards in nine plays to a 7-0 lead when Allen dashed 9 yards for a score and Ryan Merriman tacked on the first of four conversion kicks. Benet bounced back immediately with a 20-yard field goal to make it 7-3, but that's when the Spartan defense set the table.

With Benet backed up in the shadow of its own end zone, Swanson picked off an aerial to set up Marian at the Redwing 14. In just four plays, Allen burst in from the 1-yard line for a 14-3 margin.

Two plays later, a Rodriguez interception return of 22 yards set up the Spartans at the Benet 15. This time, Marian used six snaps to hit paydirt, as Allen scored from 2 yards out for a 20-3 command.

Marian's next possession saw a greater distance challenge, but it didn't turn out to consume much time. Mark Scott swept right end for 27 yards, then turned the corner on the left side for a 30-yard scoring scamper that sent the Spartans into a 27-3 halftime advantage.

Benet tried an unsuccessful onside kick to open the second half, and Marian turned it into the final score of the night. Eight plays into the second half, Allen concluded a 51-yard scoring drive with a 2-yard touchdown to cap off his four-touchdown night.

The Redwings got inside the Marian 35 on two second-half occasions, but Marian held in the red zone once and stifled the other drive with a fumble recovery by Arthur Riley.

Marian outrushed the Redwings, 231-110, overall as Scott finished with 61 yards on the ground, Brandon Sherman added 27 more and John DiGiovanni finished with 24 yards. Quarterback Evan Watson was an efficient 3-of-5 for 42 yards, hitting Sherman twice for 33 yards.

"We're in the playoffs, but now we want more," Allen concluded. "We want to finish 6-3 and a better seed. In the playoffs, everybody comes out 0-0. We want to get something going and play until Thanksgiving."

| CATEGORY | Benet | Marian Catholic |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|
| First downs | 11 | 14 |
| Rush attempts / yards | 35-110 | 46-231 |
| Passing yards | 92 | 42 |
| Pass completions | 7 | 3 |
| Pass attempts | 18 | 5 |
| Had intercepted | 2 | 0 |
| Fumbles / lost | 1 / 1 | 1 / 1 |
| Penalty yards | 5-34 | 3-25 |
| Next | NOTRE DAME | at St. Patrick |

SCORING

MC- Malcolm Allen 9-yard run (Ryan Merriman kick), 5:38 first.

BA- Kevin Kron 20-yard field goal, 0:57 first.

MC- Allen 1-yard run (Merriman kick), 5:44 second.

MC- Allen 2-yard run (kick failed), 2:14 second.

MC- Mark Scott 30-yard run (Merriman kick), 1:30 second.

MC- Allen 2-yard run (Merriman kick), 8:50 third.

Passing: BA- Jimmy Riley 7 of 18, 92 yards, 0 TD, 2 INT. MC- Evan Watson 3 of 5, 42 yards, 0 TD, 0 INT.

Rushing: BA- Dan Cannon 8-42, Mike Wuest 14-42, Dan McGue 8-24, Pat Simonaitis 2-5, Bill Koloseike 1-3, Riley 2-(minus 6). MC- Allen 23-91 (4 TD), Scott 4-61 (TD), Brandon Sherman 5-27, John DiGiovanni 5-24, Watson 3-12, Joe Hess 4-9, Frank Tambrini 2-7.

Receiving: BA- Emmett Carrier 3-40, Ben Menconi 1-38, Wuest 1-8, Ted Savage 1-7, Sean McCabe 1-(minus 1). MC- Sherman 2-33, Dennis Kelly 1-9.

Interceptions: Joe Swanson, Andres Rodriguez.

