

### 2008 Spartan Football games

#### GAME 1: Homewood-Flossmoor 18, Marian Catholic 13

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

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

**2007 records:** Marian Catholic 5-5; Homewood-Flossmoor 8-5.

**Streaks:** Spartans- 2 losses; Vikings- 1 loss.

**Week 2:** Marian at Bloom Township (Fri., 6 p.m.); H-F at Hillcrest (Fri., 7 p.m.).

**Last meeting:** Marian Catholic 34, Homewood-Flossmoor 28 (OT).

**The series:** Marian has captured the last two meetings in overtime (including one in the 8A playoffs) to trim the Vikings' overall series advantage to 7-4. A four-game H-F winning streak preceded the Spartans' current run.

**Notes:** Eight of the teams' 11 meetings have been decided by no more than one score... The Spartans open their season vs. two neighborhood rivals as they visit Bloom Township on Sept. 5 at 6 p.m... In each of the last six seasons the schools have met, H-F and Marian have both advanced to the IHSA state playoffs... Both schools have installed new *FieldTurf* in their stadiums for the 2008 season... The Spartans snapped a three-game losing streak in openers last year and own a 4-4 mark in season debuts since 2000... Marian unveiled a comprehensive [All-Time Football Records](#) portion of its website this summer.

August 29	1	2	3	4	Total
<b>MARIAN CATHOLIC</b>	0	0	7	6	<b>-13</b>
<b>at HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR</b>	6	0	12	0	<b>-18</b>



**Marian's Josh Forney (93) came up with a huge interception Friday, but visiting Marian fell just short of an upset in an 18-13 season-opening loss at H-F**

### Marian's late rally falls short at Homewood-Flossmoor

Through some critical miscues and first-game mishaps, visiting Marian Catholic was still in a great position to score late and pull off an upset of a higher-ranked Homewood-Flossmoor for a third straight time on Friday.

After virtually handing the Vikings two scores for a 13-0 command, Marian battled back to an 18-13 deficit early in the fourth quarter.

The Spartans final three possessions ended in an interception in H-F territory, then turning the ball over on downs at the Viking 4-yard line and 12-yard line, the latter on the final play of the contest.

The end result was a ninth game in the series of 12 decided by one score or less, as H-F escaped with the 18-13 nonconference decision.

"We should have won the game," explained tailback Joe Sanfratello, echoing the sentiments of a sideline that felt it had just outplayed its foe. Although he didn't get many opportunities early, the sophomore Sanfratello led Marian in rushing and produced scores of 12 and 3 yards to lead the comeback charge.

"I'm just mad I couldn't do more to help in the beginning. I thought we played a lot harder than them tonight and I know we worked a lot harder getting ready."

Statistics would show that Marian actually did play better than the Vikings on Friday. The Spartans, who will visit another neighborhood rival with a 6 p.m. trip to Bloom on Friday, outgained H-F on the ground (198-81) and through the air (94-84).

However, the Spartans set up H-F in great position for its first two scores. Marian's second snap from scrimmage resulted in a 29-yard fumble return and score for the Vikings' Derrick Goard. Then after a stop to open the second half, a Marian muffed punt set up the Vikings for a one-play, 35-yard drive and score.

Despite the 13-0 hole, Sanfratello and a Spartan offensive line of Josh Mayers, Nick Payne, Dennis Julliano, Mike Foster, James Jackson and Bryan Zavala spearheaded a comeback. When Sanfratello (13 carries, 75 yards) scored from the 3 on the second play of the fourth quarter, the Spartans still had plenty of time to complete the comeback.

"I just ran hard and went I got hit, I wasn't going down," explained Sanfratello, who had 11 of his totes after halftime. "The line did a great job tonight. I almost never got hit until I was into the secondary."

That leads to three great chances down the stretch.

Early in the final stanza, the Vikings got their lone interception of the night on a third-and-short play from the H-F 38.

Two plays later, Spartan lineman Josh Forney came up with an amazing, acrobatic interception to set up Marian at the H-F 12. However, a sack left Marian with fourth-and-long and quarterback Evan Watson's scramble came up 4 yards short of the end zone.

Marian wasn't done, as a Spartan defense that yielded 10 negative yardage plays on the night forced a punt and Marian possession at its own 42 with 1:04 to play.

Following an incomplete pass, Watson and Sanfratello connected on a screen for 23 yards to the H-F 35. A Watson scramble then netted 18 yards to the 17, although the signal-caller was injured on the play.

Junior quarterback Tommy Doane entered, and after an incomplete pass, tossed to Jesse Steward at the Viking 12. The Spartans were forced to spike the ball to stop the clock, before the final effort- an incomplete pass to Joey Walker in the area of the H-F 4-yard line.

Following back-to-back overtime games in the series, a huge crowd was treated to another fantastic finish in the series. Meanwhile, Marian's bench left feeling like it had allowed an upset victory to escape.

While all of the Spartans' turnovers proved critical, the Vikings fumbled the ball on the new H-F carpet four times without a Marian recovery. Meanwhile, Dan Vargas added an interception to Forney's pickoff, but neither netted points.

Sparked by a strong effort up front from Forney, Mac Stevenson, Bryan Golubski, Julliano and Mayers, along with linebackers Kevin Linde, Joe Swanson, Nolan Berens and Nate Coburn, Marian held a potentially explosive H-F offense to 81 yards rushing on 37 attempts. Only two rushes all night netted more than 9 yards.

Meanwhile, the Spartans used a balanced effort to more than double-up H-F's total on the ground. Joe Hess finished with 53 yards on 13 carries and Watson added 37 yards on the ground to go with a 3-for-7, 89-yard night through the air.

The Spartans will hope to chalk up some of their shortcomings to first-game mistakes, although next they'll run into a Bloom offense that churned out 48 points Friday.

"We just need to work more as a team and not break down when things don't go our way," Sanfratello concluded with an optimistic eye to the future.

**Sophomores:** The Spartans jumped ahead early and opened the campaign with a 25-13 decision over the Vikings.

CATEGORY	Marian	H-F
First downs	11	9
Rush attempts / yards	41-198	37-81
Passing yards	94	84
Pass completions	4	9
Pass attempts	11	17
Had intercepted	1	2
Fumbles / lost	2 / 1	4 / 0
Penalty yards	4-30	4-22
Next	at Hillcrest	at Bloom Twp.

**SCORING**

**HF-** Derrick Goard 29-yard fumble return (kick blocked), 11:04 first.

**HF-** Lantz Sims 35-yard run (pass failed), 10:08 third.

**MC-** Joe Sanfratello 12-yard run (Dan Roque kick), 5:05 third.

**HF-** Mike Buchanan 10-yard pass from Doriane Reese (pass failed), 1:06 third.

**MC-** Sanfratello 3-yard run (run failed), 11:17 fourth.

**Rushing:** MC- Sanfratello 13-75, 2 TD; Joey Hess 13-53; Watson 7-37, Joey Walker 4-18, Frank Tambrini 2-11, Jesse Steward 2-4. HF- Sims 9-77, Jibri Jackson 10-33, Malik Norman 10-(minus 8), Reese 8-(minus 21).

**Passing:** MC- Watson 3 of 7, 89 yards, 1 INT; Tommy Doane 1 of 4, 5 yards. HF- Reese 9 of 17, 84 yards, 1 TD, 2 INT.

**Receiving:** MC- Tambrini 1-52, Sanfratello 1-23, Austin Guaccio 1-14, Steward 1-5. HF- Mark Williams 3-35, Travis Thomas 3-27, Sims 1-10, Buchanan 1-10, TD, Alex Mitripoulos 1-2.

**Interceptions:** Dan Vargas, Josh Forney (MC); Mike McWhorter (HF).

