

GAME 2: Bloom Township 13, Marian Catholic 7

Kickoff: 6 p.m. Friday at Bloom's Sarff Field.

Where: 10th and Chicago Road, Chicago Heights.

2008 records: Marian Catholic 0-1; Bloom Township 1-0.

Streaks: Spartans- 3 losses; Blazing Trojans- 3 wins.

Week 1: H-F 18, Marian Catholic 13; Bloom Township 48, Shepard 26.

Week 3: Notre Dame at Marian (Fri., 7:30 p.m.); Bloom at Rich Central (Fri., 6 p.m.)

Last meeting: Marian Catholic 27, Bloom Township 14.

The series: The Spartans have captured six straight in the series and own an overall series command of 8-1, as well as a 47-0 victory in the lone meeting with Bloom Trail. The Bloom Township win came with a 14-12 decision in 1974.

Notes: Marian's former home until the mid 1980s was Bloom's Sarff Field... The 1989 meeting at Sarff featured future NFL players Bryant Young (Bloom), Rodney Harrison (Marian) and John Holecek (Marian)... The 48 points scored by Bloom last week topped any total from the 2007 season... Blazing Trojan head coach Tony Palombi is a former Marian football staffer.

September 5	1	2	3	4	Total
MARIAN CATHOLIC	0	0	7	0	-7
at BLOOM TOWNSHIP	6	7	0	0	-13



Marian's offense came up just short for a second straight week in a 13-7 loss to crosstown rival Bloom Township on Friday at Sarff Field.

Marian falls short again in loss to rival Bloom Township

It's gotta be thrilling drama to watch, but Marian Catholic's football team certainly doesn't want to make a habit of this.

For a second straight week, the Spartans made halftime adjustments to physically (and convincingly) win the battle in the second half.

And for a second straight week, Marian came up short on potential game-winning drives in the fourth quarter, unable to erase a halftime deficit.

On Friday at the Spartans' former home, Sarff Field in Chicago Heights, Marian was unable to tally on two fourth-quarter drives inside the 20 as host Bloom Township stunned the Spartans for the first time since 1974 with a 13-7 nonconference decision.

"We've gotta come out right from the beginning and play our kind of football right from the start," explained senior defensive end Josh Forney, who saw a three-sack night go for naught. "We can't come out and just do it for a half. We've gotta go back to the drawing board and work some things out and play full football games."

Much like an opening-game effort at Homewood-Flossmoor that saw Marian misfire on three strong fourth-quarter opportunities in a five-point setback, the Spartans had two brilliant chances in the fourth quarter on Friday.

With tailback Joe Hess (30 carries, 168 yards) carrying most of the load, Marian marched from its own 10 to the Bloom 10-yard line in a 22-play drive. However, a fourth-down sack of quarterback Tommy Doane put pressure right back on the Marian defense with 4:20 to play.

The Spartan defenders responded, as Mac Stevenson pounced on a fumble at the Bloom 27 with 3:02 to go.

A pair of totes by Hess got the Spartans 19 yards from a tying or winning score, but the Blazing Trojans (2-0) stiffened by throwing Hess for a 1-yard loss and forcing an incomplete pass just out of the reach of Caleb Dyson on fourth down.

The end result was a second straight loss in a contest that Marian dominated in the trenches. With superb pressure effort up front from Forney, Stevenson, Josh Meyers and Bryan Golubski, Marian limited Bloom to 5 yards rushing on 32 attempts. Meanwhile, with Hess and Joey Walker (10 carries, 37 yards, touchdown) leading the way, the Spartans churned out 193 yards with the infantry.

When Forney wasn't stopping the Blazing Trojans' running game, he was in the face of Bloom quarterback D'Angelo Blatcher. His three sacks (one combined with Stevenson) helped limit the Blazing Trojans to 47 yards in the second half, but Marian was able to seize only two of Bloom's eight fumbles on the night.

"I was just trying to get off the ball fast and pressure, using the technique the coaches taught us," a modest Forney said of his dominant effort.

But while Marian was stifling Bloom on the ground game, the Spartans got torched via the air. Blatcher connected on 17 of 19 passes, tossed for 247 yards and threw or ran the ball on 45 of Bloom's 51 snaps. His touchdown aeriols of 17 and 13 yards spotted Bloom to a 13-0 halftime command.

Marian responded from a first-half shutout for a second straight week. With an offensive line of Nate Coburn, James Jackson, Nick Payne, Michael Foster, Bryan Zavala, Josh Mayers and Dennis Julliano paving the way, the ground game went to work.

The Spartans took the opening kickoff of the half, marching 70 yards in eight plays. Hess ripped off runs of 15, 22 and 19 yards before Walker eventually scored on a 3-yard sweep.

As it turned out, Marian gained only three more possessions in the second half.

With the three sacks and a couple holding calls in the backfield helping the numbers, Marian held Bloom to negative yardage on 15 snaps. However, the Blazing Trojans had nine pass plays carry for 15 yards or more.

For an 0-2 team that is two possessions away from being 2-0, Marian will try to right its ship next Friday when the Spartans host ESCC foe Notre Dame at 7:30 p.m. in the first varsity contest on Spartan Stadium's new *FieldTurf*.

"It's a new season with the conference starting next," Forney concluded. "We just need to get our confidence back with a win."

Sophomores: The Spartans improved to 2-0 with a 28-0 whitewash of Bloom on Thursday.

Freshmen: Marian fell to 0-2 on the A level with a 12-0 setback to the Blazing Trojans.

CATEGORY	Marian	Bloom Twp.
First downs	15	15
Rush attempts / yards	46-193	32-5
Passing yards	32	247
Pass completions	5	17
Pass attempts	12	19
Had intercepted	1	0
Fumbles / lost	2 / 0	8 / 2
Penalty yards	2-25	8-64
Next	NOTRE DAME	at Rich Central

SCORING

BT- Danon Cameron 17 yard pass from D'Angelo Blatcher (kick blocked), 2:26 first.

BT- Byron Goodrich 13-yard pass from Blatcher (Anthony Narcisi kick), 4:39 second.

MC- Joey Walker 3-yard run (Dan Roque kick), 8:48 third.

Rushing: MC- Hess 30-168, Walker 10-37 (TD), Jesse Steward 1-3, Tommy Doane 5-(minus 15). BT- Blatcher 26-16, Nyko Palombi 3-0, Mytriel Stewart 1-(minus 3); Cameron 2-(minus 8).

Passing: MC- Doane 5 of 12, 32 yards, 0 TD, 1 INT. BT- Blatcher 17 of 19, 247 yards, 2 TD, 0 INT.

Receiving: MC- Armando Lopez 2-16, Austin Guaccio 2-12, Frank Tambrini 1-4. BT- Cameron 10-112 (TD), Darryl Pugh 2-51; Stewart 3-50, Japheth Cato 1-39, Goodrich 1-13 (TD).

Interceptions: Goodrich (BT).

