

GAME 6: Nazareth Academy 42, Marian Catholic 13

Kickoff: 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Nazareth Academy.

Where: 1209 W. Ogden Avenue, LaGrange Park.

2008 records: Marian Catholic 1-4; Nazareth Academy 4-1.

ESCC records: Marian 1-2; Nazareth 2-1.

Streaks: Spartans- 1 loss; Roadrunners- 2 wins.

Week 5: Carmel 50, Marian Catholic 7; Nazareth 24, Benet Academy 7.

Week 7: St. Viator at Marian (7:30 p.m. Fri.); Nazareth at Notre Dame (7:30 p.m. Fri.).

Last year: Nazareth Academy 27, Marian Catholic 7.

The series: The Spartans own a 3-2 edge in the brief series, but neither team has won consecutive games since Marian prevailed in 2003 and 2004.

Notes: In the last meeting contested at Nazareth, Marian prevailed in a 42-20 decision... The Spartans are 1-0 in afternoon contests this year and have won three of their last four games under the sun... Nazareth is one of three ESCC teams (Carmel, Marist) hoping to secure a fifth victory and likely playoff bid this weekend... Joey Walker has led Marian in rushing the last three contests, but the Spartans have only eclipsed the 100-yard rushing mark in one of those games.

Oct. 4	1	2	3	4	Total
MARIAN SPARTANS	0	0	6	7	-13
at NAZARETH ROADRUNNERS	7	7	28	0	-42



Marian's Armando Lopez pulled in a touchdown pass Saturday, but the visiting Spartans still dropped a 42-13 ESCC decision to Nazareth Academy.

Spartans throttled in ESCC visit to Nazareth Academy

Visiting Marian Catholic fell for the second straight weekend with a 42-13 East Suburban Catholic loss at Nazareth Academy on Saturday.

All afternoon, it was a case of good news... bad news for the Spartans, who fell to 1-5 overall and to 1-3 in league play.

The good news is Jesse Steward rambled 77 yards for a touchdown on Marian's last offensive snap of the day. The bad news is that rush was more than three times the total yardage Marian's offense had to that point (23 yards).

The good news is the leg of Joe Swanson racked up 332 yards in punting yardage. The bad news is that the Spartan punter was called on 11 times as Marian managed just four first downs in the contest.

There's more to come.

Despite the final score, Marian still had plenty of life after it was shut out in the opening half for the fifth time in six games- resulting in a 14-0 halftime deficit.

With a near carbon copy effort of the spark that keyed an earlier afternoon comeback victory at St. Joseph, Spartan senior Dan Roque returned the second-half kickoff 82 yards to the Roadrunner 15-yard line.

It took just one snap to get Marian right back in the contest, as Joey Walker hit Armando Lopez with a 15-yard scoring strike to pull the visitors within 14-6.

Marian maintained momentum, as the defense produced a three-and-out and Marian soon gained command following the punt at its own 29-yard line.

But getting a grip on the football was not the Spartans' forte on Saturday.

The good news: Marian got away with four fumbles, all of which it recovered itself, in the opening half.

The bad news: The Spartans initial fumble of the second half came on the next play and set up Nazareth at the Marian 19-yard line.

Yielding momentum to the Roadrunners (5-1, 3-1), the Spartans were about to get blitzed.

More good news: led by a strong effort up front from Josh Forney, Bryan Golubski, Josh Mayers and Mac Stevenson, the Spartans held one of the ESCC's top scorers- LaSteven McKinney- to 9 yards on eight carries in the opening half.

The bad news: McKinney's next carry after the fumble was the one to get him rolling.

One snap following the turnover, McKinney burst through the line for a 19-yard score and Nazareth's lead swelled to 21-6.

From there, three straight Swanson punts were turned into Roadrunner scores on consecutive possessions. Nazareth found the end zone three times in less than four minutes at the end of the third quarter. Before Marian knew what hit it, the Spartans trailed 42-6.

McKinney busted off touchdown runs of 50 and 60 yards, finishing the day with more rushing yards (169) than the Spartans totaled as an offense (100).

The Roadrunner tailback also ensured that Marian would be outscored in the second half for the first time this season.

Conversely, the Spartans have now been outscored in the first half this year, 102-3.

With one of Marian's four first downs for the afternoon coming via penalty, the Spartans could never get anything rolling on Saturday.

Of 44 snaps the Marian offense had, nine went for no yardage and 19 for negative yardage.

While quarterback Walker tossed for 60 yards on four complete passes, including a 38-yarder to Austin Guaccio, the Spartans gave much of that back in the passing game with seven sacks totaling 45 yards in losses.

While Marian only had two giveaways for the day (fumble, interception), the Spartans wound up with two muffed punts and six fumbles overall.

In the early going, it appeared that Nazareth would be the team hurt by miscues.

The second snap of the contest saw the Roadrunners fumble the ball away at the Marian 35 when Kevin Linde pounced on the ball. Then when Marian had to punt three plays later, Spartan Dennis Julliano recovered the ensuing Roadrunner fumble on the return at the Nazareth 35.

No Marian punt on this occasion, but a Nazareth interception squelched any threat.

Following a Nazareth score to make it 7-0, Marian opened the next series with the 38-yard connection from Walker to Guaccio, giving the Spartans their only opening-half first down at the Nazareth 42-yard line.

But the next three plays resulted in a short gain, incomplete pass and sack to force another Marian punt.

Not including the two turnovers, Marian's offense yielded nine three-and-out series for the day.

After a strong start to the year, the Spartan offense failed to produced more than 40 yards on the ground for the second time in three games.

Marian will try to turn things around next Friday when it hosts a struggling St. Viator team (2-4, 0-4) at 7:30 p.m. in Spartan Stadium.

CATEGORY	Marian Catholic	Nazareth
First downs	4	15
Rush attempts / yards	32-40	41-285
Passing yards	60	135
Pass completions	4	10
Pass attempts	12	21
Had intercepted	1	1
Fumbles / lost	6 / 1	3 / 2
Penalty yards	6-55	8-75
Next	ST. VIATOR	at Notre Dame

SCORING

Nz- Njohnny Nelson 22-yard pass from Adam Marske (Pat Dunn kick), 4:31 first.

Nz- Mike Williams 26-yard run (Dunn kick), 4:45 second.

MC- Armando Lopez 15-yard pass from Joey Walker (kick failed), 11:38 third.

Nz- LaSteven McKinney 19-yard run (Dunn kick), 10:54 third.

Nz- Reggie Jennings 6-yard run (Dunn kick), 5:55 third.

Nz- McKinney 50-yard run (Dunn kick), 3:57 third.

Nz- McKinney 60-yard run (Dunn kick), 1:58 third.

MC- Jesse Steward 77-yard run (Dan Roque kick), 2:25 fourth.

Rushing: MC- Steward 9-70 (TD), Frank Tambrini 5-14, Walker 18-(minus 44). Naz- McKinney 14-169 (3 TD), Williams 3-66 (TD), Jacob Mijares 7-18, Jennings 3-16 (TD), Mike Dore 2-9, Robert Devine 1-8, T.J. Jones 1-5, Patrick Callaghan 1-4, Tom Doyle 2-4, Alan Fredian 3-3, Marske 2-(minus 3), Scott Patterson 1-(minus 3), Greg Marker 1-(minus 11).

Passing: MC- Walker 4 of 12, 60 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT. Naz- Marske 10 of 21, 135 yards, 1 TD, 1 INT.

Receiving: MC- Austin Guaccio 1-38, Lopez 2-17 (TD), Brian Kelly 1-5. Naz- Dore 2-28, Mark O'Connor 2-37, Nelson 2-25 (TD), Steven Murphy 2-24, McKinney 1-9.

Interceptions: Josh Forney (MC), Matthew Letcher (Naz).

