

**GAME 1: Marian Catholic 34, Homewood-Flossmoor 18**

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

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

**2008 records:** Homewood-Flossmoor 4-5; Marian Catholic 1-8.

**Streaks:** Vikings- 1 win; Spartans- 5 losses.

**Week 2:** Hillcrest at H-F (Fri., 7:30 p.m.); Bloom Twp at Marian (Fri, 6 p.m.).

**Last year:** Homewood-Flossmoor 18, Marian Catholic 13.

**The series:** The Vikings hold an overall 8-4 series advantage, although Marian has captured two of the last three meetings in overtime. The Spartans have prevailed in the last two contests played in Chicago Heights.

**Notes:** Both teams turned in losing campaigns last year after making playoff visits the previous year... Nine of the 12 meetings have been decided by one score or less... Marian opens its campaign in "rivalry" fashion, as the Spartans will host crosstown foe Bloom Township in week two... Marian has prevailed in just one of its last five opening-game tests... The *SouthtownStar* will produce a commemorative game program for the Spartans's two opening games.

Aug. 28	1	2	3	4	Total
<b>H.-FLOSSMOOR VIKINGS</b>	0	0	6	12	<b>-18</b>
<b>at MARIAN SPARTANS</b>	7	21	6	0	<b>-34</b>



**Spartan Joe Sanfratello had three first-half scores to spark host Marian Catholic to a 34-18 season-opening victory over Homewood-Flossmoor.**

## Spartans strike early, roll past rival Homewood-Flossmoor

Coming off a disappointing season, Marian Catholic was looking for any of its elements to give it a jump start when the Spartans hosted rival Homewood-Flossmoor Friday before a crowd of more than 3,500.

How does a combination of offense, defense and special teams work for a recipe?

Marian used a 10-play drive and short fields courtesy of special teams and defensive turnovers to score three times in less than five minutes, en route to a 28-0 halftime lead and eventual 34-18 nonconference victory over the Vikings.

The decision trimmed H-F's series edge to 8-5, as Marian (1-0) equaled its highest scoring output in the series and rolled up the most lopsided score since the Vikings captured the first meeting, 24-6, in 1964.

"I thought this would be a battle all the way," explained Joe Sanfratello, who scored three times to help propel Marian to a 34-0 lead. "I didn't see that (first half) coming. But we came out confident and we were a little ticked off after last year (an 18-13 H-F victory).

"The defense was awesome and gave us some great field position. And the offensive line did a great job tonight."

Marian punted on its first possession, but the Spartans would score on their next four. Behind

a physical offensive line of Brian Kelly, Alexander Bell, Tim Michels, Michael Foster, James Jackson and Jeffrey Bona, the Spartans drove 61 yards in 10 plays for the first score of the season, a 1-yard burst by Joe Hess. Adam Hutchison booted the first of four conversions for a 7-0 Marian lead with 51 ticks remaining in the opening quarter.

Before the second-quarter clock hit 8:00, the Spartans had expanded the lead to 21-0 thanks to some great defensive and special teams play.

Actually, the Spartan defense did need to spend much time on the field.

One H-F snap later, Foster pounced on a fumble to set up the home team at the H-F 11-yard line.

Four plays later, Sanfratello hit paydirt from a yard out for his first score and a 14-0 Spartan command.

Next, the special teams got into the act, as Hutchison's kickoff was recovered by Marian's Tony Alozie at the Viking 18-yard line. This time, it took five plays to find the end zone, as Sanfratello's 1-yard score made it 21-0 with 8:09 to play in the half.

After Marian's defense yielded just one first down (penalty) on the next series, the Spartans took possession on a more conventional punt and marched 43 yards in seven plays for a 28-0 command. From that point, H-F was destined for its third straight loss on Spartan turf.

While some consolation numbers for the Vikings tended to balance out the statistics, Marian maintained one of the most significant telltale numbers.

The Spartans ran off 63 plays to the Vikings' 40, as Marian gained command at the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball.

Joe Walker was Marian's top rusher with 66 yards on nine carries, but a group of nine ballcarriers combined for 239 yards on an impressive 58 attempts. That included a poor punt snap that resulted in a 27-yard loss.

Marian's three-pronged attack of Walker, Sanfratello (12 rushes, 38 yards) and Joe Hess (14 rushes, 57 yards without the bad snap) was too much for H-F to handle. Meanwhile, sophomore quarterback John Rhode was very efficient in his debut, completing four of five passes for 23 yards.

"All the backs are explosive," assessed Sanfratello, who missed much of last season with a broken collarbone. "We can all run and block and stay involved. It's great to be back on the field and in full health. And it's also great to have a big halftime lead after being 1-8 last year."

Marian's productive first-half trio rested most of the second half, but led by Trevor Woolfolk (49 yards) and Jesse Steward (34 yards), Marian remained productive on the ground.

The Spartan defense eventually yielded points with a handful of starters resting in the second half, but it was dominant when it needed to be.

The Vikings were limited to 31 rushing yards, 35 passing yards and four first downs in the opening half. H-F's initial possession resulted in a fourth-down sack and fumble recovery by Michael Tolliver, then the Spartan defender forced the fumble on H-F's next try. Stretching into the second half, the Vikings were forced to punt on their next three possessions.

With strong efforts along the defensive line from Tolliver, Foster, Marc Grkinich and Josh Mayers, H-F eventually abandoned the run and finished with just 61 yards via the terrain. By the time H-F did mount a scoring drive, Hess had added another Marian score from 2 yards out for a 34-0 Spartan command with 7:17 to play in the third quarter.

Marian's rivalry kickoff start to the season continues next Friday when the Spartans host crosstown foe Bloom Township in a 6 p.m. kickoff.

**Sophomores:** Marian broke a late deadlock for a 21-14 decision over the Vikings.

CATEGORY	H.-Flossmoor	Marian Catholic
<b>First downs</b>	13	19
<b>Rush attempts / yards</b>	16-61	73-239
<b>Passing yards</b>	199	23
<b>Pass completions</b>	13	4
<b>Pass attempts</b>	24	5
<b>Had intercepted</b>	0	0
<b>Fumbles / lost</b>	3 / 1	1 / 0
<b>Penalty yards</b>	6-42	3-30
<b>Next</b>	<b>HILLCREST</b>	<b>BLOOM TWP.</b>

#### SCORING

**MC-** Joe Hess 1-yard run (Adam Hutchison kick), 0:51 first.

**MC-** Joe Sanfratello 1-yard run (Hutchison kick), 10:39, second.

**MC-** Sanfratello 1-yard run (Hutchison kick), 8:09 second.

**MC-** Sanfratello 6-yard run (Hutchison kick), 3:48 second.

**MC-** Hess 2-yard run (kick failed), 7:17 third.

**HF-** Malik Norman 18-yard pass from Tim Williams (kick failed), 4:53 third.

**HF-** Norman 55-yard pass from Williams (pass failed), 5:50 fourth.

**HF-** Gerald Butler 16-yard pass from Williams (pass failed), 1:42 fourth.

**Rushing:** HF- Norman 8-43, Nate Ferrell 3-17, Kamari Stephens 1-0, Williams 4-1; MC- Joey Walker 9-66, Trevor Woolfold 5-49, Sanfratello 12-38 (3 TD), Jesse Steward 5-34, Hess 14-30 (2 TD), Jeruel Taylor 8-14, Rhode 1-4, Brandon Spruili 3-2, Alex Obanor 1-1.

**Passing:** HF- Williams 13 of 24, 199 yards, 3 TD, 0 INT; MC- Rhode 4 of 5, 23 yards, 0 TD, 0 INT.

**Receiving:** HF- Norman 5-119 (2 TD), Butler 3-47 (TD), Stephens 3-25, Antione Dantzler 2-7; MC- Hess 2-15, Walker 1-5, Austin Guaccio 1-3.

**Interceptions:** none.

