

Game 9: Marist-49; Marian Catholic-00

Kickoff: 7:30 p.m. Friday at Marist High School.

Where: 4200 W. 115th Street, Chicago.

Streaks: Spartans- 2 losses; RedHawks- 1 win.

ESCC records: Marian Catholic 4-2; Marist 4-2.

Week 8: Joliet Catholic 28, Marian Catholic 6; Marist 43, Benet 12.

Next: Both teams qualified for IHSA playoffs.

Last year: Marist 35, Marian Catholic 26.

The series: Marian had won two in a row prior to last year's decision and the Spartans own an overall series advantage of 14-5. Last year marked the first time in 29 meetings that the losing team scored more than 16 points.

Notes: Five of 10 ESCC teams own 6-2 records and have earned IHSA playoff berths; three more teams can qualify this weekend with a victory... Friday marks just the second time this fall Marian has played on natural grass... The Spartans have rushed for more than 125 yards in six contests (6-0), but have been limited to rushing outputs of 23 and 54 yards in their last two contests (0-2)... Marian is seeking its fifth season of seven wins or more since 2000.

| Oct. 23 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total |
|------------------------|----|---|----|----|------------|
| MARIAN SPARTANS | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -0 |
| at MARIST | 14 | 7 | 14 | 14 | -49 |



Spartan Jeruel Taylor rushed for 58 yards on Friday at Marist, but Marian sustained a 49-0 ESCC loss to the RedHawks in the regular season finale.

Spartans thumped by Marist in regular season finale

This certainly wasn't the way Marian Catholic wanted to go roaring into the IHSA state playoffs.

Host Marist scored the first three times it had the ball Friday and Marian had little luck in slowing down the RedHawks from there, as Marist handed the Spartans a 49-0 ESCC setback to conclude the regular season for both teams.

Marian (6-3, 4-3) had success moving the ball on a handful of occasions on Friday. But eventual breakdowns and the worst night of the season on defense left the Spartans thinking it's time to move onto the second season.

That's the good news for Marian, which concluded the regular season with three straight losses following a 6-0 start.

The Friday result likely sends Marian on the road to start the IHSA playoffs, which will be announced Saturday evening. For the Spartans' sake, they hope that assignment will be on artificial turf. Marian owns a 6-1 mark on turf, but has been outscored 74-0 in two sloppy games on natural grass.

Seeking its 15th win in 20 tries against the RedHawks (7-2, 5-2), Marian appeared to be in a

groove offensively for much of the first half on Friday.

The Spartans put together 12-, 11- and nine-play drives the first three times they touched the ball on Friday. However, Marian turned the ball over on downs following a bobbled field-goal snap on the first occasion, then saw the next two drives conclude with interceptions- both after advances inside the Marist 30-yard line.

Opportunities were fewer in the second half after Marist had rolled to a 21-0 command at the intermission.

However, the RedHawks were consistent for four quarters, and they didn't get much cheap in terms of impressive drives. The early three-touchdown command came after Marist scored on drives of 65, 86 and 80 yards. The RedHawks earned shorter fields in the second half, as Marian found more difficulty in moving the ball.

Things never got off on the right foot for Marian, as the opening kickoff sailed out of bounds to set up Marist in good field position at its own 35-yard line. After an eight-play drive netted a 7-0 command for the hosts, Marian appeared poised to answer.

The Spartans marched from their own 34-yard line to the RedHawk 13, as Jeruel Taylor (eight carries, 58 yards) had three first-down runs and pulled in a pass from John Rhode to get Marian inside the Marist 15. However, a bobbled snap on Adam Hutchison's would-be 31-yard field goal attempt resulted in an incomplete pass as Marian came away empty.

With quarterback Mike Perish beginning to roll up big numbers, Marist drove the length of the field for a 14-0 command on the first of his four touchdown passes.

Marian again appeared to rally. A pair of first-down runs by Joe Sanfratello moved Marian into RedHawk territory and a facemask penalty set up Marian at the Marist 26-yard line. But a fumble and two plays later had Marist back in business following an interception.

Marist's most efficient drive of the early going (80 yards in seven plays) made it 21-0, but the Spartans again appeared ready to rebound.

This time, Marian marched from its own 20 to inside the Marist 15-yard line, as Spartan signal-caller Rhode (9 of 23, 139 yards) began to heat up. Yet, two snaps inside the 20 resulted in a rush for loss, then the second interception of the night.

While Marian managed a respectable 11 first downs in the opening half, the Marist field and Marian's offense began to deteriorate in the second 24 minutes. The Spartans managed only five first downs after halftime, getting no closer than the Marist 30-yard line and extending futility on natural grass to eight shutout quarters this season.

Taylor was the highlight for Marian's rushing game with the 58 yards, while Joe Hess added 20 yards on six carries. Austin Guaccio pulled in four passes for 62 yards, while Joey Walker added 46 yards on three grabs.

However, all of the Marian numbers paled in comparison's to Perish's 315 yards through the air on 19-for-25 accuracy.

Marian will need to pick up the pieces, as the Spartans venture into their third playoff appearance in the last four years. Marian will seek its first IHSA playoff victory since an overtime decision over Homewood-Flossmoor in 2006.

Sophomores: Marian had its chance for at least a share of the ESCC crown put on hold, as Friday's contest was moved back to a 9 a.m. Saturday kickoff against Marist in Spartan Stadium.

| CATEGORY | Marian Catholic | Marist |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| First downs | 16 | 19 |
| Rush attempts / yards | 32-79 | 21-130 |
| Passing yards | 139 | 315 |
| Pass completions | 9 | 19 |
| Pass attempts | 24 | 25 |
| Had intercepted | 2 | 0 |
| Fumbles / lost | 3 / 0 | 0 / 0 |
| Penalty yards | 6-76 | 11-104 |
| Next | IHSA Playoffs | IHSA Playoffs |

SCORING

Mst- Mike Skalitzky 1-yard run (Ben Falloon kick), 9:45 first.

Mst- Dan Piko 15-yard pass from Mike Perish (Falloon kick), 0:35 first.

Mst- Piko 11-yard pass from Perish (Falloon kick), 4:18 second.

Mst- Jayson Gorski 22-yard pass from Perish (Falloon kick), 5:29 third.

Mst- Nick Valla 20-yard pass from Perish (Falloon kick), 0:31 third.

Mst- McKinley Moore 45-yard run (Falloon kick), 8:51 fourth.

Mst- Kevin Callahan 19-yard run (Ryan Kalck kick), 1:27 fourth.

Rushing: MC- Jeruel Taylor 8-58, Joe Hess 6-20, Joe Sanfratello 4-11, Joey Walker 4-11, Jesse Steward 3-4, Trevor Woolfolk 4-4, John Rhode 3-(minus 29). Mst- Moore 9-62 (TD), Callahan 3-38 (TD), Skalitzky 6-19 (TD), Perish 3-11.

Passing: MC- Rhode 9 of 23, 139 yards, 0 TD, 2 INT; Walker 0 of 1, 0 yards. Mst- Perish 19 of 25, 315 yards, 4 TD, 0 INT.

Receiving: MC- Austin Guaccio 4-62, Walker 3-46, Hess 1-27, Taylor 1-4. Mst- Piko 5-75 (2 TD), Gorski 4-68 (TD), Anthony Szul 2-62, Valla 4-60 (TD), Bill Lundy 2-37, Skalitzky 2-13..

Interceptions: Piko, Dave Pirkle (Marist).

