

GAME 2: Marian Catholic 38, Bloom Township 0

Kickoff: 12 p.m. Saturday at Bloom's Sarff Field.
Where: Chicago Road at 10th Street, Chicago Heights.
Streaks: Spartans- 2 losses; Blazing Trojans- 5 losses.
Week 1: H-F 33, Marian Catholic 14; Thornwood 34, Bloom Township 7.
Week 3: Marian at Benet (Benedictine, Fri, 7:30 p.m.); Bloom at East Moline (Fri, 7:30 p.m.)
Last year: Marian Catholic 35, Bloom Township 6.

The series: Although the teams have split the last two meetings, Marian has captured seven of the last eight contests. The Spartans hold a 9-2 overall series command, as well as a 1-0 mark against Bloom Trail.

Notes: Bloom prevailed in the last contest held at Sarff Field, 13-7, in 2008... Despite the Spartans' opening week setback against H-F, the East Suburban Catholic posted an overall mark of 8-1 in the first weekend of play... Prior to the building of Spartan Stadium, Marian used Sarff Field as its home field... Defense has characterized the crosstown series, as the losing team has never scored more than 14 points in 11 meetings... Bloom and Marian also co-host events in other sports, including a sophomore soccer invite and the Chicago Heights Classic men's basketball tournament at Thanksgiving... This will be the lone home contest either team (Bloom) plays in the opening three weeks of the season.

Sept. 4	1	2	3	4	Total
MARIAN CATHOLIC SPARTANS	14	10	7	7	-38
at BLOOM TWP. BLAZING TROJANS	0	0	0	0	-0



The Marian Catholic defense dominated on Saturday at Sarff Field en route to a 38-0 nonconference victory over crosstown rival Bloom Township.

Marian defense dominates in shutout of Bloom Township

Marian Catholic's defense and special teams set the table on Saturday at Bloom Township's Sarff Field and the offense delivered.

The Spartans turned four first-half turnovers into three touchdowns- twice with quick-strike one-play drives, en route to a 24-0 halftime command and eventual 38-0 nonconference victory over the crosstown rival Blazing Trojans.

The first shutout in the series since 2006 and fifth overall (including Bloom Trail) for the Spartans (1-1) in the rivalry improved Marian's series advantage to 11-2 over the Dist. 206 schools.

The defense delivered the shutout by limiting Bloom (0-2) to just 153 total yards, as the Blazing Trojans had zero or negative yardage on 29 of 55 snaps. Bloom didn't penetrate the Marian 30-yard line until the final possession of the game against the Spartan reserves, with a drive that ended on downs at the Spartan 24-yard line.

"We had two pickoffs, forced some fumbles and there was a lot of good tackling," assessed junior defensive back David Sowell, who had three tackles for losses and an interception for one of four Bloom turnovers. "A shutout was a goal we talked about before the game and we accomplished it.

"I just anticipated," Sowell said of his consistent presence in the Blazing Trojan backfield. "They ran to the outside a couple times and I just made a move on the ball. It feels really good to help lead the team to a shutout."

The shutout was only part of the story for the Marian defense, which along with special teams, set up the Marian offense for an early blowout.

The Spartans had driven 78 yards for a 7-0 lead on their second possession when quarterback John Rhode hit Randall Wells for a 37-yard scoring aerial. Bloom managed just one offensive snap the next three times it touched the ball, as Marian turned the first three of four turnovers into quick scores. After the initial touchdown with 3:09 to play in the opening quarter, the Spartans scored three more times in just 3:30 to swell the lead to 24-0 early in the second period.

After scoring the touchdown, Wells pounced on a fumble on the ensuing kickoff. Marian needed just a single play for Jeruel Taylor to burst 7 yards for a score. Jabari Danzy's second of five conversion kicks gave Marian a 14-0 command.

The next kickoff resulted in Brandon Woods recovering a fumble at the Bloom 23-yard line. Marian was unable to gain

more than one first down, but Danzy's 27-yard field goal made it a 17-0 margin.

Bloom then finally secured a kickoff, but one play later Sowell returned an interception 17 yards to the Blazing Trojan 9-yard line. The Spartans wasted no time, as Wells covered the 9 yards on another touchdown toss from Rhode. With 11:39 to play in the second quarter, Bloom had been blitzed into a 24-0 deficit.

Rhode finished an efficient eight of 12 for 121 yards and two scores, along with adding a rushing touchdown in the second half. Wells pulled in four passes for 62 yards, while Rob Cifelli had three grabs for 54 yards.

Marian made it four straight forced turnovers when Tony Alozie picked off a pass on the next possession, but the visitors were unable to convert the miscue into points.

With great pressure up front from defensive linemen Jacob Bishop, Michael Toliver, Matthew Hurt and Marc Grkinich, Bloom didn't manage a gain of 20 yards throughout the contest. Bloom had just 98 yards rushing and 55 yards passing, as successful fake punt plays produced 20 of the yards.

With the defense dominating on its side of the ball, Marian used sustained drives to add two more scores on both of its second-half possession before the final minute.

Rhode bulled into the end zone from 2 yards out to culminate a 10-play, 60-yard drive in the third quarter. Then, the Spartans marched 79 yards in 13 plays for a score midway through the fourth quarter, as Trevor Woolfolk scampared around end on a pitch for a 19-yard score and final 38-0 count.

Woolfolk paced Marian on the ground with 68 yards on seven carries, while Taylor rushed 12 times for 57 yards. Cifelli led Marian on its final scoring march, completing his lone pass attempt for 10 yards.

The 38-0 final count represents the most lopsided margin in the neighborhood series, although Marian did score a 47-0 knockout punch over Bloom Trail in the schools' lone meeting.

The Spartans will continue their road act next Friday when they open the East Suburban Catholic slate with a 7:30 p.m. visit to Benet Academy at Benedictine University.

"This gives us a lot of momentum coming into the Benet game," Sowell explained. "We've just gotta play hard, come out with the same intensity and try to bring everything up to a higher level."

The ESCC has posted a 17-1 nonconference record through the first two weekends of play.

SOPHOMORES: In a game that began Thursday and finished Saturday, the Spartans notched a 20-14 come-from-behind decision over the Blazing Trojans.

FRESHMEN: Bloom and Marian settled for a 0-0 stalemate in a Thursday afternoon contest.

CATEGORY	Marian Catholic	Bloom Twp
First downs	13	14
Rush attempts / yards	35-184	32-98
Passing yards	131	55
Pass completions	9	7
Pass attempts	13	23
Had intercepted	0	2
Fumbles / lost	2 / 2	3 / 2
Penalty yards	6-50	5-44
Next	at Benet	at East Moline

SCORING

MC- Randall Wells 37-yard pass from John Rhode (Jabari Danzy kick), 3:09 first.

MC- Jeruel Taylor 7-yard run (Danzy kick), 2:59 first.

MC- Danzy 27-yard field goal, 11:54 second.

MC- Wells 9-yard pass from Rhode (Danzy kick), 11:39 second.

MC- Rhode 2-yard run (Danzy kick), 7:37 third.

MC- Trevor Woolfolk 19-yard run (Danzy kick), 8:48 fourth.

Rushing: MC- Woolfolk 7-68 (TD); Taylor 12-57 (TD), Brandon Spruill 6-19, Rob Cifelli 3-16, Rhode 4-13 (TD), Matt Simmons 3-11. BT- Chris Baker 7-25, Duane Wells 15-24, Malcolm Way 4-23, Calvin McGregory 5-18, Jason Mendez 1-8.

Passing: MC- Rhode 8 of 12, 121 yards, 2 TD, 0 INT; Cifelli 1 of 1, 10 yards. BT- Duane Wells 6 of 22, 43 yards, 0 TD, 2 INT; Mendez 1 of 1, 12 yards.

Receiving: MC- Wells 4-62 (2 TD), Cifelli 3-54, Dominic Pascale 1-10, Taylor 1-5. BT- Otha Spears 2-25, Mendez 2-22, Way 2-17, DeShaun Wells 1-16.

Interceptions: David Sowell, Tony Alozie (MC).

