

GAME 4: Saint Patrick at Marian Catholic

Kickoff: 7:30 p.m. Friday at Spartan Stadium.
Where: Joe Orr Road at Ashland Avenue, Chicago Heights.
Streaks: Shamrocks- 3 wins; Spartans- 2 wins.
ESCC records: Saint Patrick 1-0; Marian Catholic 1-0.
Week 3: Saint Patrick 24, Nazareth 7; Marian Catholic 14, Benet Academy 13.
Week 5: St. Viator at St. Patrick (8 p.m., Fri. at Hanson); Notre Dame at Marian Catholic (7:30 p.m., Fri.)
Last meeting: Saint Patrick 7, Marian Catholic 0 (2007).
The series: Marian holds a 10-6 advantage in the series, but the Shamrocks have captured three of the last four meetings.
Notes: The Spartans prevailed in the last meeting played in Chicago Heights, 40-21 (2006)... Saint Patrick is one of four ESCC teams that still owns a perfect 3-0 record... Marian has scored a rushing touchdown in each of its three contests and six of nine TD this year have come via the infantry... The ESCC sports an impressive 19-1 overall mark in nonconference games this year... Friday's contest will be the first of back-to-back home tilts after the Spartans opened the campaign with three road contests... Marian is seeking its second straight 2-0 start in the ESCC, but just what would be the third time in eight years.

Sept. 17	1	2	3	4	Total
SAINT PATRICK SHAMROCKS	7	13	6	7	-33
at MARIAN CATHOLIC SPARTANS	7	7	21	14	-49



Spartan Michael Toliver prepares to rush on Friday night during a 49-33 ESCC shootout victory over St. Patrick.

Marian outslugs Saint Patrick in home opener, 49-33

To say Friday night was a breakout party for the Marian Catholic offense would be an understatement. Needing to match a potent St. Patrick passing attack blow-for-blow much of the night, the Marian ground game responded.

With three ballcarriers eclipsing the century mark in rushing yards and a total of a school-record 514 yards on the ground, the host Spartans outslugged the Shamrocks, 49-33, for an ESCC victory in their home opener.

"We came out with a bang and just said that we had to finish, we had to keep coming at them and we had to have a swagger," explained Jeruel Taylor, who rushed for 218 yards and three scores on 21 carries. "In the first quarter we hit them in the mouth and then we just kept going at them.

"Our offensive line did an excellent job," added Taylor, singing praise on Steven Jackson, Brian Kelly, Jeff Bona, Phil Faso and Trent Podnar. "The three running backs had a great game, but all the credit goes to the offensive line."

Facing a 20-14 halftime deficit, Marian (3-1, 2-0) scored on five of its first seven second-half possessions to pull away to its third straight victory.

With Matt Simmons needing 6 yards to become the third Spartan back of the night to eclipse the century mark, the fleet junior scampered around right end for a 54-yard scoring burst and the clinching score with 3:17 to play in the contest. Simmons actually scored on consecutive carries of 53 and 54 yards for Marian's final two scores.

Simmons finished with 148 yards on an efficient five carries, while Trevor Woolfolk- who had the Spartans' first score and eventual go-ahead for good score- finished with 137 yards and two touchdowns on just seven carries.

The 514 rushing yards eclipsed the previous record mark of 474 yards set in 2006. Meanwhile, Marian's total offense for the night (571 yards) was just 36 yards off the all-time mark.

Behind quarterback Ryan Tentler (27 of 47, 395 yards, two touchdowns), St. Patrick appeared stacked to match the host Spartans in a shootout on Friday.

After Woolfolk had given Marian the early lead, the Shamrocks scored 17 unanswered points to take a 17-7 command in the second quarter. However, Taylor hit paydirt from 12 yards out and the second of Jabari Danzy's seven conversion boots pulled the hosts to within 17-14 with 2:54 to play in the half. St. Patrick added a late field goal for a 20-14 halftime margin.

The Spartans were forced to punt in their initial second-half possession, but the was one of the last times Marian

would be denied. Quick strikes proved to be Marian's attack mode.

A 50-yard jaunt by Taylor gave Marian a 21-20 edge. Then after the Shamrocks answered for a 26-20 command, Marian needed just two offensive snaps to regain the lead for good. After Taylor picked up 12 yards, Woolfolk bolted around end for a 62-yard score and a 28-26 Spartan lead that they would never relinquish.

While the Marian defense also yielded more than 500 yards, one key play put an end to the swapping scores trend.

With St. Patrick backed up near its own goal line, a fumble on a completed pass was scooped up by Cal Roque on the Shamrock 10-yard line. Again, Marian needed just two plays to find the end zone as Taylor scored from 6 yards away for a 35-26 command.

St. Patrick was not done, however, as the Shamrocks pulled within 35-33 with 11:14 to play in the contest.

That's when Simmons, who had sparked Marian with some key kickoff returns, proved to be the closer.

His 53-yard score culminated a three-play, 80-yard drive, then his 54-yard clinching burst ended another 80-yard scoring march, this one taking eight plays.

Other than the short field set up by Roque's fumble recovery, Marian didn't get any cheap scores Friday. The other scoring marches were of 69, 80, 50, 74, 80 and 80 yards. The Shamrocks ran 21 more plays than Marian (75-54), but the Spartans compensated with 12.2 yards per rush.

If St. Patrick was clinging to any late comeback hopes, the Marian defense dashed them when senior Wes Fleming pounced on a fumble after a long completion had moved the ball inside the Marian 5-yard line.

"We've had some great practices and this was going to come sooner or later," explained Taylor, who will lead the Spartans into a 7:30 p.m. Homecoming battle against Notre Dame on Friday. "We worked too hard to be down at halftime and we just kept coming at them.

"The offense and defense are both playing with a lot of confidence now. We just have to believe in ourselves and keep this going."

Sophomores: The Spartans fell to a 0-2 in the ESCC with a 22-6 setback against the Shamrocks.

CATEGORY	St. Patrick	Marian Catholic
First downs	26	22
Rush attempts / yards	28-119	42-514
Passing yards	395	57
Pass completions	27	4
Pass attempts	47	12
Had intercepted	0	0
Fumbles / lost	3 / 2	0 / 0
Penalty yards	1-5	3-35
Next	ST. VIATOR	NOTRE DAME

SCORING

MC- Trevor Woolfolk 3-yard run (Jabari Danzy kick), 8:25 first.

SP- John Haniacek 19-yard run (Michael Graf kick), 5:53 first.

SP- Graf 29-yard field goal, 11:56 second.

SP- Dennis Lemke 19-yard pass from Haniacek (Graf kick), 5:41 second.

MC- Jeruel Taylor 12-yard run (Danzy kick), 2:54 second.

SP- Graf 42-yard field goal, 0:33 second.

Rushing: SP- Haniacek 11-49 (TD), DiBalsamo 8-38 (TD), Tentler 6-21, Anthony Ferraris 3-11. MC- Taylor 21-218 (3 TD), Simmons 5-148 (2 TD), Woolfolk 7-137 (2 TD), Rob Cifelli 4-12, Rhode 5-(minus 1).

Passing: SP- Tentler 27 of 47, 395 yards, 2 TD, 0 INT. MC- Rhode 4 of 12, 57 yards, 0 TD, 0 INT.

Receiving: SP- DiBalsamo 12-136, Lemke 7-175 (TD), Kapolnek 3-61 (TD), Kevin Furlong 2-19, Haniacek 2-5, Michael Lucas 1-(minus 1).

Interceptions: none.



