

Average Joes have a super night for Marian against H-F

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CHICAGO HEIGHTS | Joe Sanfratello couldn't wait to get on the field.

The junior running back missed six games last year with a broken collarbone as the Spartans suffered through numerous injuries in a 1-8 season.

Everything went right on opening night for the Spartans as they took advantage of several Homewood-Flossmoor mistakes -- both physical and mental -- as they cruised to a 34-18 win before a standing-room-only crowd at Spartan Stadium.

Marian's offense, defense and special teams all stepped forward.

It was the largest margin of victory in this series and Marian has won three of the last four meetings. H-F leads the series 8-5.

Sanfratello rushed for three touchdowns in the second quarter as Marian Catholic took a 28-0 halftime lead. He, Joe Hess and Joe Walker combined for 138 yards and all five scores. Hess had two touchdowns. Sanfratello finished with 38 yards rushing while Hess had 30, though he lost 27 on a bad snap while he was attempting to punt. Joey Walker had 66 yards.

"I couldn't wait and I think the whole team couldn't wait to get out there and play," Sanfratello said. "Going 1-8 last year and being hurt, it kind of (ticked) me off.

"We wanted to come out and show we are a good team."

Marian stopped the Vikings on their first drive and set the tone when on fourth-and-1 from the H-F 34, Marian's Mike Toliver hit sophomore quarterback Tim Williams and forced a fumble, and Toliver recovered it at H-F's 39.

"We knew we had to come out and set the tone on defense," Toliver said. "We knew we had to not let them get big plays."

Hess scored on a 1-yard run 10 plays later. On the next series, the Vikings fumbled and Mike Foster recovered at the H-F 11 to set up the first of Sanfratello's three scores.

"You have to give credit to our defense for setting us up and the offensive line for clearing the way," Sanfratello said. "Having three good backs, that makes it hard for any team to just go after one guy."

On the ensuing kickoff, H-F did not field the kickoff and Tony Alozie fell on the ball at the Vikings' 19.

"I just saw the ball, and one of our guys blocked an H-F guy and I fell on it," Alozie said.

H-F coach Kenneth Smith said his team had too many lapses as it lost two of three fumbles.

"Our guy just didn't go after the ball," Smith said. "We made some mistakes at crucial times and they took advantage of them."

Hess scored in the third. H-F quarterback Tim Williams threw three second-half touchdown passes -- two to Malik Norman and the other to Gerald Butler.

"We dominated on the line and that is how I like to play," Marian coach Dave Mattio said. "We came out and hit and played hard."

PREP FOOTBALL

Marian Catholic 34, Homewood-Flossmoor 18

Marian's Joe Sanfratello scored three TDs rushing.