

**CHICAGO HEIGHTS STAR- Oct. 26, 1961**

## **Marian in Battle For Metro Lead**

**By Jack Jeneson**

It will be just like old home week Saturday for football coach John Abraham when his Maryville Academy squad takes on Marian in an important Catholic Metropolitan conference game at Bloom High field.

Abraham, a short-time resident of both Chicago Heights and Steger before taking over the academy football reins over 20 years ago, brings his team into Chicago Heights for the second straight season. The game is set for 2 p.m.

His gridders are familiar with Marian too, routing the Spartans last year to the tune of 41-12. But the game Saturday could be "for all the marbles" as both teams are undefeated in league play.

Marian comes into Saturday's tilt with a 3-won, 3-lost season's mark and Maryville sports a 2-won, 1-lost, 1-tie worksheet. The tie was a scoreless one with St. Francis de Sales, a team Marian whipped 12-6 of its only league win.

If nothing more, Marian can consider Saturday's battle a meeting of revenge. The Spartans highest point output this year was 52 against Angel Guardian.

Both teams need a win Saturday if they are to gain championship laurels. As Abraham puts it: "If we can take Marian we can make it all the way." His team whipped strong-contender St. Francis of Wheaton Saturday 12-7.

At Marian, coach Joe DeSoto is faced with problems just before the game he says his team "needs most."

DeSoto said his team suffered from stage fright in its 31-6 loss to Andean Catholic of Gary Saturday. The "59'ers" rolled up 204 yards against Marian's defense. The Spartans could only throw Andean for one loss of three yards all afternoon.

But in the losing effort, DeSoto said the defensive work of back Tom Bijak and end John Ryan was most pleasing. He indicated that several changes in the backfield and line could come about if his starters "couldn't meet the test."

The Marian mentor indicated that he still isn't happy with his team's passing attack, which netted only 18 yards against Andean. He said that more work would go into the attack to give it some punch.

Saturday, Marian will be forced to stop Maryville fullback John Abraham, who has scored 50 points this season. Son of the academy coach, Abraham has scored six touchdowns in the conference, including two paydirt scampers against St. Francis of Wheaton.

It will be the second successive week that the Spartans will be called on to stop a one-man scoring ace. Dale Marino of Andean was the Spartans' first challenge and he raced for three touchdowns and a total of 89 yards rushing.

"We have our work cut out this week," said DeSoto, indicating that more action would be seen by his freshmen and sophomores. The coach heisted to comment on whether his team would pass against Maryville because of an arm injury to top-passer Joe Bijak."

“Bijak is still able to handle the ball, but his passing is doubtful until game time,” DeSoto said. Freshman Bob Dyke will support Bijak at quarterback. DeSoto said Dick Hamilton and Don Curran would work at offensive ends and Carl Swanson would be at fullback. He added that some other spots are yet undecided for the Maryville game.

Maryville’s wins came over Little Flower, 27-7, Ottawa Marquette 20-0 and St. Francis. The team’s only loss was 20-0 to Harlem of Rockford.

Senior Al Raya directs the team from his quarterback post. An average passer, Raya becomes effective with his adept ball handling and running.

Al Sabanas (150) and Wayne Steen, a defensive specialist, are the Maryville halfbacks and Abraham, a 175 pound junior, works at fullback. At ends, Abraham said he would use Peter Kaiser and Ken Cameron. Frank Wolfson at 180 pounds is the team’s center and defensive anchor man.