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Goes 87 Yards

Marian Ties on Nicolas' Run

By Bob Lueder

Marian made a few costly mistakes, but was still able to survive a 12-all tie in a football game at Lockport West on Friday.

“Our line was still not at its best,” coach Tom Mitchell said. “There was some signs of improvement though.”

The Spartans lost veteran Tom Bijak early in the game with a leg injury, while backs Jerry Nicolas and Claudio Cerullio were also limited by injuries.

Nicolas carried the ball 14 times and gained 151 yards to raise his season average to 9.4 yards per run.

Victory could have belonged to Marian on one of Nicolas' carries late in the game when he scampered 25 yards to Lockport's 8-yard line.

Meanwhile, well up field and far from any of the action, Ron Carr was detected holding a downed Lockport West player to cancel the play and cost a 15 yard penalty.

It wasn't the only walk-off of the night against Marian, which was charged with 110 yards in penalties, to 45 for West.

Marian had two chances to go all the way on kickoff returns, Jack Thar and Cerullio each having one man to beat and two blockers in front of them.

The blockers worked the lone safety man to the sideline on each occasion, where they were able to halt the touchdown bound runners.

Lockport West was the first to score when it fell on Thar's fumble on the first play of the game.

John Buerger completed a 45-yard drive with a sprint over the left side of the line, but failed to run the extra point, with 6:19 left in the first quarter.

Cerullio nearly ran back the kickoff, but the Spartans still went right to work, and with Nicolas showing the way, Marian was soon right back in the game.

With Nicolas going 41 yards in seven carries, it set up a Tim Tierney to Joe Kalinowski touchdown pass from the 6-yard line with 1:24 left in the opening quarter.

Chuck Harris, back in the West lineup after an early season illness, took a reverse handoff from Buerger and scampered 34 yards with 7:54 left in the half to put Lockport on top 12-6.

Marian was losing ground and had the ball on its 13-yard line with a third down and 17 to go into a stiff wind when the luck changed.

Nicolas took a handoff from Tim Tierney and cut back up the middle shaking off would-be tacklers on his way to an 87-yard touchdown gallop with 9:01 left in the third period.

A pass attempt for the extra point was completed, but it failed to carry long enough for needed conversion.

The Spartans rolled up 249 total yards to 181 for Lockport West with the big advantage coming in the passing department where Marian was on top, 66-5.

Good news was reported on the injury to halfback Steve Bergstrom, who was feared lost for the season.

Bergstrom is expected to be ready for duty when the Spartans make their home debut in a Homecoming game with Gary Andean at Bloom field on Saturday, October 10.