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Spartans Shape Up For Season Opener

By Bob Lueder

The cast is all set at Marian high school for the football debut on Saturday at Homewood-Flossmoor, according to work from coach Tom Mitchell.

“We’re adjusting to the new offense, the team is in excellent shape and our defense is beginning to sharpen up,” Mitchell said.

The youthful coach, in his first year at Marian, reported eight senior lettermen, six who were starters, and three juniors will be in the offensive lineup.

Heading the list will be a pair of speedsters, Jerry Nicolas and Steve Bergstrom, who will do the bulk of the Spartans’ ball carrying.

Nicolas, 5-8, 175-pound fullback, has a few Marian records to his credit and hopes to add more with a good season.

Ranking just behind Nicolas on offense a year ago, Bergstrom, 5-9 and 170 pounds, was clocked in 9.8 for the 100 yard dash during the spring track season.

Tim Tierney, 6-1, 180 pounds, will do the signal calling, but Mitchell reports Dennis Schmal will see plenty of service.

The only newcomer to the backfield is junior Jack Thar, 5-10, 175-pounder. Thar will play the slot back in Marian’s new pro type offense that includes split ends.

“We think speed will be one of our major assets,” Mitchell remarked, along with reminding that both Tierney and Schmal are capable passers.

Tom Czech, 6-1 and 190 pounds, has the edge to nail down the center duties after a battle with fellow senior Emery Harmon.

A key to the Spartans’ success is in rugged veteran guard Tom Bijak, 5-8, 175 pounder, who will open at that position, along with 5-11 letter winner Tony Schrementi, 185 pounds.

Junior Dave Mattio, 6-1, 190 pounds, and 6-foot John Mulhollan, 200 pounds, a senior, are at tackles. Mulhollan played a regular end position last year.

Rounding out the line are ends Ed Scott, 5-9, 160 pound senior veteran, and junior Joe Kalinowski, 6-1, 180 pounds. “We’ve just begun to work strong on defense, but it looks like eight of the players will go both ways,” Mitchell said.

The Spartans will use a defense that varies slightly from a 5-4-2 pattern with the front wall being made up of Mulhollan, Schrementi, Kalinowski, Chuck Urewicz and Jim Ranieri.

Urewicz, 6-foot and 215 pounds, was a regular last season with the frosh-soph squad and will be the largest Spartan. Ranieri was a varsity reserve last season.

Tim Massey, 5-6, 165 pounds, will be one of the corner men in the secondary, joining with Thar, Czech and Bijak. Marian will use twin safeties with Schmal and Nicolas getting the nod. Both players had good records on pass defense in 1963.