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Marian on Rebound

Coach Predicts Win Streak

By Bob Lueder

“We’ll win five straight,” said Coach Tom Mitchell, indicating his Marian football team has the spirit to bounce back.

If Mitchell is right, the Spartans will beat Maryville Saturday afternoon at Bloom field, something they have never before accomplished.

The Terriers, previously a Catholic Metropolitan conference power, are at the bottom of the standings this season.

Marian’s rebound is off a 7-0 defeat by Gary Andean, heir apparent to Maryville’s title.

“We were disappointed at losing to Andean, Mitchell said, “but these boys are still going to play good football and have a winning season.”

Most of the week’s practice sessions have been devoted to pepping up the offense.

“The defense has been sharp most of the games, but we have to score,” Mitchell said.

Marian has gained 779 total yards, one less than the opponents, and hold a 39-34 first down advantage, but trail in scoring 50-45.

The Spartans are expected to get more help from Steve Bergstrom, a veteran halfback who saw his first duty of the year against Andean.

Bergstrom was out from the start of the season with a knee injury and now must win back a starting position.

Claudio Cerulli has been doing a capable job in the backfield and might force Mitchell to shift Bergstrom to either an end or split back.

“This could give us added speed for that downfield pass,” Mitchell pointed out. Last spring, Bergstrom was clocked in 9.8 seconds for the 100 yard dash.

Cerulli has gained 158 yards in 29 carries for a 5.4 average that makes him the number two man in the Spartans rushing attack. The leader for the second straight year is fullback Jerry Nicolas, rated one of the best runners in the area with a 6.2 average with 286 yards in 46 attempts.

In the passing department Tierney has connected on 23 of 59 throws for 309 yards. Cerulli is the main receiver with 144 yards and end Ed Scott second on 129.

“We have had the deep ends open more in the last couple games, but have not been able to throw deep, which I hope to improve on this week,” Mitchell said.

The Spartan defense did an outstanding job against Andean. This was the first game this year that the Indiana team has been halted with less than 21 points.

Rugged Tom Bijak’s return from the injury list helped this a great deal. The senior veteran recovered two fumbles and blocked a kick that nearly turned the tide for Marian.