

# Edwardsville girls soccer team drops tight game to Triad 2-1 in Metro Girls Cup

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** – **Edwardsville and Triad** took each other on in an Adidas Bracket semifinal match of the Metro Girls Cup tournament at Tiger Stadium Thursday night.

It was just the second match of the season for both sides, but it was played more like a match that had everything on the line.

There were plenty of chances, some great plays both on the offensive and defensive ends and some big saves from both goalkeepers that kept things tight.

It even looked as though the match was going to go to a penalty-kick shootout to determine a winner, but a Molly Suess goal in the 87<sup>th</sup> minute sent the Knights into Saturday evening's Adidas Bracket final as Triad defeated Edwardsville 2-1 in extra time. The loss dropped the Tigers to 1-1 and send them into the third-place match at 4 p. m. Saturday against O'Fallon, who dropped a 4-0 decision to Rochester in Thursday's other semifinal match. The Knights will take on the defending IHSA Class 1A champion Rockets in the final at 6 p.m. at Tiger Stadium.

“It was a great game by both teams,” said **Tiger coach Abby Comerford**. “Triad had their scoring chances and we had our scoring chances; our defense was strong tonight, we did some really great things. We just gotta score.”

Suess' winning goal came off a corner kick in the 87<sup>th</sup> minute of the match; the Tigers had cleared away a potential match-winner moments before, a shot being volleyed over the goal by EHS goalkeeper Regan Windau. The volley created a corner-kick situation for the Knights and Suess managed to put the ball in the back of the net in the resulting goal-mouth scramble.

“Our team had a lot of good energy going into that corner kick,” Suess said. “We were ready to take it and it was a beautiful cross from my teammate; (Windau) was unlucky, we got a rebound and I was there at the right time and had a good finish.”

Both sides had good chances throughout the match and, despite it going into extra time, **Knight coach Matt Bettlach** felt the chance was there for his side. “We've been trying to preach to these girls that it's never over,” Bettlach said, “and we stick together. Edwardsville's a heck of a team and they really took it to us for the most part.

“We did have some good opportunities and had some good possessions, but they took it to us for a long time. You could feel the energy from the girls on the bench, you could feel the energy on the field, and even though we were down at times, we still just kept grinding.”

The Tigers broke on top first when Taylor Hansen took a corner kick early in the second half and found Mallory Mushill near the goal; Mushill got the ball into the back of the net in the 47<sup>th</sup> minute to give EHS a 1-0 lead.

The Knights kept pressing and kept the pressure on the Tiger defense and Windau, seeing one apparent tying goal being disallowed before Jody Ellis finally found the back of the net on a scramble to tie proceedings at 1-1. Edwardsville had a couple of good chances in the last five minutes of regulation time but were turned back, forcing the match into extra time.

Both sides kept the pressure up in extra time prior to Suess' match-winner.

“We have the potential to be a great team,” Comerford said. “It's just one of those things; the girls just have to continue to work hard; we'll continue to get after it.”

In other tournament matches Thursday, Waterloo Gibault defeated Highland 4-0 in a consolation-bracket semifinal of the Nike Bracket in Columbia, while Columbia got by Marion 1-0 to reach Saturday evening's final against Alton; that match is set for 6 p.m.. with the third-place playoff between the Wildcats and Belleville Althoff set for 4 p.m. Saturday.

In the round-robin Puma Bracket in Freeburg, Gillespie defeated Centralia 6-0, with Mascoutah scoring a 4-0 win over Salem. Play in the round-robin bracket concludes Friday and Saturday.