

West goal helps Tigers slip by Alton 3-2 in girls soccer match

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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GODFREY – Soccer can be a game where things can seemingly reverse themselves just in the blink of an eye.

Ask Alton's girls team, who saw themselves drawing even with Edwardsville thanks to a perfectly placed **Sydney Mossman** shot that found its way into the back of the net in their Southwestern Conference match Tuesday at Piasa Motor Fuels Field in Godfrey.

The Tigers wasted no time in answering Mossman's goal when **Ashlin West** found herself on the receiving end of an Abby Crabtree feed and put it away to give the Tigers a 3-2 win; EHS, playing its first match in a week and a half, took its record to 14-2-1 overall and 3-0-1 in the SWC, while the Redbirds fell to 10-4-2 overall, 0-3-1 in the league.

“It was really nice to see,” said **Tiger coach Abby Comerford** of the Tigers bouncing right back after the Redbirds tied things up. “That's the way soccer goes; you can dominate the entire game but still end up losing, but the girls definitely made up for that (Alton getting back into the match). They did great today.”

West's match-winning goal came when Abby Crabtree came charging in on goal and had a chance to score her third of the match, but instead passed off to West, who tucked

it away. “She (Crabtree) could have had that shot but the ball was kind of bouncing. She made that right decision to play it to Ashlin, who was wide open.

“It was one of those things that shows the girls all work together; this is a team, it's just not one person doing all the work.”

“I think we are heading in the right direction,” said **Redbird coach Jeff Hayes**. “Our schedule on the backside, especially with conference games, is definitely tougher, so I think we're playing a little better than we did at the beginning of the season, but I think the competition is as well.”

Edwardsville's first two goals were scored off goal-mouth scrambles. “When you score them, they're scrappy, good goals, but when you give them up, you're disappointed,” Hayes said. “We certainly can't afford to give up goals like that to Edwardsville because they're going to create plenty of chances otherwise.”

Edwardsville's first goal came off a scramble off a Taylor Hansen corner kick in the 20th minute; the ball bounced around and had seemingly crossed the goal line earlier, but Crabtree got ahold of it and knocked it past Redbird goalkeeper Michaela Lewis to put the Tigers up 1-0. Crabtree scored again in the 45th minute when she put it home off another Hansen corner kick off a scramble in front.

The Redbirds, undaunted, drew to 2-1 down three minutes later when Annie Evans got up in the air and knocked home a Bri Hatfield corner kick past Tiger goalkeeper Regan Windau, seemingly giving Alton some momentum. The Tigers kept up the pressure and dictated the pace of play, preserving the one-goal lead.

Mossman had other ideas; she gained possession and went on a long run downfield before chipping the ball high past Windau to tie the match in the 70th minute and seemingly giving the Redbirds some momentum. Crabtree and West had other ideas when, in the 71st minute, Crabtree found an open West and got her the ball; West put it away and gave Edwardsville the lead back.

The Tigers host defending IHSA Class 2A state champion Rochester in a 6:30 p.m. match at Tiger Stadium Wednesday, while the Redbirds travel to Granite City's Gene Baker Field for a league match against the Warriors for a 6:30 p.m. Thursday match.

