



# **Tigers conclude 7-on-7 matches in stride, next step will be start of practices in August**

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
July 26 2016 2:35 PM





**EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Tigers** completed their series of three 7-on-7's last night after scrimmaging with the Highland Bulldogs at District 7 Sports Complex on Monday night.

**Edwardsville head coach Matt Martin** was pleased with the way his team has progressed.

“Our first 7-on-7 to now we’ve gotten better and that’s the goal, it’s always about getting better all summer long,” Martin said. “It’s the best thing you can be doing right now and we’re trying to get something positive out of it.”

The summer as a whole has been a busy one and it’s been a grind.

“Football’s become a tremendous summer commitment. The days of showing up in July and maybe getting in shape and then you had two-a-days in August, those days are over,” Martin said. “It’s a sacrifice on everybody’s part. There are a lot of families that have to really work around the off time to do their family vacations. I think we all need rest when it comes.”

Although they weren't needed, the Tigers linemen will be a force up front as a good amount of big bodies return, which is part of the reason of why Edwardsville could enjoy another very good regular season.

At this moment in time, Martin is hesitant to focus on what the Tigers can accomplish, but is concerned on where they're at in the present.

"This team could be good," Martin said. "This team is not where they need to be to be good. Do they keep following the process? Do they keep working hard? If we have a group that's willing to do that then I think they will be."

When most people think of Edwardsville football they'll think of one name, **A.J. Epenesa**, however he'll be apart of a successful senior group as a whole, which is a big positive going into the season. Then there are the unusual suspects that always pop up season after season.

"They're doing the right things and we need to continue that process," Martin said. "It's exciting for me to see them grow. To see some of these kids progress is fun, that's why you put the time in. Every year and it's usually a senior, kids surprise you. Sometimes they disappoint you and they're not as good as you were hoping, but some kids come out of nowhere and they make themselves into a player. That's exciting as a coach to see that happen."



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)