

Edwardsville-Granite City play to 1-1 boys soccer draw

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
August 26 2016 10:34 AM



GRANITE CITY – Edwardsville's soccer team was riding high after knocking off **Chaminade** in their season opener in St. Louis County Tuesday evening.

An old bugaboo from 2015, though, came back to haunt them at Gene Baker Field in Granite City Thursday night. Edwardsville had several chances but couldn't put the ball in the back of the net when the opportunities were there.

It forced the Tigers to settle for a 1-1 draw with the Warriors in both teams' Southwestern Conference opener, putting Edwardsville at 1-0-1 and the Warriors, 0-1-1 after dropping a decision to Columbia in their season opener earlier in the week.

“Once players set an idea into motion, it tends to kind of repeat itself,” said **Tiger coach Mark Heiderschied**. “I think there were times where we had success getting around corners, but there were times we would have been much better if we had connected it; too many people got caught up taking touches into the center space.

“It made the game a little more challenging for us because they win it and the ball's (kicked) down the field.”

Warrior coach Kenny Jackson was happy with the result. “Edwardsville's been one of the top teams in our conference and in Illinois the last 10-15 years,” Jackson said. “They've been the team to go through. Mark Heiderschied's got a great program up there and they turn out quality players...a tie this early in the season against this kind of program is a big result for us.

“The kids really fought hard and it didn't look like it was going to go our way; Edwardsville had plenty of the attack and plenty of the ball, but we defended hard for the most part. Our shape was good, we defended balls in (the penalty) box pretty well. Our individual defending could be better.”

The Tigers had some excellent chances in the first half but couldn't solve Warrior goalkeeper Matt Woods, who came up big several times or saw the ball sail over or past the goal; they finally broke through in the 55th minute when Michael Glisson found Michael Picchiotti alone at the goal mouth and fed him a pass that he was able to tuck away to give EHS the lead.

Edwardsville's tendency to try to find open space came back to haunt them in the 73rd minute when Sam Ortiz managed to score off a goal-mouth scramble following a free kick to draw GCHS level.

“Granite was like, 'you know, if you can knock it around, keep it a soccer game, something will favor us,' “ Heiderschied said. “At the same time, all of a sudden, you're giving up some possession, they run, they end up with a free kick – that's kind of their specialty. We gave them several opportunities with that one and you've got to try to eliminate them.”

On the goal, the Warriors' Lucas Rainwater fired the high kick into the penalty area, where the ensuing scramble gave Sam Ortiz the chance to draw Granite level and he took advantage of it.

“To hang in there, hope we get a free kick and throw it in the box and Alex Moore and Sam Ortiz went up for it and battled for it. That was a great result for the kids to battle through and hang on in (extra time).”

Goals from Malik Robinson and Adam Sneed gave Edwardsville a 2-0 win over the Warriors in the junior varsity curtain-raiser.

Edwardsville will play in this weekend's Alton Round-Robin Tournament at Piasa Motor Fuels Field on the AHS campus; they take on Dunlap at 6:30 p.m. today, then meet Triad at 11:30 a.m. Saturday and the host Redbirds at 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

