

Week 5 Roundup: Area teams head into intense conference play Friday night

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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With the area's high school football season reaching the halfway mark tonight, Week 5 could be a make-or-break week for teams hoping to make a run to get to this November's playoffs. Kickoff times for all games is set for **7 p.m.** unless noted.

In the **Prairie State Conference**, one key matchup will be at Wood River's **Memorial Stadium**, where homestanding **East Alton-Wood River** will meet up with **Metro East Lutheran-Madison** in a game to be live-streamed on Riverbender.com tonight.

The Oilers go into the game at **2-2** overall, 1-1 in the PSC, while the Knights are **0-4** overall, 0-2 in the league. EAWR dropped a 31-8 decision to **Marquette Catholic** last week while the Knights fell 7-0 at **Nokomis**. The Oilers feature leading rusher **Zach Womack** (50 carries, 453 yards, four touchdowns) and quarterback **Justin Englar** (10-of-36 passing for 236 yards and five touchdowns with an interception on the year); their leading receiver is **T.J. Lawson** (eight catches for 58 yards with a touchdown).

The Knights are led by leading rusher **Fa'shaun Merritt**, who has 142 yards on the ground and a touchdown on the season; Earl Green is right behind him with 114 yards on 41 carries, while **Darion Brooks** is 3-for-6 passing for 95 yards and two touchdowns with an interception and **Damian James** is 5-for-12 for 104 yards and a touchdown with two interceptions on the season. The Knights' top receivers are Green (three catches, 30 yards and a touchdown) and **Caleb Jones** (three catches, 82 yards and a touchdown).

Elsewhere in the PSC, **Marquette** (2-2 overall, 1-1 PSC) hosts Pawnee (3-1 overall, 1-1 in the league) at Alton's **Public School Stadium**, with the Explorers coming off a 31-8 win over EAWR last week and the Indians having had their first loss of the season last week, dropping a 28-21 decision to **Kincaid South Fork** last week on the road. **Bunker Hill** (2-2 overall, 1-1 PSC) hosts Nokomis, who defeated MEL-Madison 7-0 last week to go to 1-3 overall, 1-1 in the league; the Minutemen fell to **Mount Olive** 27-6 on the road last week.

In the **Southwestern Conference**, **Alton** (0-4 overall, 0-2 SWC) hopes to shake off a 19-6 loss to **Belleville East** last week when they travel to **O'Fallon** (1-3 overall, 0-2 SWC), who dropped a 19-0 decision to **Edwardsville** last week. The Tigers, meanwhile, coming off that 19-0 win in the rain last week at Tiger Stadium that ran their record to 4-0 overall, 2-0 in the league, head to Belleville East (1-3 overall, 1-1 in the league) for a clash with the Lancers.

Granite City (2-2 overall, 1-1 SWC) heads to Kahok Stadium in **Collinsville** for a clash with their old rivals, the Warriors having fallen to East St. Louis 44-0 in a storm-shortened contest last week in their home opener; the Kahoks dropped a 49-20 decision to **Belleville West** last week to fall to 0-4 overall, 0-2 in the league. This week's other SWC game features the Maroons (2-2, 2-0) traveling to Clyde Jordan Stadium for their traditional rivalry game with the Flyers (4-0 overall, 2-0 SWC).

Over in the **South Central Conference**, **Roxana** hopes to shake off a tough 16-14 loss to **Vandalia** at a rain-soaked **Charlie Raich Field** last week when they travel to **Greenville** for a clash with the Comets. The Shells are 0-4 overall and in the SCC going into the game, while the Comets (2-2 overall and SCC) fell to Hillsboro 28-26 on the road last week.

Piasa Southwestern (2-2) defeated **Gillespie** 22-8 last week and hit the road to **Pana** for a clash with the Panthers (4-0), who got past **Carlinville** 25-23 last week on the road.

Over in the **Western Illinois Valley South**, **Hardin-Calhoun** goes into their home matchup with **Winchester West Central** (7:30 p.m. kickoff) having won three of their first four games on the year, with a 2-0 WIVC mark. The Warriors knocked off North Greene 18-6 last week on the road.

Carrollton (1-3 overall, 1-1 in the league) comes off their 50-0 win over West Central with a home clash against **Pleasant Hill**, who fell 42-14 last week to **Greenfield-Northwestern**.

Weather should not be a factor this week, three of the season's first four weeks having been affected by rain and thunderstorms. Friday's forecast calls for no chance of rain, with sunny skies throughout the day. The high Friday will be 90 degrees, with temperatures into the mid-80s by kickoff, with light winds.