

Edwardsville, East St. Louis clash in biggest SWC football game of year

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Much will be on the line at Tiger Stadium Friday night.

It's been a clash long in the making, and the atmosphere will likely be a near-perfect one for high school football.

A huge crowd is expected for Friday's Southwestern Conference showdown between **East St. Louis** and **Edwardsville** when the St. Louis area's two top-ranked large-school

teams face each other at 7 p.m. The gates will be open early for this one, with tickets going on sale two hours before kickoff.

The Tigers are ready for the challenge the Flyers will bring.

“It's two good football teams, both of them 5-0, both wanting the same thing – the Southwestern Conference championship,” said **Tiger coach Matt Martin**. “This game will play a major factor in that.

“It's two teams with good traditions, competitive coaching staffs, competitive players. It should be fun.”

The key to success against the Flyers is simple, Martin believes. “You've got to win the turnover battle, you've got to be physical, you've got to try to limit their big plays, whether on special teams or on offense and you've got to be able to score points,” Martin said. “Their defense is pretty good; that's tough.

“We'll have to be balanced like we always try to be and throw the ball a little bit too. We'll run the ball inside and we'll run the ball outside.”

The Flyers feature Jarrell Anderson, who leads the team in rushing with 575 yards and eight touchdowns, with Kevin Brown, who has 269 yards on the ground with six touchdowns on the year. Their quarterback, Reyondus Estes, is 46-for-95 for 925 yards passing with 10 touchdown passes and one interception. His top targets are Jeff Thomas (17 catches, 431 yards, five touchdowns) and Charlando Robinson (15 catches, 299 yards, four touchdowns).

James Knight is the Flyers' leading tackler with 37 tackles on the year; Terrion Williams Jr. has 29, Ken Dixon 27 and LaMontre' Harvey 25 with a team-leading six sacks.

Dionte Rodgers has rushed for 575 yards on the season; he scored four times in last week's EHS win over Belleville East and also had five touchdowns in their Week 2 win over Rock Island; Daval Torres had some big runs last week against the Lancers that helped open things up for Rodgers and it could be a big 1-2 punch for the Tigers against East Side. Brenden Dickmann has been efficient at quarterback, going 26-for-43 for 375 yards on the year with five touchdowns; he's also run for 105 yards with a touchdown.

Torres leads the Tigers in receiving with eight catches for 81 yards and a touchdown last week against East. Dayleon Harris has five catches for 94 yards and James Fulton has contributed five catches for 87 yards for the year.

“Everybody knows what's involved (with the game); our kids know what's involved. It's not like you need a lot of motivation,” Martin said.

