

One play makes difference in Edwardsville field hockey game, Tigers move on

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EDWARDSVILLE – Just one play spelled the difference between victory and defeat.

One move that proved to be the difference.

One opportunity taken that was critical.

That move was **Edwardsville's Annie Mulford** stealing the ball from a Whitfield player, charging downfield and lifting a shot past Warrior goaltender Elena Sherertz with 19:59 remaining in the second half to lift the Tigers to a 1-0 win Saturday afternoon in the Midwest Tournament's Round of 16 at Tiger Stadium.

Mulford's goal sent the ninth-seeded Tigers to a Tuesday quarterfinal match against top-seeded St. Joseph's, who eliminated John Burroughs 5-0 in a curtain-raising match Saturday in Edwardsville, at 4:15 p.m. Tuesday at Burroughs in St. Louis County. The semifinals and final of the tournament are set for Thursday evening and Oct. 29 at the SportPort sports complex in Maryland Heights, Mo.

The Tigers took their record to 14-9-1 on the year with the win, while the Warriors were eliminated at 14-6-1.

“It was really exciting,” Mulford said. “Our team played really well today and we played as a unit, which is really exciting. We’ve had an up-and-down season and today was a really good team effort.”

“The team we played today was very well-talented; this is a really big win for us.”

“It was a great goal by Annie,” said **Tiger coach Julia Tyler**. “Our whole team played excellent today; we were very composed on the ball, we worked as a unit. Annie did an excellent job of placing the ball in the back of the net.”

“We moved a few people around for this game and I think they did a really good job of filling their spots.”

The Tigers and Warriors had met earlier in the season in the Gateway Tournament and Tyler knew what to expect from Whitfield going in. “We knew they were going to be very strong today,” Tyler said. “We knew it was going to be a physical game; we knew we had to come out and be tight on some of their key players to be successful today.”

That they were; Edwardsville limited Whitfield's chances all day long and didn't conceded only two short-corner restarts.

Mulford's game-winning goal came when she poked the ball away from a Warrior and charged toward the Warrior goal, found an opening and lifted a shot past Sherertz into the top part of the net for the only goal of the contest. “I remembered a girl coming back and pulling her stick in,” Mulford said of the goal, “and I remembered there were two (Warrior defenders) here; I just pulled (the ball) back and lifted it in.”

“It was just in my favor today, which was really exciting. I really wanted to score today and everyone did a really good job of keeping them from scoring too.”

“I just told (Sherertz) that goal was not on her; that was a fabulous goal (by Mulford),” said **Warrior coach Maggie Young**. “Edwardsville caught us in a moment of weakness; there were only a few this game, and they caught us in one and took full advantage of it. Overall, I am completely proud of how we played.”

“Defensively, our game plan to contain them, to slow them down, worked; in that one moment, they took advantage. They are a strong team and have some really talented players on that squad. They play a different style of game than most teams, especially defensively, and I think it worked for them.”

The Tigers played the Angels late in the regular season, the two sides trading goals before St. Joe's came away with a 4-3 win. “We played a really good game against them,” Mulford said of the earlier encounter with the Angels. “They're a really talented team; I think it'll be a really good game.”

“They're fresh in our minds,” Tyler said of Tuesday's upcoming quarterfinal game, “so we need to come out and play the same way we did today, and we should be very competitive with them.”



