

Tigers make smooth transition into MSCHA, Lewis, Schaeffer emerge as leaders

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EAST ALTON – Edwardsville's hockey program took a big step upwards this season when the varsity team, who had been dominating the Mississippi Valley Club Hockey Association for several years, gained admittance into the Mid-States Club Hockey Association.

The move meant the Tigers were going to be facing some of the toughest competition in the entire St. Louis area, what with long-dominating teams of CBC, Vianney, DeSmet, St. Louis University High and others in the league that was first established in 1971-72.

The Tiger players, however, have made the transition into the MSCHA a smooth one.

“We're getting a lot more competition,” said the **Tigers' Carson Lewis**. “No one knew what to expect (when the Tigers went into the MSCHA); I think we were a little underestimated and we've really shown we belong. I think we've made the league a better league over there and made Mississippi Valley more competitive too.

“We were really excited (to be moving into Mid-States); we knew it was going to be a harder and tougher league. We knew we had to get to work in practice and get better for these games.”

The Tigers' conference in the realignment for MSCHA this year includes the traditional powers like CBC, Vianney, SLUH, Chaminade, DeSmet and Oakville. “We watched those guys at (the) Scottrade (Center in St. Louis for the annual St. Louis Blues Challenge Cup final, which is televised on Fox Sports Midwest) the last four years (CBC has made the last 15 Blues Cup finals in a row); now, we're thinking, 'wow, it'd be so awesome to play there.' Now we're getting the opportunity to possibly be out there.”

“It's a lot, lot better competition for sure,” said **EHS' Tyler Schaeffer**. “It's a lot of fun; I play on a team with a lot of those guys from CBC and DeSmet. It's a lot of fun playing your teammates and it's definitely better competition. Our program has so many players in it and we've got a great coaching staff. We just progress players on a little better and I'm glad we're now playing some high-level competition and getting some really good games in.”