

Edwardsville ends hockey season with 6-1 loss in MSCHA playoffs to CBC

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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CHESTERFIELD, Mo. - Edwardsville entered their inaugural season in the **Mid-States Club Hockey Association** with many goals.

A good many of them were met this season, a season that came to an end at Hardee's IcePlex Saturday evening when the **Tigers** fell to **CBC 6-1** in Game 2 of their **MSCHA St. Louis Blues Challenge Cup playoff semifinal series**.

The Cadets will be playing in their 17th straight Blues Cup Final March 8 at Scottrade Center against St. Louis University High, who had to win a mini-game over Oakville to reach the final; the Junior Billikens downed Oakville 2-0 in the mini-game after falling to Oakville 4-3 in the regulation game.

CBC is the league's three-time defending champion.

Both of Edwardsville's games in the semifinals were played on the IcePlex's Olympic-sized rink, which measures 200 feet by 100 feet as compared to the standard 200-by-85. "It certainly makes a difference," said **Tiger coach Jason Walker** about the extra 15 feet of width. "It makes a difference offensively with more room; in the defensive zone, it makes a big difference because you have more room to cover. I thought we were prepared for that – at times, I thought we were running a little bit, but overall, I don't think the ice size was a factor in the series.

"We didn't finish off plays and they did; that's what it came down to."

The Tigers fell behind through the first period, thanks to a Clayton Dawe goal that was sandwiched between two goals from Bud Winter; Walker felt the Tigers kept battling despite being down quickly. "Our guys, we've been through a lot together," Walker said. "There's no quit in them; you get down and it's hard to battle back against a good team."

"It wasn't easy," said **Cadet coach John Jost**. "They're a heck of a hockey team and we had a few bumps in the road this year; it's sweet to get back (to the Scottrade). They (Edwardsville) are right there though. It took our best hockey to beat them; they've got good coaching, they've got good goaltending, they've got all the pieces."

Winter's three-goal game was a big factor in the game, Jost felt. "That was huge for us," Jost said. "He (Winter) hasn't felt well, he's been sick, and for him to come out and give the effort he gave tonight – I'm proud of him."

Lucas Tucker cut the Cadet to lead to 3-1 about midway through the second period from a Tyler Schaeffer assist, but the Cadets countered late in the period with Winter's third goal, then sealed the trip to the Scottrade with third-period goals from Will Baginski and Drake Nickolaison.

The Cadets outshot the Tigers 40-17, with Matthew Griffin making 34 saves for Edwardsville and Jack Caruso turning back 16 Edwardsville shots for CBC.

“We had an enjoyable season for sure,” Walker said. “It didn't end the way we wanted it to; we definitely felt like we were this type of team that would be here. We had a lot of confidence in what we do as a program, but when you get down to the end, only one team can win; we ran into a good team tonight and they got the best of us.

“It's been a great league and we've played the best of the best; it's been fun.”

In Saturday's deciding games in the second-tier Doug Wickenheiser Memorial Cup playoffs at the IcePlex, Ladue defeated Fort Zumwalt South 9-3 and Westminster Christian downed Rockwood Summit 8-2 as both schools reached the final, also set for March 8 at Scottrade Center. That game will be played as a curtain-raiser for the Blues Cup Final.

