

Two quick Kahok goals eliminate Tigers 2-1 in sectional semi

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Just when Tuesday evening's IHSA Class 3A girls soccer Edwardsville Sectional semifinal match was getting under way at Tiger Stadium, a dark cloud that was atop the stadium suddenly opened up and brought heavy showers and winds to the area.

Collinsville took advantage of the sudden cloudburst and wind at their backs to score a pair of quick first-half goals that helped the Kahoks to a 2-1 win over the Tigers to advance to Friday's sectional final against tonight's Normal Community-Minooka winner (that match begins at 5 p.m. at Normal West) at 6 p.m. Friday for a trip to Tuesday's Normal Community Super-Sectional.

The Kahoks advanced at 17-6-1; the Tigers were eliminated at 13-4-2.

“The girls played hard that last 40 minutes,” said Tiger coach Abby Comerford. “We had a few hiccups in the first half and they capitalized on them; that was the story of the game. We lost our marks on those two goals and they capitalized on them.

“Them coming out and us getting down so quick, it's a case that we have to start fighting back and we have to start fighting back from early on; that itself kind of drains the girls, but they fought the entire way.”

The Kahoks didn't waste much time getting on the board when Tayler Devine launched a shot in the rain from long distance and found the back of the net just three minutes in to quickly put the Kahoks ahead. EHS quickly rallied following the goal and battled to get the equalizer; they had several chances to put the ball away, but they just failed to click.

“That was kind of the first game against Collinsville when we played them earlier in the season; we had our opportunities, we just didn't capitalize on those opportunities,” Comerford said. “It's a case of just being able to just capitalize off those opportunities and it's a different game.”

“Coming here and they have the fans and momentum; we knew that storm was blowing in, we wanted to put the ball on (the goal) frame early and often and that's what we did,” said Kahok coach Clay Smith. “That's what we did and we found the back of the net twice.

“Tayler Devine put that ball on the frame; it was a great shot and Andrea Frerker followed it up.”

The Kahoks got their second goal in the 24th minute when Frerker launched a shot that just got past Tiger goalkeeper Regan Windau to up the lead to 2-0. Even though CHS had gotten out to a seemingly big lead, Collinsville wanted to keep on doing what they had planned.

“Tactically, we wanted to keep on doing what we were doing,” Smith said. “We still didn't get good play from our flank players out wide; they gave us a little trouble, but credit them; they were getting their outside backs into the offensive third of the field. Tonight we were a much better counterattacking team and they did a good job of shutting us down.

“We did what we had to do defensively and then we hung on.”

The Kahoks went into the break up 2-0, but Edwardsville scored on a deep Taylor Hansen free kick that found its way past Kahok goalkeeper Morgan Lerch to cut the Kahok lead to 2-1 in the 45th minute and seemingly give Edwardsville momentum.

“We talked about that at halftime,” Comerford said. “We had to get one quick to get us back into the game and we did.”

Edwardsville had several more chances to tie the game and send it into extra time, but Collinsville found ways to hold off the Tigers as the match wore down.

Edwardsville is losing five seniors – Mallory Mushill, Ashlin West, Abby Crabtree, Allysiah Belt and Hansen – that have made many contributions over the years for the Tigers. “This group of seniors,” Comerford said, “I've had all five of them pretty much all four years of their high school career; they've all played varsity since their freshman years. They all hold a special spot in my heart.”



