

Tigers, Redbirds battle to scoreless SWC draw

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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ALTON – Edwardsville and Alton met up in a Southwestern Conference match at Piasa Motor Fuels Field Tuesday afternoon.

Both teams had their chances, but couldn't put the ball in the back of the net, and as a result, the match ended in a scoreless draw.

The Tigers are now 11-1-2 on the season, 4-0-1 in the SWC, while Alton is now 9-5-2 on the year, 1-1-1 in the league.

“The kids tried; they connected – sometimes, there's those games where a lot of shots, some of them they kind of stubbed it, some were wide, some of them hit a post,” said Tiger coach Mark Heiderscheid. “Obviously, we're going to give up a chance because everyone's going forward and we've got a revamped backfield (due to a run of injuries); we continued to work very hard and the game goes up and down, but I felt we connected the heck out of the ball.

“It was almost a situation where the possession, I think we're doing a good job with that one; in the end, I thought they knocked it around pretty well – some shot selection could have been better – but I thought the end result was that they ended up with a lot of the ball and I thought they had a lot of shots created; that's fruitful, but the bad news is that final finish was just not there at all today.”

“The conference this year is stacked,” said Redbird coach Nick Funk. “It's probably the best that I've seen the conference since back when I was in high school; there was never an easy game when I was in high school and this year, there's definitely not.

“It's great to have a competitive conference, but it's also kind of a killer too; it makes you better for (the IHSA) playoffs, but you're also playing those same teams. It's kind of a give-and-take thing. Getting back to .500 (in the league) isn't really a big thing before (IHSA Class 3A regional and sectional) seedings, but we do have two more (SWC games) – Belleville West and Collinsville, who aren't easy – we'll see what we can do and finish strong.”

Funk would have liked to have the three points in the standings for the win. “Three points in this conference is a huge deal, especially against a team like Edwardsville,” Funk said. “That would have really shook some stuff up, but a tie may as well; I mean, Edwardsville is phenomenal, there's no doubt about that.

“You're always looking for the win, no matter what game it is; disappointed, no. I think we played awesome. I think we had a few too many mental errors, but that's high school soccer.”

Next up for the Redbirds is a 12:45 p.m. Saturday match against Waterloo Gibault at Oerter Park in Columbia, while the Tigers travel back to Alton – this time to Gordon Moore Park – for 6:30 p.m. Thursday match against Marquette Catholic before hosting St. Mary's of south St. Louis city for a 10:30 a.m.

