

Corzine hat trick helps Edwardsville MVCHA team past Alton 4-3

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EAST ALTON – Edwardsville and Alton were coming off season-opening Mississippi Valley Club Hockey Association games the night before heading into their clash at East Alton Ice Arena Tuesday night.

Both of them were losses, the Tigers falling to Granite City 5-2 while the Redbirds dropped a 5-3 decision to Bethalto.

Edwardsville rebounded from their loss to the Warriors with a 4-3 win over the Redbirds, thanks to Logan Corzine hat trick, putting the Tigers at 1-1-0 (two points) for the season; the Redbirds fell to 0-2-0 (no points) with the loss.

The Tigers' MVCHA team is a young one this season, felt Tiger coach Jason Walker. “The guys responded well,” Walker said. “We've got a young team, an inexperienced team; you always question how you're going to to come back from back-to-back nights, but the guys picked stuff up big-time tonight – everybody came with a lot of energy and were motivated from last night.

“Arianna (Johnson) played well in net and defensively, I thought that was a very nice effort – we took care of the puck for the most part; for the second game of the season, we're happy with where we're at.”

“They came out strong tonight,” said first-year Redbird coach Aaron Kestler. “We were short-handed on the bench; we had six guys out with mono and the flu tonight; other than that, I think our boys came out strong and Edwardsville played a (heck) of a game tonight.

“We made a couple of mistakes on our end; not getting the puck out cost us a few goals. We're going to have to work on it before we play East Alton-Wood River tomorrow.”

Kestler thinks this year's Redbirds will be a “grind-it-out team; we're going to have a lot of battles in front of the net, just get into the dirty areas. We're going to have to pick up a lot of rebounds and put them in the net – we're not going to be a team that's going to finesse around anybody.”

Edwardsville got on the board first with 57 seconds left in the opening period when Corzine got a pass from Nate Frey and snapped the puck past Redbird goalie Madi Dallas, with Justin Harper getting the other assist on the play; Connor Neely tied the game up early in the second period with Chase Lawrence off for holding; Neely got a pass from Anderson Carter and tucked it in past Johnson to even things up at 1-1. That was followed by Corzine's second goal for the game with 6:14 left, with the assist going to Garret Doolin.

Neely managed to tie the game with his second goal for the Redbirds with 5:45 left off a Jacob Hendrickson assist; things stayed even through the rest of the second period until Corzine picked up a loose puck with 10:38 left in the third and broke in on Dallas, finding an opening and scoring an unassisted goal to put the Tigers back up 3-2; Adam Leston then gave Edwardsville some breathing room with 4:51 left when he scored past Dallas off an Ethan Bogner assist.

The Redbirds didn't go away, however, and pulled to within a goal with 58 seconds left when Tristan Mouser scored an unassisted goal to give the Redbirds a chance; Alton pulled Dallas for a sixth attacker down the stretch, but couldn't get the tying goal as Edwardsville's defense shut down Redbird attacks on the goal.

Edwardsville had 26 shots on goal, with Dallas turning back 22 shots; Alton had 14 shots on goal, with Johnson making 11 saves on the night.

Both teams are back in action tonight, Edwardsville meeting Highland at 7:15 p.m. and Alton taking on EAWR at 8:45 p.m.; both games are at East Alton Ice Arena.

