

Stevens leads way as Tigers open season to 5-0 win over Lancers

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Abby Federmann got her 2018 high school girls soccer season off to a great start Monday night.

So did Sydni Stevens.

Federmann opened her account as Edwardsville's girls soccer coach with a big win, thanks in part to Stevens' two-goal, two-assist effort as the Tigers began the season with a 5-0 win over Belleville East in both teams' opening match of both the season and the Nike bracket of the Metro Girls Cup tournament at Tiger Stadium. The win put EHS at 1-0-0 on the year, while the Lancers opened at 0-1-0.

“It feels different,” Federmann said about her first match and getting her first win as head coach, having taken the reins of the program after Abby Comerford stepped down at the end of the 2017 season. “It's been the three of us out here for the last three years, but I think she'd be proud of me – it feels good.

“Of course, I was a ball of nerves last night, as I'm sure any coach is before a game, but I could not be more pleased with how these girls came out; every single person on my bench saw some playing time and did what they needed to do.”

Monday's opener also marked the debut of a sophomore class that may well have an impact on the team this season. "We've got a crop that couldn't play last year as freshmen due to club policies," Federmann said. "But they've come in and their humility is what is really exciting; nobody came in with any kind of chip on their shoulder thinking they deserved a spot or had a spot; they've all been competing with each other and working with each other.

"I think that's what makes my bench so deep; I can interchange five and six and seven sophomores – how wonderful is that for the future of our program?"

The Tigers didn't waste much time getting on the board as Stevens opened the scoring when she lifted a shot over East goalkeeper Grace Antillean to put EHS up 1-0 in the fourth minute, setting the tone for the match; Libby Doak followed 20 minutes later with a goal of her own to get EHS to a 2-0 lead at the half.

Stevens scored her second goal of the match in the 47th minute to get the Tigers to a 3-0 lead, followed by a 56th-minute goal from Releigh Kuhns and a 64th-minute goal from Megan Woll to wrap up the scoring. Reagan Windau got the start in goal for the Tigers and recorded her first clean sheet of the season.

In Monday evening's other match in Edwardsville, Waterloo opened the tournament with a 1-0 win over Rochester; all four teams who played Monday in Edwardsville are in Group A of the bracket, while Alton, Belleville West, Triad and Springfield make up Group B. Play continues Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. in Group B as Triad takes on Belleville West at West.

Group A play continues Wednesday as the Tigers meet Waterloo at 5:30 p.m. at Tiger Stadium, then continues at 5:30 p.m. Thursday as EHS takes on Rochester. Group play concludes Friday, with the final matches set for Saturday beginning at noon at Tiger Stadium.

