

Cooper Nolan gets two in second half to help Tigers past Kahoks

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Cooper Nolan stepped up Tuesday night and gave his Edwardsville boys soccer team a much-needed lift just when the Tigers needed one in their key Southwestern Conference match against Collinsville at Tiger Stadium.

Nolan drew the Tigers level at 1-1 with a blast in the 42nd minute, then sealed the deal in the 67th minute when he knocked in a rebound off Kahok goaltender Tate Wyatt as EHS posted a come-from-behind 3-1 win over CHS to go to 4-2-1 on the season, 2-0 in the SWC while the Kahoks fell to 7-1-1 overall, 2-1 in the league.

“All of a sudden – a lot in the first half – we started getting really good possessions and we played very, very well,” said Tiger coach Mark Heiderscheid, “excepting for the fact that Collinsville – being as athletic as they were – created a lot of near-chances, but they’re all contested and it made it a little bit difficult for us.

“All it took was just one error – that square ball that we accidentally played in the middle of the field – we pounced on it – goal. Other times, all of a sudden, we had it – Cooper had a near-chance and a miss; we had another near-chance and a miss. This is one of those games like before – everything we shot went in. You have a lot of chances created in the first half that were in and around there but the moment is tougher because Collinsville is a good team.”

Collinsville's only goal of the match game in the fourth minute when Luke Lilijegren got ahold of the ball and knocked it past Tiger goalkeeper Tyler Frolik to put the Kahoks ahead 1-0; things remained that way the rest of the half despite the Tigers having some great chances but not being able to get the equalizer.

"You had a lot of chances created in the first half; really, in the first half, I thought we should have Cooper sit for a bit because all of a sudden, it's going to bother him that he had some close chances and doesn't get it in. Contrast that to a guy like (Ethan) Miracle or a guy like (Bryce) Glisson – he's just going to shrug it off and keep shooting," Heiderscheid said. "All of a sudden, he (Nolan) gets that close chance to his right and I'll tell you, he's just an incredible finisher; he just went ahead and he just knocked it in."

That Nolan goal in the 48th minute drew the Tigers level with the Kahoks at 1-1 and set up Miracle for what proved to be the winning goal in the 65th minute when he unleashed a drive past Wyatt that gave the Tigers the lead at 2-1; two minutes later, Nolan scored a goal that put the match away. "If you really look at it, at 2-1, it was very important," Heiderscheid said. "Cooper knocks it in at three and you can almost sense it from both teams that three – you know what, this becomes a mountain to overcome."

"They're well-coached, they're a good team," said Kahok coach Rob Lugge. "We've been battling some injuries – it's not really an excuse for anything, but we didn't have our best night and they played pretty well. Once they get a goal, you kind of push higher and we had some mistakes in the backfield and they put it in – good for them."

Edwardsville heads to Normal West for a 11 a.m. Saturday match, followed by a 5 p.m. Sept. 18 home match against Marquette Catholic; the Kahoks pay a visit to Belleville Althoff at 6:30 p.m. Thursday before visiting Marquette at Gordon Moore Park at 6 p.m. Friday.