

Cochran, Duke, pace Alton boys bowlers to win over Edwardsville

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BOYS' MEET: ALTON 39, EDWARDSVILLE 1

EDWARDSVILLE – The Alton Redbird boys bowlers, behind a 604 series from Jared Cochran and a 587 from Chris Duke, defeated the Tigers 39-1 on Tuesday at Edisons Entertainment Center.

In the junior varsity meets, both teams traded 7-0 wins, with the Alton boys winning over the Tigers, and the Edwardsville girls taking the win over the Redbirds.

Both the Redbird teams bowled well throughout the match.

“The boys are doing good, boys’ varsity’s doing really well,” said Alton coach Dave Meyer. “They need to improve a little bit, but, I mean, it’s making spares, making consistent shots. They’re going to win their match easily against Edwardsville’s boys, the JV boys won their match. The varsity girls, they’re still coming along. We’ve got some growing pains that we’re going through. We only have five girls for varsity. We need to find some more, and we had one sick today, so we only had four, but I mean, they grind it out, they worked hard, and they worked hard all weekend, too.”

Both Cochran and Duke’s series helped the Redbirds to a near sweep of the points against the Tigers, and the team has been doing well early on.

“Right now, the boys are doing good,” Meyer said. “They’re starting to grow. And they’re coming together as a team, they’re staying together, but they should, because they’re all seniors. We have a couple of hot ones on the team right now; we’ve got Chris Duke, we’ve got Matt Engdale, he can come along and be a hot person. They’re both seniors. Jared Cochran, he was doing good tonight and everything, so I think if we can get them all clicking on engines here after Christmas, come January, they’re going to be in the hunt come regionals and sectionals.”

On the other side of the coin, a very young Edwardsville team continues to develop.

“I think that we haven’t been progressing like we need to,” said Tigers coach Kimber Moscardelli. “I think that we definitely have had the time to start working on things, and we’re not seeing what we need to be seeing at this point in time, so I think by now, having our second match, I think it’s definitely time to start thinking about what we can do in our practice time to start ensuring that we’re going to start seeing the progression. I see some progression in some of the bowlers, but I also see some digression, so it’s real important right now that we build a good team chemistry, and it’s important that we start to work on some drills and mechanics, because there’s been a lot of things that we’ve been trying to do in practices that I’m not seeing on the lanes. And so, I think we just need to mix some things up to try to approach what we need to work on from a different angle.”

The Tigers didn’t particularly have a standout bowler on the night, but there were a few bright spots that came through during the match.

“I really think we had a difficult time really having a bright spot in general,” Moscardelli said. “The people who are usually bright spots even struggled. I think that it took a little while, but Eian (Sims) got hot the last game, and Jackson (Budwell) had some bright moments in games, but he also had some struggles in the middle of games. I wouldn’t say that we had really a standout performance tonight; it may be coming off of Thanksgiving break. But I think mentally, the boys have got a little bit more of a challenge in front of them just to kind of lock-in and zone in like the other programs are. You know, like whenever I see the Alton program, all of them are watching each other throw the balls down the lane. I don’t think our bowlers are quite watching everybody’s shots more, with that attention. So as far as standouts, I think that nobody stood out as much as they could have, but it just gives us an idea of what we can be working on.”

It’s still early on in the season, and everything is correctable, and there’s still a learning curve for the young Edwardsville team.

“Yes, it’s still early in the season,” Moscardelli said. “I also have to remember that we have a really young team. Tonight, I had four freshmen, a sophomore and a junior out

on the lanes. And that's a very young program compared most others. Alton had all seniors tonight, for the most part, and that's also another challenge that these guys have to face. It's certainly intimidating when you're bowling guys that have three years on you in high school, but that doesn't mean that they can achieve the scores that they need."

Sims led the way for the Tigers with a 463 series, bowling games of 139, 152 and 172. Budwell had a 444 series, with a game of 145, 156 and 143, and also scored Edwardsville's only point of the night with a second game win over Alton's Lance Perkey. James Zugmeier had a 365 set, while Steven Leitschuh bowled a 353 series, Derrick Newsome had one game of 100, and Kyle Voepel had a two-game set of 190.

Duke led the way for the Redbirds with his 587 set, bowling games of 184, 181 and 222, Cochran had games of 201, 202 and 201, while Perkey had a series of 546, with games of 200, 135 and 211. Engdale had a 523 series on the night, Trevor Vallow had a two-game set of 369, and Danny Laslie tossed one game of a 134.

Moscardelli is seeing similarities between the boys' program now and the girls' program of two seasons ago, and thinks that there are positives that the boys can take away from the match.

"Even though it's a tough time, I'm seeing a lot of things in the boys' program that I saw in the girls' program two years ago," Moscardelli said. "While it's sometimes it's a really tough loss whenever you're getting beat by 300 pins a game, there are still some positive things to take out of these matches, and that we have a bar to reach. And so, there's always somewhere else to get to the next step, and that we can always get our way to the ceiling, and that once we reach the ceiling, we'll set a new limit. So maybe our target is a little too high right now, but I think once we set a new target, and the boys know what they need to shoot for, I think they'll have a better time getting there."