

# Redbirds take down Eagles in 7-5 shootout on senior night

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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EAST ALTON - The 2019 senior night for the Alton Redbirds Hockey Club was a memorable one.

In what would be a goal and penalty festival, the Redbirds outlasted the Civic Memorial Eagles 7-5 on Monday night at East Alton Hockey Rink.

“A lot of penalties tonight, but it was good for Senior Night with a lot of goals and back and forth,” Alton head coach Aaron Kestler said. “It’s been a great group of kids. had these kids from the beginning since we started coaching. We watched them grow up and become young men that they are. It’s a great group to have and wish them the best of luck in the future.”

The Redbirds have now won four out of their last five and improve to 7-9-1 on the season.

Freshman sensation Nick Jones and junior Shawn Grizzle each collected a hat trick for Alton.

“Jones has been huge this year. He’s constantly scoring,” Kestler said. “He’s got help out there. Grizzle had a hat trick. He’s got a lot of support.”

Civic Memorial got a game-high four goals from senior captain and center Nolan Kahl.

“ had a lot to prove tonight and were playing for their seniors. We had to match that intensity, and I think we did a good job of that,” Eagles head coach Brayden Emerick said. “A few things didn’t go our way, but we played well, they played well. It got a little chaotic, but everyone kept their heads kind of cool and it turned into a really good game.”

Within 23 seconds, the game got its first goal.

Kahl wristed a shot past Caleb Vitali to give the Eagles a 1-0 lead, however, that wouldn’t last long.

Alton came roaring back with three unanswered goals in two minutes.

Jones scored on a power play with 8:16 to go in the first period and 25 seconds later Trystan Mouser gave the Redbirds the lead for good on a one-timer. Jones made it 3-1 96 seconds later.

“Definitely not the start we wanted, but it was the response that we need for that one,” Kestler said. “We felt good about coming back the way we did.”

Civic Memorial got a goal back with 1:36 to play in the period on a goal by Kahl.

The Eagles had an excellent opportunity to tie the game up on a 5-on-4 powerplay heading into the second period, but the Redbirds killed it off. Shortly after, Alton would strike in quick succession again.

Grizzle found the back of the net three minutes and 32 seconds into the period and just under two minutes later, Jones completed his hat trick to give the Redbirds a commanding 5-2 lead. That's when the tables would turn in the Eagles favor.

Midway through the period, Alton was whistled for multiple infractions seconds apart from each other. The result was four players heading to the penalty box, including one with a ten-minute major. Civic Memorial effectively had a 5-on-3 man advantage for four minutes.

Kahl cut the deficit to 5-3 with 5:55 to go and then three minutes later on a 5-on-4 power play he added his fourth goal of the game to make it 5-4.

"Those penalties killed us," Kestler said. "We've been pretty bad with penalties this year. That's one thing we keep trying to work on, but some nights you get stuff like this. Most of the calls were right, but it is what it is. We have to be more disciplined out there."

However, at the 2:17 mark of the period, Grizzle gave Alton some insurance once again as he scored on a man advantage of their own 15 seconds after Kahl's goal.

In the third period, the scoring would die down, but not before a couple more early goals.

After the puck dropped to start the final period Grizzle capped his hat trick in 25 seconds.

Defenseman, Matthew Winter became the first Eagle not named Kahl to score with 10:39 to play on a one-timer during a power play.

Alton's senior class: Anderson Carter, Connor Neely, Hunter Goodman, Jacob Eppel, Jon Croxton, Logan Jansen, and Matt Klug.







[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)