

Collinsville Goal In 72nd Minutes Gives Kahoks 1-0 Boys Soccer Win Over Edwardsville

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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COLLINSVILLE - A own goal in the 72nd minute turned out to be the difference as Collinsville took a 1-0 win over a 10-man Edwardsville side in a boys Southwestern Conference soccer match played Tuesday at Kahok Stadium.

It was a very tight defensive-oriented match that saw the Tigers lose defender Parker Mathews to a straight red card just right before the hour, forcing Edwardsville to play with 10 men for the final 20 minutes.

"Well, obviously, it's kind of a disappointment," said Edwardsville head coach Mark Heiderscheid, "because it's sad. This is a difficult to awkward situation, because of COVID-19, and preparation for this season. And yet, still, it's like the thought was let's make the most of things, and I told the players, it's a gift to be able to play. There's no tournament, it's half of a season, but, really, we were given such a lucky gift to be able to go out and play a few games. But, I think, most of the disappointment lies in that, for the second straight time, we end up playing a chunk of the game shorthanded. And we're kind of lucky that last time, we played a good 50-something minutes short and still be very fortunate to get a result, albeit penalty kicks. But this one here, I think, yeah, it was tough, because you go down, and we were sorting out how to play shorthanded again, but our fault. And then, unfortunately, a ball got crossed in, our defender ends up heading it into our goal when he's trying to make the play, so it's no shame on his part. But he knocks it in, and then, that's that. And so, otherwise, it was just a tough one.

"I feel we had a chance when (Eli) Bateman knocks it off the post", Heiderscheid continued, "I thought (Brennan) Weller had the one, the keeper does a great job of making the save sweep. We had our opportunities to give ourselves a result, which is one of those things, again, where you just did not, and that's the way soccer goes, sometimes."

The Tigers had a glorious chance to go up early in the second half on a Bateman shot, but the ball rang heavily off the underside of the crossbar and stayed out, keeping the match goalless at the time.

"Yeah, it was," Heiderscheid said, "because, I mean, sometimes, it's a matter of just small increments, and unfortunately, that one, if it's just even the slightest lower, obviously, it's in. So close, it bounced off on top of the bar into the goal, but, unfortunately, it didn't happen. And so, I think something like that could have been the game right there., but unfortunately, today, those chances didn't happen to go in. And as a result, we make it into a tighter contest, and, of course, we get the (red) card, and at that point, then, we put ourselves in a bind. And so, as a result, people are in not the best situation in terms of our shape. So, (Andrew) Mills tries to make a play and, unfortunately, heads it in. So I mean, it's a tough one."

The defenses on both sides were the stories for the first 25 minutes of the match, with Edwardsville having the better of the chances, especially after the 20-minute mark, when a couple of big chances were cleared away by the Kahok defense, and goalie Miguel Gaspar. At the half-hour, Collinsville had a big chance when a defender's clearance header nearly went in at the far post, but the Tigers were able to get the ball out of danger. Right before the halftime whistle, Weller had a great opportunity, but was defended well, and his crossing shot was smothered by Gaspar, keeping the game scoreless at the interval.

The action began heating up in the second half, and in the 43rd minutes, Tiger defender Auggie Gianaris was booked after tripping up a Collinsville player along the sideline, and in the next minute, Bateman got a great cross from Weller, but his shot rang off the bottom of the bar and stayed out, keeping the match goalless.

The Kahoks then began having some great chances. In the 45th minute, from a throw-in, Landon Mahat had a great chance in front, but Grant Toby dove out to his left to make a big save and keep it 0-0. In the 54th minute, from a corner, Aiden Hensler headed down the ball, but it hit the bottom of the post and stuck there, with Toby coming out to cover up.

In the 60th minute, Mathews made a brilliant tackle to stop a Collinsville chance, but as he stepped over the Kahok player, the referee showed Mathews a straight red card, sending him off and forcing the Tigers to play with 10 men the rest of the way. Two minutes later, another Weller opportunity was thwarted by good Collinsville defense, keeping the game scoreless.

The breakthrough came in the 72nd minute, off a free kick by the Kahoks from outside the box. Mahat took the kick, which came perfectly into the box, and a clearance header from the Edwardsville defense got by Toby just inside the far post and into the net that gave the Kahoks a 1-0 lead.

Off the ensuing kickoff, Bateman raced down the left flank, but his attempt to level the score was stopped. The Collinsville defense was able to shut down the Tigers the rest of the way to give the Kahoks the 1-0 win.

The Tigers are now 5-2-0 on the year, and go on the road to face Alton Thursday evening, then have the weekend off before meeting O'Fallon at home next Tuesday night, with both games starting at 7 p.m. Edwardsville continues to play hard, and Heiderscheid is looking ahead to the upcoming challenges.

"Yeah, I think for the players on the field, without a doubt, there were so many kids that played their hearts out," Heiderscheid said. "And when they were down, a player could certainly see, Adam Boykin raced down the field, made a play just by himself. If you look at the work rate from our back players, I think it was exceptional. I think at that point, we were certainly trying to go forward, still try to win the game for him, because that's what we're going to do. I think Auggie Gianaris just had an incredible work rate to do his part as a center (midfielder).

"Again, the season is what it is," Heiderscheid said. "It's a space we take each game, so at this point, we go, we just try within a day to talk and get ourselves organized again, because in two days, you've gotta play Alton. Then we get a weekend to go sort things out, since we're on break, which is greatly not helpful. But then, we come back after the weekend, we've got a tough slate of games the next week, so we see how things go there. But again, it's a season to be played. I think that it's a much more different season, obviously, in the spring, and it's a half of one. But we just try to get something out of it for the kids, and so, I think that's how we have to continue to approach this."





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)