



Curry Throws For Three Touchdowns, Brnfre, Larson Both Score Twice, Defense Shuts Down Champaign Central Offense

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Sophomore quarterback Jake Curry threw for three touchdowns, receiver Kellen Brnfre and running back De'Shawn Larson each scored twice and the Edwardsville defense totally shut down Champaign Central's offense, forcing three turnovers as the Tigers won their home opener football game over the Maroons 48-0 at Tiger Stadium.

Edwardsville built up a 41-0 lead at halftime, allowing many of the younger players a chance to play in the second half, and Tiger coach Matt Martin couldn't have been any prouder of his reserves.

"Yeah, isn't it?" Martin said when asked about seeing many orange helmets on the field instead of the varsity's black helmets. "You know, a lot of those kids are scout team kids that work just as hard as anyone else, and when they get a chance to play, it's fun for the whole team and the coaching staff."

The Tigers played outstandingly in the first half, building up their lead and allowing the younger kids a chance to play.

"First drive, we had a turnover; that was disappointing," Martin said. "But for the most part, both sides of the ball executed."

Curry had a great first half, and Martin feels that his potential is there.

"Yeah, and you know, like I said, you see the potential in him," Martin said, "you see his playmaking ability, you see his poise for a young guy. At the same time, sometimes, you say 'yeah, he's a sophomore' and he does sophomore things. He'll continue to get better."





The Tigers' execution led to many of their big plays on the night, which is one of the keys for the team.

"Yeah, we feel like we've been our own worst enemy all year," Martin said. "No disrespect to anybody else, but we felt like we've left yardage and points on the board."

The defense played exceptionally well all evening, shutting down the Maroons offensively and not allowing them to get untracked.

"Yeah, I hope I see on film that all 11 guys were getting the ball," Martin said, "because we didn't do that last week. And I want to see where all 11 guys were getting to the ball."

A standout on defense for the Tigers was James Distaso-Hutchins, who's the backup quarterback and is also a defensive end who played very well on the night.

"Yeah, you know what? James is trying to make the transition to play some defensive end," Martin said. "He's got a long way to go, but his head and heart are in the right place, so he'll make quick improvements."

Both teams recovered fumbles in the opening two possessions, but after the Tigers got the ball back from Central, it didn't take long for them to score. Curry took the ball on a keeper 40 yards for the opening touchdown that made the score 7-0 after Chase Parker's conversion. On the next Maroon possession, Evan Holderer intercepted a Cody Brown

pass to put Edwardsville in business at their own 37. It only took the Tigers three plays to score, as Larson took the ball 55 yards up the middle to put the Tigers up 14-0 after the conversion,

After a Central punt went out of bounds on their own 26, the Tigers again took advantage of the short field to score as Curry tossed a 26-yard pass to Brnfre in the end zone to give Edwardsville a 21-0 lead at the end of the first quarter. On the next possession, the Tigers again took advantage of a short field, as Curry passed 20 yards to Jordan Bush for another touchdown at the start of the second quarter to give Edwardsville a 28-0 advantage.

The next drive was one of their longest of the game, taking six plays to go 39 yards in exactly two minutes, as Bush gained 19 yards on the drive. Curry passed 13 yards to Beau Brandt to the Central one, where Curry took it in himself to give the Tigers a 34-0 lead after missing the extra point.



The Tiger defense came up with a blocked punt deep in Maroon territory on the next possession, setting the ball up at the Central three, where Curry passed to Brnfre in the end zone once again to make the score 41-0 at halftime, setting up the running clock for the second half.

On the opening possession of the second half, with the ball on the Central 10, Larson ran for nine yards, but fumbled the ball at the one. No problem whatsoever, as Larson recovered the ball in the end zone for the final Tiger touchdown to make it 48-0. The Edwardsville defense then shut down the Maroons the rest of the way to make the final 48-0 score.

The Tigers are now 2-1 and open Southwestern Conference play next Friday at O'Fallon, the scene of their epic 43-40 double overtime win this past spring. The big win will give Edwardsville a confidence boost heading into the game against the Panthers, but Martin also knows there's still plenty of work ahead for his team.

"What I'm trying to do is get us to play 48 minutes of high-quality football," Martin said. "And learn to practice hard every day of the week. That's still a challenge for us. I talk to the kids about it. We have growing up to do if we want to beat some of those conference schools, and we're going to have to continue to work."





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