

Erber's Brace, Solid Defensive Effort Allows Edwardsville To Advance In Regional With 3-0 Win Over Belleville West, Play O'Fallon In Final

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EDWARDSVILLE - A brace (two goals) from Wyatt Erber, along with a solid defensive effort that limited Belleville West's opportunities, helped give Edwardsville a 3-0 win over the Maroons in the first semifinal of the IHSA Class 3A regional tournament Tuesday evening at Tiger Stadium.

The Tigers played very well in their postseason opener and advanced to the final on Saturday afternoon against O'Fallon, a 3-1 winner over Granite City in the second semifinal.

"It went well," said Edwardsville head coach Mark Heiderscheid. "I thought the players did a good job of moving the ball, and especially in the second half, we did a good job of connecting the ball. I do think we did a good job, and in the second half, we were able to do a good job defensively, and we were able to get Nathan Beck the clean sheet."

Ben Loftus scored the opening goal early on, where he was able to beat a defender and got a good shot past the West goalkeeper into the back of the net to give Edwardsville a 1-0 lead.

"It was very good," Heiderscheid said, "because he was able to beat the guy with pace, got up into the box and smashed it home. It was a very good goal."

Erber's brace came in the second half, and both were of similar design. On the first goal, Erber went through the middle, took a good ball, went in and slotted the ball home to give the Tigers a 2-0 lead. The second goal was virtually the same as the first.

"It was a carbon copy," Heiderscheid said. "He got the ball in the middle and slots it home."

The Tigers clamped down defensively on the West attack, rarely allowing a chance as Edwardsville took the win and advanced to the final.

Edwardsville is now 15-3-3 and advances to Saturday's final, where they'll face the Panthers in the rubber match, both teams splitting their Southwestern Conference matches this season. Heiderscheid expects a very good challenge from O'Fallon for the title.

"They come in with a lot of energy and spirit," Heiderscheid said, "and they're a very difficult opponent to play against. We'll definitely have to be very prepared."



