

All-Stars showcase skills at East Alton Ice Arena

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EAST ALTON – For a time, it looked as though the Mississippi Valley Club Hockey Association's Class 2A North Division All-Stars were going to run their South Division brethren right out of the rink.

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A six-goal first-period blitz, plus stellar goaltending by Alton's Tyler St. Peters, gave the Northerners a 6-0 lead through the first 17 minutes. The Southerners bounced back to make a game of it, but in the end, the North Division took a 7-3 win in the Class 2A All-Star Game at East Alton Ice Arena Monday night.

Edwardsville, who went unbeaten in the regular season and had nine representatives on the team, saw its' stellar duo of Tyler Hinterser and Tyler Schaffer combine for five goals and two assists in the win, with Hinterser scoring three of the North goals, and while Tiger coach Jason Walker, who coached the Northern side, was thrilled with his side having so many players on the team, he also was happy just to see the players have a chance to show their skills.

"It's a thrill to see the players who usually play against each other during the season get together and play with each other," Walker said. "They all played hard and played great. Seeing them get together and interact with each other, seeing them get their jerseys – it's great to see. The (MVCHA) does a good job of putting this together."

Despite falling behind early, South coach Pat Culiberk of Triad recognized the score wasn't as bad as it looked. "It looked like a rough start, but it was much better than it looked," Culiberk said.

St. Peters' goaltending was a part of that; the Alton netminder made several dazzling stops to keep the South at bay in the first period. "We adjusted after that," Culiberk said. "Guys adapted to what was going on and kept going hard. We had a lot of determination from our guys out there."

The North wasted no time getting on the board as Hinterser scored on O'Fallon's Brendan Johnson just 30 seconds into the game with an assist from Alton's Alex Rubin to put them ahead 1-0. Forty-five seconds later, Collinsville's Kodee Keys unassisted to put the North up 2-0.

Play settled down for a bit, but Schaffer solved Johnson after taking a feed from Edwardsville teammate Justin Warta to up the lead to 3-0 at 8:59 of the session. Nearly four minutes later, Hinterser scored again, with Rubin and Schaffer getting assists, then Schaffer, with help from Hinterser and Rubin, made it 5-0 with 3:34 left in the first. Collinsville's Jacob Scrum capped off the explosion with 2:21 left in the first on assists from Edwardsville's Shaun Raftery and Alton's Jake Bohn.

The second period started out quietly, but the South finally got on the board when O'Fallon's Graham Sudduth beat the goalie with an assist from Belleville's Jack Langen, to cut the lead to 6-1 at 7:27. Later in the period, Triad's Kyle Culiberk took a pass from

Belleville's Brendan Kowalski with 1:20 left in the second to make it 6-2 in the North's favor.

Just a minute into the third period, Belleville's Anthony Pellegrino halved the lead on when O'Fallon's Nicholas Mueller found Pellegrino and beat Edwardsville's Justin Nosser to make it 6-3, but Hinterser got the hat trick on an unassisted effort with 56 seconds left to close out the scoring.

The South outshot the North 39-36; there were no penalties called in the game.

The league's Class 1A All-Stars will get their chance to show their skills when the East and West divisions clash at 7:15 pm tonight at East Alton. The MVCHA Playoffs begin Thursday night with four games – Jersey vs. Granite City followed by Alton vs. Collinsville at East Alton and O'Fallon vs. Belleville followed by Edwardsville's 1A team vs. Highland at Granite City.

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