

Miller Scores In Fourth Minute, Baker Strikes In 70th Minute, Alton Wins At Edwardsville 2-0 In SWC Girls Soccer Match, Runs Record To 9-1-0

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Lyndsey Miller put home a rebound in the fourth minute, then Emily Baker slotted home off a great through ball after 70 minutes to give Alton a 2-0 girls soccer win at Edwardsville in a Southwestern Conference match Thursday night at Tiger Stadium.

The win at Edwardsville was the first for the Redbirds for 15 years at Tiger Stadium and Alton head coach Gwen Sabo-Howland was very happy after the match.

"I feel good," Sabo said. "My first season here, in 2019, we beat them, but it was a home game. I don't think we've won here in quite some time, so anytime to pick up a conference win, it's huge, but especially away on the road. And with this being our third game of the week, our legs were heavy, the girls were tired. But I'm really proud of everybody for pushing through and getting that 2-0 shutout."

Edwardsville played very well, having the better of the play after the first 10 minutes, creating very good chances, but couldn't score, while the Redbirds were able to cash in on their opportunities. The Redbird defense and goalie Peyton Baker also came up big when called upon.

"Definitely," Sabo-Howland said. "Our girls just constantly push, even though we were up with the one goal, they weren't satisfied with that and they're constantly pushing for

the second. And luckily, we got that to kind of settle the game down even more. Definitely proud of the whole team's defensive effort, especially our center backs, Peyton Baker in goal, they killed it."

Alton is now off to a 9-1-0 start, their best one in many years, and Sabo hopes that the team keeps the momentum going well.

"Exactly," Sabo-Howland said. "This is a special group this year and so far, we've been able to rise to every occasion and get the results that we need. So we just have to continue that momentum as we look forward to Belleville East next week."

The Redbirds got a very early goal in the fourth minute, starting with Emily Baker taking a ball and breaking in on goal. Her initial shot was saved nicely by Kaitlyn Naney in the Tiger goal, but Miller was in the right place at the right time, and calmly right-footed the ball into the net to give Alton a 1-0 lead.

The Tigers then started to have the better of the play after the first 10 minutes, having good opportunities, with Olivia Baca just missing on a chance on a shot that went over the top in the 17th minute, then Payton Federmann had a glorious chance that banged off the bar in the 21st that kept the score 1-0. The Redbird defense continued to hold strong as the two teams went into the interval with Alton still on top 1-0.

Baca had two more chances in the 47th and 51st minutes, with the first chance just going past the near post, and the second chance again going wide after Peyton Baker came off her line and the ball came out to Baca, who had a great chance at the open net.

Lily Freer had a wonderful chance in the 62nd minute, but Naney covered up her shot to keep things at 1-0. In the 70th minute, Emily Baker broke through on a nice through ball and calmly slotted the ball into the back of the net to double the Alton lead to 2-0. The Alton defense then played solidly to cut down the Tigers' chances as the Redbirds came away with the three points.

Alton is now 9-1-0 and is at Belleville East next Tuesday and Belleville West on April 14, with both games starting at 6:45 p.m., then host Triad April 16, also at 6:45 p.m. The Tigers go to 3-5-0 and play Incarnate Word Academy of north St. Louis County Friday at St. Joseph's Academy at 5:30 p.m., then go up against St. Joe's Saturday morning at 11:30 a.m and Wentzville, Mo., Liberty at 3:30 p.m.



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