

Edwardsville Girls Soccer Defeats O'Fallon For First Time This Season In Sectional Semifinals

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE – How’s the old saying go? The third time’s a charm?

The Edwardsville High School girls soccer team lost to the O’Fallon Panthers twice in the regular season. They fell 5-1 back on March 24th and 2-1 on May 3rd.

The two met again in the sectional semifinals at Collinsville Tuesday night in what shaped up to be an instant classic.

Not only did Edwardsville win, but they also shutout O’Fallon by a score of 2-0 and picked up their sixth straight win. Their last loss was against the Panthers almost three weeks ago.

Edwardsville head coach Abby Federmann spoke about the progression of her team against O’Fallon.

“We needed to change just one thing every time we played them to just get a little bit closer to beating them,” Federmann said after the win.

She also gave plenty of credit to O’Fallon and recognized their potent attack.

“If they would have scored on us, this whole thing would’ve changed and been a different story because they would have been on fire,” she said.

The Panthers didn’t score, but junior forward Olivia Baca did. Twice.

Her first came in the 11th minute of the game and helped settle what little nerves the Tigers may have had. The goal came off of a half breakaway attempt. She beat the one defender in her way and then rocketed the ball into the back of the net. This one of course ended up being the game-winner which is her fifth of the year.

She was just getting started though. Baca struck again in the 25th minute. She ran onto a through ball and once again beat a defender with her tremendous speed before chipping the keeper and going side-netting to double the Tigers lead.

Those goals were her 21st and 22nd of the season which leads her team.

Edwardsville led at halftime, but O’Fallon gave it everything they had coming out into the second half.

The Panthers had a quality chance a couple minutes in when a cross came in, but the Panthers headed it over the bar.

They had another opportunity in the 58th minute off of another cross. This one came in from the corner kick toward the back post and was headed back toward the center of the six-yard box. It bounced off an Edwardsville player hitting the inside of the crossbar but somehow staying out of the goal. That was the Panthers best attempt of the game thus far.

The Tigers’ defense held strong for the final 20 minutes and managed to pick up the shutout against the best team in the Southwestern Conference.

With the loss O’Fallon ends their season with a 20-2 record, with their only other loss coming against Triad earlier this month.

The Tigers move up to 14-8 and pick up their seventh shutout of the season. A huge help and making 13 saves when she was called upon was senior goalkeeper Kaitlyn Naney. She’s been solid as a rock down the stretch and into these playoffs.

The Tigers have a chance to win a Sectional Championship this Friday and inch closer to making an appearance at state.

Edwardsville got their payback against the Panthers and will now move on to the sectional championship game on Friday May 27th. They'll take on Normal Community High School in Normal at 5 p.m.

The Tigers can say they're in the 'Super Sixteen' and Federmann said it's like a clean slate after getting out of the conference.

"It's a clean slate now," Federmann said. "We got out of the conference, out against the teams we've played once, twice, three times and now we can start over and keep this momentum going forward with somebody we know nothing about and I'm okay with that."

Federmann and the Edwardsville Tigers can't wait to continue their postseason.

"A chance now to win the sectional title. I'm super excited," Federmann finished with.



