Tigers Open Preseason Football Practice On Positive Note, Martin Feels Team Has Great Potential

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
August 9 2022 12:03 PM





SEE PHOTO GALLERY:

EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High football team opened preseason practice on Monday morning at the Edwardsville Sports Complex on a positive note as turnout was very good and the players worked hard as the Tigers begin preparations for the 2022 season.

What started out as a fairly cool but overcast morning turned into a sunny and warm day; nevertheless, the Tiger players began by relearning techniques and drills that they'll be using during the season.

"A lot of good," Tiger head coach Matt Martin said about opening day. "You kind of go backwards from the summer a little bit, you go back, you revisit a lot of the fundamentals. You reteach a lot of technique, drills, assignments, things like that. I thought the kids did a good job."

Coach Martin felt that the summer season went well for Edwardsville and he thinks the Tigers are in a better place than at this time last year as the team went 5-5 and lost in the first round of the playoffs to South Elgin 24-13 on a rainy night in Chicagoland.

"It went well," Martin said. "I thought the kids were pretty committed. The ones who wanted to be here worked hard, they got better. I think we're in a better place at this point than we were last year, so I think we've improved."

Martin feels that the Tigers have the potential to achieve great things in the 2022 season, which will include the usual games against the Southwestern Conference schools such as East St. Louis, Alton and O'Fallon, along with games against Highland, St. Louis Soldan and CBC to conclude the regular season.

"Yeah, I think this team has the potential," Martin said. "We're not ready for the season, we've got a lot of work to do, we've got to get better, we've got to get more consistent, we've got to tougher, we've got to get into better shape, all those things. But where we're at right now is pretty good. We've just got to continue to get better."



Martin also felt that his linemen stood out on the day, and singled out a couple of players who worked hard on the first day.

"I was mainly with the (offensive) line and (defensive) line," Martin said, "but I think Iose (Epenesa) always comes ready to work, I think Brett Moss always comes ready to work. I thought they looked good."

Prep work will continue throughout the week for the Tigers as the team prepares for the opener on Aug. 26 at Jackson, Mo., a traditional power in Southeast Missouri.

"Absolutely," Martin said. "We'll have a tough opener. Jackson High is a very good program. They've got a strong tradition, they're well-coached, so we've got to match that or be better."

Overall, Martin was very glad to be back with his players, and also thinks that the Tigers are ready to work hard to achieve all of their goals for the new season.

"Yes," Martin said. "One of the worst things in coaching is when you feel like you're working harder or you want it more than the kids. I don't feel like that with this group. I feel like they want to be good."



Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.