

# Redbirds' Boys Soccer Open Season With Big Tournament Win

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
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ALTON - The Alton High School boys soccer team kicked off their season with a big 6-0 win over the visiting Springfield Southeast Thursday night (August 25) at Public School Stadium.

The start time was originally scheduled for 6:30 p.m. but after a heat delay and then another rain delay in the game prior, the Redbirds didn't get things going until about 7:45 p.m.

It didn't matter though; they were still rolling on all cylinders. Not only did they put in six goals, but they didn't allow any either, something head coach Tyler Hamilton was super proud of postgame.

"It's something we preach every day at practice," he said. "Doesn't matter if we score goals, we have to keep them out of the back of our net too."

The score line was huge to instill some confidence in the team as they wrap up play in the Redbird Round Robin Tournament on Saturday.

Things got underway relatively quickly for the Redbirds. An own goal by Springfield in the opening 10 minutes gave Alton the lead, and they never turned back.

They doubled their lead in the 17<sup>th</sup> minute when a shot bounced off the post and trickled in.

In the 36<sup>th</sup> minute sophomore Dillan Cowan made it 3-0 when his shot from about 25 yards out deflected off a defender and moved its way past Springfield's keeper. That's how things stood heading into the halftime break.

There wasn't another goal for about 25 minutes, but then three of them came back-to-back-to-back within 120 seconds. Sophomore Jack Lombardi snagged a goal when he let a shot rip from around 30 yards that ended up toward the top corner of the net. Then, not even a minute later, junior Logan Rynders chipped it over the goalie to make it 5-0 in the 65<sup>th</sup> minute.

The final goal came from senior Ashton Scheppers who took advantage of a breakaway situation from the half-field line. He only had the keeper to beat, and he did so with ease to make it 6-0 in the 66<sup>th</sup> minute.

Senior goalkeeper Aiden Belchik picked up the first shutout of his high school career for the Redbirds and wasn't called upon very much in this game.

Alton will continue to play in this tournament on Saturday when they take on Jersey. That game is currently scheduled for 10 a.m. but they were talking about the possibility of moving the games up earlier.

Either way, Hamilton says that this tournament is "huge" for his team. "It's super important we keep moving in the right direction every game," he said.

Alton begins play in the Southwestern Conference on Tuesday.

