



Edwardsville Faces Traditional Southeast Missouri Power In Jackson On Road

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville Tigers face a formidable opponent on Friday night as they travel to Jackson, Mo., to face the Indians, a traditional power in southeast Missouri, in a 7 p.m. kickoff to open the 2022 IHSA football season.

The Tigers are coming off a 5-5 campaign in 2021, making the playoffs once again but losing in the first round of Class 8A at South Elgin 24-13 on a rainy night. And Edwardsville is ready for the season opener.

"We had a good week of practice," said Tigers head coach Matt Martin. "We prepared as well as we could."

Jackson was 12-1 in 2021, going to the Missouri Class 5 semifinals before losing to Webb City 35-21. They were the Class 5 champions in 2020 and both Martin and his players know the challenge that lies ahead.

"They a quality team, a quality program," Martin said. "This will be a good challenge for us to start the season."

To have success against the Indians, Edwardsville will need to do several things well.

"I think we have to be a better tackling team," Martin said. "I think we have to make plays on special teams and I think we have to have a balanced attack on offense. And we have to win the turnover battle."

The Tigers have several players returning from last year's campaign, and they've all worked hard to overcome last year's disappointing season.

"I think we have some guys that were part of last year," Martin said, "and they've worked hard not to experience last year again."

The opener couldn't have come at a better time, either, as the Tigers are raring to play a game after pre-season practice.

"Obviously, we're at the point where we've got to start playing other people to get better," Martin said. "You can only get better so much by practicing against each other."

The Tigers are ready to go and see where they stand to start the season and see where their strengths lie and what they need to work on.

"We're really excited to get going and see where we're at," Martin said.

Edwardsville returns home a week from tonight against Highland.

