

McGinnis' Brace In Extra Time Puts Tigers Into Sectional Final With 2-0 Win Over O'Fallon, Edwardsville Meets Joliet West For Title

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COLLINSVILLE - Colin McGinnis had a brace (two goals) in extra time to pull Edwardsville to a 2-0 win over O'Fallon in the semifinal of the IHSA Class 3A boys soccer Moline sectional Wednesday evening at Kahok Stadium in Collinsville.

The win put the Tigers into the final on Friday night in Moline against Joliet West, who defeated the host Maroons 2-1 at Moline also on Wednesday night. That match was postponed due to the heavy rains that went through the state on Tuesday.



Edwardsville was able to pick up the intensity during the second half and moved the ball very well, getting many good opportunities, and kept the momentum going into extra time, breaking through late in the first half of extra time for the goal that would give them the match.

"Yeah, I think there were stages where we moved it and I think there were times it was just very difficult," said Tigers' head coach Mark Heiderscheid, "because O'Fallon, I thought, brought so much energy, that they battled very hard.

"I think that they're a team that, when you look at the start of the season to now, there were moments when they were looking at a .500 record and then, when you look at their

time at the end of the season, they were such a better team and that's really a credit to the O'Fallon players, honestly. They were able to win the game in overtime against East, they made it a battle with us, and they picked up a conference win late in the year. They just were so much better, so for us to be able to construct some stuff like that was quite good."

Heiderscheid also talked about a couple of chances in regulation that the Tigers almost scored on, but were foiled, one in particular that Panther goalie Rohan Jacob made an incredible save on.

"I think we had a couple of good chances, because McGinnis, he almost had a (hat trick) had he scored early in the game on the one ball that was right inside the six; he just couldn't quite pull it off," Heiderscheid said. "We had another one where (Jacob) tips the one that was quite well-saved," referring to a brilliant flick-on header by Axton Anom that Jacob somehow tipped over the bar to keep the match scoreless.

"At the same time, (Zach) Chitwood came up big for us," Heiderscheid also said. "But I think McGinnis, he's a born scorer, even though he's had to come late for us in the season. But now, it's nice to have him, and so he gets on that back post, knocks it. And on this one, you think he's taking 1-0, hey man, let's protect the lead. But he gets the ball there and I think he has thought of it's late and then, 'I'm right on the goal and I think I can finish it on this guy,' and so he does it and buries it, because a 2-0 game in overtime, it's just really over at that point."

Both sides played very hard and well, a credit to both the Tigers and Panthers, for the entire 100 minutes.

"Yeah, I think so," Heiderscheid said, "because O'Fallon, I couldn't give them any more credit for what, I think again, they started, where it was a tough struggle. And out here, their energy, their fighting spirit was nothing short of amazing, and so, you have to have the deepest respect. They would have been a good representative. And I'll be honest, we were very, very fortunate to come away with this because I thought the effort that they brought was very much equal to ours and they created chances that could have gone for them as well."

Both teams had good chances in the opening 20 minutes, particularly the effort by McGinnis that Jacob was able to stop to keep the match scoreless. In the 34th minute, Berik Selberg had a great chance, but his shot went over the top, which was followed up by O'Fallon's Nate Koenig, who also had a chance that went over the bar in the 35th minute. The match remained scoreless at halftime.

In the second half, the Panthers scored what appeared to be the breakout goal off a scramble in front, with Chitwood making a big save and the rebound knocked home. After the referee discussed the situation with one of his assistants on the sideline, he waved off the goal and gave Edwardsville a free kick in front. It seemed to spark the Tigers, whose intensity then picked up and moved the ball around to create good opportunities. In the 50th minute, the Panthers had a good chance that was ruled offside, with Koenig's name going into the referee's notebook.

Both teams continued to have good chances leading to the 71st minute, when Jacob made the save of the night off Anom's brilliant flick-on header on a corner to the Tigers, Jacob just getting his hand on the ball to tip it over, keeping things scoreless. Edwardsville had one last opportunity in the 78th minute, but a free kick on a severe angle off a handball went past the post as regulation expired, the match still scoreless, forcing 20 minutes of extra time.

The Tigers got the breakthrough goal in the 90th minute, right before the end of the first half of extra time when, on a corner, the ball went through to McGinnis, who first-timed it past Jacob into the back of the net to give the Tigers a 1-0 lead.

In the second half of extra time, Carter Breuchaud's bid to bring the scores level just went over the bar and in the 99th minute, McGinnis took a through ball with O'Fallon having gone forward in search of the equalizer to force a penalty shootout, went in on goal and scored to give the Tigers their 2-0 win.



