



# **Electrifying Wide Receiver Daion Gaston Has Big Playoff Opener With 4 TDs, Is iCAN Clinic Male Athlete Of Month For EHS**

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O'FALLON - Senior wide receiver Daion Gaston had a big game in Edwardsville's 43-36 win in the first round of the IHSA Class 8A football playoffs on Oct. 29 at OTHS Panther Stadium, catching three touchdown passes from quarterback Jake Curry and taking a kickoff back 85 yards for another touchdown to help the Tigers advance to the second round.



It was a very happy Tiger sideline when the time ran out, and like his teammates and coaches, Gaston was ecstatic after the game.

"I'm feeling great right now," Gaston said during a postgame interview. "I'm just happy we get to move on to round two in the playoffs."

Gaston is an iCAN Clinic Male Athlete of the Month for the Tigers.

Gaston also talked about his kickoff return for the touchdown, which gave the Tigers the lead back at 21-14 with 8:51 remaining in the second quarter.

"I'm feeling good," Gaston said. "I just saw that hole and I cut it back and I was gone. I know that last game (against CBC), it was like three times I could have returned the kicks and I knew I had a chance to return one this game."

The second touchdown pass Gaston caught was also a thing of beauty, as he took a throw from Curry, faked a defender out with a brilliant spin move, and went off to the races on a 53-yard play for a touchdown that put the Tigers up at the time 28-20.

"I caught the ball, made the juke move and they don't make the tackle," Gaston said, "and I saw daylight and have to go to school."

It was a big play in a game full of big plays, and it's been part of a breakout season for Gaston, who's emerged as a dependable receiver and return specialist for the Tigers. The playoffs are always a time to shine the brightest.

"Yes, it is," Gaston said. "It's a great start. Big-time players make big-time plays in big-time games."

The Tigers advance to a second-round game at Tiger Stadium this weekend against Wilmette Loyola Academy, a 42-7 winner over Plainfield South in their first-round game on Oct. 29. Gaston knows what Edwardsville will need to do to defeat the Ramblers and move on to the quarterfinals.

"I feel great," Gaston said. "We've just got to go out there, play all four quarters like we did and we'll be on to round three."

Gaston also took time to praise the Tigers' defense, who came up big when needed to take the win over the Panthers.

"I'm happy for the defense," Gaston said. "They brought it. They did it. I know last game, they had a struggle. In this game, of communication, they gave it their all. We won," Gaston said with a big smile.