

Miller's Brace Leads Redbirds To Regular Season Finale Win

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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BELLEVILLE - The Lady Redbirds finished up their regular season with a win over Southwestern Conference foe Belleville East.

Alton won 3-0 thanks to sophomore Lyndsey Miller's brace and senior striker Emily Baker's shot.

Miller found the back of the net in the first half from an outstanding effort from about 25 yards out that soared into the upper corner. The game went into halftime 1-0, but head coach Gwen Sabo said the game should never have been that close.

The goal was Alton's first shot of the game.

"They just weren't mentally tuned in," Sabo said about some first half jitters.

"Very slow to start. I think it was hard for the girls to mentally get into it with us playing first, we're not used to that."

With impending storms scheduled to head through the Metro-East area Thursday evening, the varsity game was moved up to 5 p.m. while JV played after.

Sabo said that her team didn't even arrive to the field until 4:30 p.m. with just a half hour to warm up.

The Redbirds sorted themselves out at halftime and came back onto the field and doubled the lead thanks to Emily Baker scoring her 19th goal of the season.

The Lancers had a glaring opportunity saved midway through the second half. Alton had a hand ball inside the box that led to an East penalty kick. Alton senior goalkeeper Peyton Baker guessed the right way and made a big time save.

"That was big for us, because at that point it would have made it 2-1, and they're right back in it," Sabo said. "Peyton came up huge there."

The save sparked some momentum in Alton which led to the third and final goal from Miller. Her tally is up to six goals now on the season.

With O'Fallon already locking up the Southwestern Conference title, Thursday's game sort of didn't matter much, but sort of did at the same time.

That's because these two teams will play each other again in just a few day in the Regional Semifinals.

Alton, earning the No. 4 seed in the Edwardsville Sub-Sectional will play the No. 6 seeded Lancers at O'Fallon on Tuesday, May 16 at 7 p.m.