

McLean Scores With 23.7 Seconds Left: Edwardsville Takes 1-0 Soccer Win Over O'Fallon

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EDWARDSVILLE - Liam McLean scored with 23.7 seconds left before going into extra time, and that goal allowed Edwardsville to come away with a hard-fought 1-0 win over O'Fallon in a Southwestern Conference match Tuesday evening at Tiger Stadium.

The win allowed the Tigers to improve to 4-0 in the league, moving a half-game ahead of the Panthers, who are now 4-1 in the conference, and it was a hard-fought fight to the finish on Tuesday night.

"Well, I mean, kind of bittersweet," said Edwardsville coach Mark Heiderscheid when asked about his feelings in his post-match interview. "It was a tough play on the goal, because it's one of those where, maybe, it could have been a foul called against us, and we score. So I think that one is a tough one for me, because I always try and respect the opponent.

"So, I think with that, it's good to get the win, but I feel for them, just for that reason. The flip side of that is we had a lot of good chances. I thought we might have had an opportunity to get one at the penalty spot, too, to be fair. But that is what it is on that one."

Heiderscheid did think the Tigers had the better of both the play and the opportunities, but couldn't convert, especially at key times of the match.

"I think we had all sorts of territory and possession the second half," Heiderscheid said, "so that boded well for us. I would rather have some of those go in earlier," he said with a laugh, "instead of one of those things where, maybe, it was a tough play on their part and sometimes, they could have gotten a call on that goal. But again, I was kind of hoping we would have a (penalty kick) five or six minutes earlier; it didn't happen.

"I would be OK with that. I think we just had a lot of shots miss. There would have to had been maybe six or seven where i was hopeful that we could finish and for whatever reason, didn't. I guess the coup de grace was when (Colin) McGinnis headed the one ball in the first half and our own players kind of knocked it off the line for him," he said with a hearty chuckle. "Just happened to have both strikers in the way. Otherwise, McGinnis heads it, it's going to be in the goal."

Nonetheless, Heiderscheid felt that the Tigers played well and gave a great effort for the entire 80 minutes.

"But you know what? You've got to admire the effort of the kids," he said.

"I think that's one where O'Fallon also worked very hard. They would have been a deserving team, I think, in this one. And so, I hate to have too much exuberance, given the fact I thought that O'Fallon played their hearts out and stuff. So I have to give them due respect, really, and the would have been a deserved team to win a game as well. And it's late in the game, we just happened to knock it into a moment."

The Tigers did have a pair of corner kicks to start off, but both went awry and for the first 10 minutes, it was an evenly played game, with both sides having chances. The game got a bit chippy in the middle of the period, with the referee showing the yellow card six times, four to the Tigers, but the bookings didn't deter either team.

McGinnis had a solid chance at the half-hour, breaking in on goal, but his shot was stopped nicely to keep the match scoreless. Before the end of the half, both Nate Loftus and later McLean had great opportunities that failed to click at the teams entered the half 0-0.

Edwardsville began to assert itself more in the second half, having the better of the play, but nothing to show for it. But in the 55th minute, the Panthers had a free kick from just outside the box, which was cleared nicely. As time was starting to wind down, Evan Moore had a glorious opportunity to go by the boards when he couldn't get his shot off, thanks to solid defense by the Panthers.

Finally, in the 80th minute off a scramble in front of the O'Fallon goal, McLean gathered the ball in and sent a low shot into the bottom left corner of the net to give the Tigers the 1-0 win.

The Panthers are now 6-2, with the Tigers going to 7-2 and will host Belleville West Thursday night in a 6:30 p.m. kickoff, then are at Marquette Catholic Saturday at 11 a. m., then host Collinsville Sept. 19 and Alton Sept. 21 in 6:30 p.m. starts.





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)