

# Edwardsville Dominates Glen Ellyn Glenbard West 34-14 In Second Round Of Playoffs

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High football team scored on all five of its possessions in the first half in taking a 34-14 halftime lead in going on to a 48-14 win over Glen Ellyn Glembar West in a second-round IHSA Class 8A playoff football game on a very pleasant Saturday afternoon at Tiger Stadium.

The Tigers advance to the quarterfinals for the first time since 2018 and will go on the road against Elmhurst York, a 17-14 winner over LaGrange Lyons Township on Saturday evening, next weekend.

Edwardsville got off to a fast start against the Hilltoppers, taking only five plays to score their first two touchdowns, then after allowing a kickoff return for a touchdown and a recovery on an on-side kick by West, kept on going and struck early and often.

"We talk about trying to start fast, and I think we did that today," said Tigers' head coach Kelsey Pickering. "On both sides of the ball, we came out, we were able to get a stop, get down and score. So I think anytime we can start fast, any team that can start fast, it's going to go well. We just start with good momentum, we had good flow, and I don't think we turned the ball over. We won the turnover battle; that's a positive and something we've been focused on this week. Just anytime we can start fast, limit the turnovers, we've got a chance. That's a heck of a team over there."



The fumble recovery by Clarence Stewart on the second play following a recovered on-side kick helped to change the momentum of the game at a key time, with West threatening to come back after falling behind 14-0.

"They did a great job of trying to swing the momentum," Pickering said. "Fortunately, things went our way there. Noah (Ramirez) got a good strip there, and obviously, we were able to change that momentum real fast for, which is good for us."

Both the running and passing games were highly effective for Edwardsville on the day.





"Again - I hate to sound like a broken record each week," Pickering said with a laugh, "but again, when we can hit that way with the run and passing and we keep a balance, you have to defend both. Somebody can take away one, and if we can't execute the other. But today, we were able to stay in that offensive run and pass. It's just such a good flow."

Senior quarterback Jake Curry has had an exceptional season for the Tigers thus far, and has stepped up in the postseason, leading the team to their quarterfinal berth, as has the entire senior class this season.

"You know what? You're right about Jake," Pickering said, "And I think, really, I label the senior class that same way. That senior group has been through so much together, They spend time with each other, it's important to them. And they really lead that program right now. Jake's the one who everyone talks about, since he's the quarterback. There is no doubt he's throwing the ball, running the ball. He's doing so much. But I think he really embodies our senior class."

The Tigers started the game by holding the Hilltoppers to a three-and-out, then took only three plays after the punt to take the lead. Curry hit Joey DeMare with a pass good for 49 yards deep into West territory, then the two connected again with an eight-yard touchdown pass with 8:33 left in the quarter to make it 7-0. On the next possession,

Steven Moore, Jr. took a handoff and raced 49 yards down the sideline for another touchdown to make it 14-0 for Edwardsville.

Mason Ellens then took the ensuing kickoff back 77 yards for the first West touchdown, but the point after missed, leaving the score 14-6. The Hilltoppers then recovered an on-side kick at the Edwardsville 44, but two plays later, Stewart had the key fumble recovery at the Tiger 44. From there, Edwardsville took 16 plays to go 56 yards in 3:58, with Curry hitting Zach Williams on the first play for 27 yards, later on running for 14 more for a key first down. Curry ended the drive himself by going in from the one to make the score 21-6.

Undaunted, West went 78 yards in 16 plays, with Ben Cesario going in from one yard out, then scoring a successful two-point convert to cut the Tiger lead to 21-14. The Tigers scored again on the next possession when Patrick Chism swept right and went 21 yards for the touchdown that made the score 28-14. Late in the first half, after a great punt return by Michael Hedge was taken back after an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty, Curry hit Chism for 20 yards to take the ball to the one, where Curry finished the drive himself with a sneak over the goal line to give the Tigers a 34-14 halftime lead after the conversion kick was blocked.

In the second half, Curry hit Kaylon Bursey from 21 yards out for another touchdown to make the score 41-14, and after an interception by Drew Smith that took the ball to the Hilltoppers' five, Javion Smith went two yards up the middle to make the final score 48-14.

Glenbard West ends its season at 8-3, while the Tigers go to 10-1, their first 10-win season since 2016, and travel to play York in next week's quarterfinal game. Pickering gave credit to his players and coaching staff for the achievement.

"That's a tribute to our assistants and our kids," Pickering said. "I don't look at any at that stuff, because we are a team, we are a program. We've got great assistants and great kids."





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