

"Puck Hungry" Redbirds Skate Past EAWR

by Nathan Tucker, Sports Reporter
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EAST ALTON - A packed East Alton Ice Arena welcomed two of the teams that call it home on Monday night when the Alton Redbirds took on the East Alton-Wood River Oilers in MVCHA action.

Alton came in looking to continue a strong start to the season, and pick up a third win. The Oilers came in seeking their first win, and left still seeking it, after falling to the Redbirds 4-1.

“It’s a better game all around,” said Alton head coach Bryan Clark after the victory. “I thought we put a lot of shots on net which is the key, and we’ve been working on that for the first few games. I think it started to come together tonight.”

Indeed, Alton peppered EAWR netminder Gerold Myatt, with 40 shots throughout the game. Conversely, the Oilers just couldn’t create the same pressure offensively, getting just 11 shots on goal on the other end of the ice.

Senior captain Lawson Bell opened the scoring for the Redbirds, taking a turnover the other way and beating Myatt. It’s Bell’s eighth goal in just four games.

“It’s (Bell’s) senior year, we’d like to have him for a little bit more,” said coach Clark. “But we’re going to try to make the best out of this season for him.”

EAWR found an answer to Bell’s early goal nearly three minutes later, when Daniel Welborn beat Alton goaltender Logan Seymour to tie the game at one goal apiece.

That parity would be short-lived, however, when Bell found Caden Clark, who sent a wrist shot past Myatt to reestablish the Redbird lead.



Alton would expand that lead midway through the second period, when Keller Jacobs found Ethan Taul closing in on goal, where he dispatched the third Redbird goal of the night.

For most of the game, it seemed as if Alton was simply quicker to loose pucks, and were able to dictate pressure and tempo on the ice.

“I talk to the boys all the time about being puck-hungry,” coach Clark said. “Being puck-hungry creates a lot of turnovers. That’s absolutely part of the plan, to be hard on pucks all of the time.”

Just 23 seconds of live action later, Alton added a fourth, when Sam Lackey let a long-range shot go that made its way through traffic and into the back of the net. The Redbirds were up three goals, with momentum thoroughly in their favor heading into the final stages of the game.

Perhaps the fatigue of the late 9 p.m. start at East Alton Ice Arena, but the third period was sloppier for both teams.

“I would have liked to see us bringing a little bit more in the third period,” Clark said of his team after the game.

Alton’s shot totals were high in the third period, but less threatening. The final horn blew, the Redbirds 4-1 winners, and 3-1 on the new season.

Alton takes on Edwardsville at East Alton Ice Arena on Tuesday night.

On the downside of the result, EAWR is still searching for their first win of the new campaign. They take on Bethalto on Monday, Nov. 20 in their next MVCHA encounter.

