

Tigers show squad loaded with talent at Orange and Black Scrimmage

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
August 22 2015 12:50 AM





EDWARDSVILLE – By this time next week, Edwardsville's Tigers will have opened another season and another journey they hope will take them to a state championship Thanksgiving weekend in DeKalb.

To get there, though, they have to navigate across a sometimes difficult regular season and get to the Illinois High School Association football playoffs.

That journey got under way Friday night with the **Orange and Black Scrimmage at Tiger Stadium**, where the Tigers practiced situations in front of an enthusiastic crowd. The game was also a fund-raiser for the **Ed-Glen Food Pantry**, which helps families in need in the Edwardsville-Glen Carbon area; admission was two cans of food or a cash donation for the organization.

“I thought the effort was good,” said Tiger coach **Matt Martin**. “We'll have to watch the film to see how things went, but we had some good plays and good things happen.

“We did learn a few things that we'll need to work on; we need to move the ball a bit more consistently. We had some really good runs, but we need to be a bit more consistent and move the ball something like five yards a pop. We need to catch the ball better on passing plays too.”



One thing the Tigers are hoping to do is get the ball to junior A.J. Epenesa; the standout defensive end also took part with the first-team offense as a tight end; he caught a touchdown pass toward the end of the scrimmage.

“We definitely want to find ways to get him the ball,” Martin said.

The varsity Tigers weren't the only one scrimmaging on the evening; both the freshman and sophomore teams also had scrimmages to show their abilities in front of the Tiger fans.

“We looked all right,” said Tiger freshman coach **Ryan Followell**. “We were a bit nervous going out there; it's a freshman scrimmage we had as part of the program tonight, and we had kids who were nervous about what was happening, But we'll look better as the season goes on.



“We've got a lot of good kids on the team this year and we're really looking forward to working with them. Our main goal is to be sure they're ready when the time comes and they're taking the field on a Friday night.”

Tiger sophomore coach **Craig Colbert** was glad to see what his sophomores had to offer. “We looked good,” Colbert said. “We're about ready to see someone else very soon.

“We've got some good numbers this year and we've got good kids who work hard. We'll be opening the season next Friday (against Quincy in a late-afternoon encounter as a curtain-raiser for the Tigers' season-opening game against the Blue Devils) and we're about ready for a game; that it's going to be before the varsity plays is a big honor.”



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