

Max Keiffer's two second-half goals spark Edwardsville's soccer team to 3-0 regional win

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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Edwardsville's scoring slump on the soccer pitch was becoming a concern for the Tigers, especially as the IHSA Class 3A playoffs loomed.

The Tigers had scored just once – on a penalty kick – in their final regular-season matches, matches that did include St. Louis-area powerhouses CBC and DeSmet.

Fortunately for EHS, they found their scoring touch at just the right time, getting a pair of second-half goals from **Max Keiffer** just three minutes apart as Edwardsville defeated Belleville East 3-0 in an IHSA Class 3A Edwardsville Regional semifinal match Tuesday at Tiger Stadium.

The win sent the Tigers into Saturday night's regional final against O'Fallon, 3-0 winners over Belleville West in the nightcap, at 6 p.m. Saturday. The winner advances into next week's Collinsville Sectional against the Quincy Regional champion, either Quincy or the Kahoks.

“Part of (the scoring slump) was a scheduling issue,” said **Tiger coach Mark Heiderscheid**. “If you look, we're playing CBC – you look at the last couple of years, we're not scoring prolifically against CBC. If it's DeSmet late in the year, and this year

DeSmet is very, very good, so if you get a goal in either one of those matches, I don't fancy too many schools on the East Side scoring against those two programs. You might do it, but not very many."

Heiderscheid did admit there had been some pressure on the Tigers going into Tuesday's match. "It's a tough situation because we know we haven't scored goals, and that puts added pressure. But we relaxed in the second half, the keeper (Trey Riley) does a fantastic job winning the area balls."

The Lancers did almost manage to grab a lead in the first half following Tiger turnovers in their end, but Riley came up big twice to thwart East's chances. "They gave us a gift," said East coach Mark Lasley. "I told them at the half 'if someone gives you a gift, use it.' That was the big difference; we score on that one, it could have been a different story."

As it was, the Tigers kept East off the scoresheet, then finally broke through in the 53rd minute when, off a corner kick, Matt Busse managed to find Keiffer in the Lancer penalty area; Keiffer beat East goalkeeper Jakob Kerkemeyer to get Edwardsville off to a 1-0 lead. Three minutes later, Riley delivered a free kick to Keiffer's head, with Keiffer getting the ball past Kerkemeyer to increase the lead to 2-0.

"We just didn't keep the ball well," Lasley said. "Every time we got it, we gave it right back to them. We can't play anyone like that, let alone Edwardsville, who's got a good team."

Edwardsville's final goal came in the 69th minute when Kyle Wright came down the right side and found Justin Toby with a pass; Toby then fired and beat Kerkemeyer to finish off the scoring.

The Tigers improved to 11-6-4 with the win; the Lancers were eliminated with a mark of 3-14-3.

