

Patterson knocks in goal to move Tigers past O'Fallon 2-1 in soccer match

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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O'FALLON – Riley Patterson was in the right place at the right time.

Patterson, a senior, managed to win the ball off a goal-mouth scramble following a Mohammad Ahmad corner kick and put the ball away in the 77th minute to give **Edwardsville** a 2-1 win over **O'Fallon** in a Southwestern Conference boys soccer match Thursday night.

The win put the Tigers at 5-0-1 on the season and 2-0-1 in the SWC; the Panthers fell to 2-2 overall and 0-1 in the league.

“I loaded up; I had players mostly up front,” said **Tiger coach Mark Heiderschied** on the winning goal. “All of a sudden, you have five attacking players with a holder in the midfield; it was just a great game for this time of year. We had a couple of games that went pretty lopsided in the Alton tournament, we needed to have something like this that made us tough it out.

“There's never enough times that a group of kids can try to find a way to make themselves get through it on the run. That's the thing everyone's going to remember. It's things like this that shows you it's never going to be easy. The kids did a great job of, once they got scored on, they made that push. The response by our team (following the Panthers' tying goal in the late going) was very good; it was everything you could hope for.”

“They scored a good early goal,” said **Panther coach Jason Turkington**. “We were chasing a lot in the first half; we made an adjustment at halftime and I thought we were the better team in the second half. We deserved (the tying goal) because we were pressuring them. We don't have a lot of experience from last year and we came back and responded

“The rest of the guys fought hard and worked really hard and they get a late one. It happens; Edwardsville always fights hard and works hard and they got it.”

Edwardsville grabbed the lead in the 21st minute when Alec Mills gained possession and charged down the left side, serving the ball to a diving Michael Picchiotti, who got a head on it and beat Panther goalkeeper Joe Guithues to put the Tigers up 1-0. Play to that point had mostly been centered on the field as both sides tried to find openings to get the ball into attack.

In the second half, play opened up, with Edwardsville having a couple of excellent chances to increase the lead turned back, but the Tigers held on to their lead until the 69th minute, when freshman Ben Koenig managed to score past EHS goalkeeper Daniel Picchiotti off a free kick from junior Jake Koenig to draw the Panthers level with the Tigers 1-1. Extra time was looming when down the stretch, O'Fallon conceded a corner kick and Hamad lifted it into the goal area, where Patterson won the ball off a scramble and scored.

“Mohammad played the ball in and I saw Mills behind me,” Patterson said. “I tried to stay in the mix and the ball bounced onto my head and I put it in. We ended up in that same situation against Granite (City, where the Warriors tied the match in the late going off a free kick last week; the match ended in a 1-1 draw); I think it was huge for us to come out with a win coming out of that.

“I think that's going to be a huge boost for us going into the rest of our season and hopefully the postseason.”

The Tigers had eight shots on goal in the match, with the Panthers getting six shots away; each side had four corner kicks on the evening.

Edwardsville and O'Fallon fought to a scoreless draw in the junior varsity curtain-raiser. The Tigers host Waterloo Gibault at 6:45 p.m. Wednesday in their next match.