

# Alton-Edwardsville play an intense, scoreless soccer draw

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** – Tuesday night's Southwestern Conference soccer showdown between **Alton and Edwardsville** was a tight, intense match. Both sides had good chances to break through; both sides came up with big moments on defense.

And in the end, it ended up in a scoreless draw.

The draw kept the Tigers unbeaten at 11-0-4 overall, 3-0-2 in the SWC; the Redbirds went to 11-3-1 overall, 2-1-1 in the league.

And, quite possibly, it could have been a look at what lies ahead.

“It was just one of those games,” said **Tiger coach Mark Heiderschied**, “and, you know, as a team, you have to deal with, not always, is it going to be a game in which you always play at your best. We had our moments – there were several times where we came very, very close to knocking it in, but at the same time, we're also very fortunate.

“I thought defending-wise, (Zach) Timmerman was absolutely great. I thought the other backfield players really did their job, Danny's (Picchiotti) making some good decisions. There were certainly several things you could tip your hat to; I think emotionally, the kids could have done a better job (the Tigers' Alec Mills was sent off in extra time for getting a second booking), but it's high school kids, and we'll talk about that.”

In many ways, Heiderschied believes the Tigers' season has gone better than expected. “Before the game, I said, 'look – we've had a season that has superseded a lot of our expectations', and along the way, you usually have a game or two that isn't really that well-played by your team, because it's a high school season, and sometimes, it goes that way.”

“There were several chances on each side of the ball,” said **Redbird coach Nick Funk**. “It was a very well-played game on both sides; obviously it gets a little physical, but that's the rivalry in the conference that we're in. Both teams worked their tails off tonight.

“Both defenses were stout; I really credit our back line. They probably held Edwardsville to their season low in shots. Our back line has been solid all year long; the two of them in the middle are juniors, so that's a plus.”

Getting the result the Redbirds did in Edwardsville was satisfying for Funk. “Getting a tie in Edwardsville any day of the week, any year, is a great result,” Funk said, “especially with their tradition, their coach and those players that they've got. We've played five games in the last six days last week (in the St. Louis CYC/Bob Guelker tournament, where the Redbirds won their division) and then, to hang with them into double overtime, I think that's a lot of credit to their work effort.”

Both sides had their chances throughout the match, arguably the best coming down the stretch in extra time when the Tigers' Mohammad Hamad gained possession near the Redbird goal and dribbled past a couple of defenders before getting a shot on goal that Redbird goalkeeper Braden Flanigan got to before it could get into the back of the net. Picchiotti came up big in the dying moments of extra time himself when he turned back an effort from the Redbirds.

The Tigers will hold their Senior Night for a 5:30 p.m. Thursday match against Marquette Catholic at home, while the Redbirds travel to Breese Mater Dei for a non-conference match this evening before returning to Piasa Motor Fuels Field for a Saturday afternoon clash with Waterloo Gibault.

