

Alton vs. Edwardsville: It is always a rival football game for both teams

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville (1-3 overall, 0-1 in the conference) hosts Alton (2-2, 1-1) at Tiger Stadium Friday night in the week's feature game. Kickoff time is set for 7 p.m. The game will be live on Riverbender.com and Edglentoday.com.

Both the Tigers and Redbirds are coming off tough losses last week. Edwardsville lost to Aurora Waubonsie Valley 21-7 in a game that saw senior quarterback Kendall Abdur-Rahman being injured in the second quarter. Abdur-Rahman didn't return, and his status for the Alton game is unknown. The Redbirds lost to Belleville West 52-21, in which a three-touchdown burst in less than a minute late in the second quarter by the Maroons broke open a close game.

Abdur-Rahman is the Tigers' leading rusher, with 502 yards and eight touchdowns in the first four games. Sophomore running back Justin Johnson, Jr. is making a big contribution to the Tigers' running game, with 240 yards and three touchdowns. Abdur-Rahman is also 12 of 31 passing for 214 yards and five touchdowns. His backup, Luke Oglesby, has rushed 10 times for 15 yards and is seven of 13 passing for 45 yards.

Johnson is leading all Tigers receivers with five catches for 57 yards, while Lavontas Hairston has four receptions for 55 yards and two touchdowns. Defensively, Jacob Morrissey leads the team with 25 tackles and 19 assists, while Ryan Strohmeier has 21 tackles, 11 assists and three sacks. Ethan Young has 14 tackles and two assists, while

Evan Ramirez has 12 tackles and nine assists, and Norman Harris has 10 tackles, seven assists and an interception.

Tim Johnson is the main rushing threat for the Redbirds, with 70 carries for 482 yards and a touchdown, while Ahmad Sanders is Alton's leading pass receiver, with 28 catches for 420 yards and two touchdowns. Terrance Walker is right behind Sanders with 10 catches for 135 yards and one touchdown, with Lonnie Tate having eight catches for 130 yards and two touchdowns, and Moory Woods with five catches for 127 yards and a touchdown.

The Redbird defense is led by Izeal Terrell, who is the team's leading tackler with 24, along with seven assists and a sack. Armonte' Miller, Charles Miller and Ju'Qui Womack are next with 16 tackles each, with Armonte' Miller adding three assists and a fumble recovery. Charles Miller also has seven assists, a sack and interception, while Womack has six assists, a fumble recovery and an interception. Sanders has 14 tackles and 10 assists, along with three interceptions, while Walker has 11 tackles, three assists, a sack and a fumble recovery.

Edwardsville head coach Matt Martin said Edwardsville-Alton is always a good rivalry game.

"The conference wins are important," he said. "Alton has a very big and fast linebacker corps and defensive linemen who are scrapper type of kids. Offensively, they have a couple tall receivers who can jump to the ball. Alton has strong athletes that run the jet sweep. Our challenge is we have to tackle well and gang tackle or they can big play you. Alton is a very good football team."

Alton head coach Eric Dickerson said: "Every game is an important game from here on out. We've had a good week of practice and I think we will be prepared. We were able to heal up this week. The kids have worked hard this week and are excited to play. I don't know anything about their quarterback (status) but they have a very good running back and are solid up front."

Coach Martin said Abdur-Rahman's status is day-to-day and he was uncertain as of Thursday whether he would play against the Redbirds.

"If he doesn't play, Luke Oglesby will be in the quarterback slot," Coach Martin said.

"Luke has had a lot of reps and we have a lot of quality receivers and backs behind him. We will be OK if we execute."

[Brent Feeney also contributed to this story.](#)