

# Tigers' Nick Hylla Assists in Key Fumble Recovery on Senior Night Win, Looks Ahead to Postseason

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EDWARDSVILLE - Nick Hylla, a senior outside linebacker and wide receiver for the Edwardsville High football team, helped out on what was perhaps the biggest defensive

play of the game Friday night, helping to cause a fumble that was eventually recovered by defensive end Lloyd Reynolds near the O'Fallon goal line that set up the game-clinching touchdown in the Tigers 26-14 Senior Night win over the Panthers Friday night at Tiger Stadium.

The win improved Edwardsville's record to 6-2 with one game left in the regular season, and officially clinched the Tigers' ninth consecutive IHSA playoff berth. And Hylla was a very happy person after the game.

"Pretty good. I feel good," Hylla said during a postgame interview. "It was a hard battle, we fought it out, and we won."

Hylla described the play on the fumble recovery as a combined effort between him and Reynolds on the Panthers' best running back, Mason Blakemore.

"He came up, he bounced around for a little bit, and we just collapsed on him and got it," Hylla said.

The Edwardsville defense played very well throughout the game, and Hylla described the team's mindset as a very simple one.

"We knew they were going to be tough," Hylla said, "and we knew they had talent, and just tried to play our best, and outwork them."

Along with the other members of the Class of 2020, it was Hylla's final regular-season home game, and he'll take with him very fond memories of the Tigers' football program.

"I love it," Hylla said. "This is a great program, they know what they're doing, and I'm going to be sad when I leave."

The Tigers conclude their regular season this coming Friday night at St. Louis power St. John Vianney Catholic before heading into the IHSA Class 8A playoffs. Hylla's feelings going into the finale and the postseason are very straightforward.

"We just got to play our hardest," Hylla said, "and try to get a home playoff game."

And Hylla also thinks the mindset of the team will be just as straightforward and simple.

"Just win," Hylla said. "We know they have talent, and they're a great program. We're just going to have to play our best, and play like we did tonight, and everything's going to be OK."

And the string of nine consecutive playoff appearances for the Tigers is a big feather in the team's caps.

"Yes, sir," Hylla said. "It's great. We've just got to keep working, and try to make that string go longer."