

Poettker Scores Twice For Francis Howell, As Vikings Win Over Edwardsville 3-2 In Close Mid-States Hockey Game

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EDWARDSVILLE - Logan Poettker scored twice for Francis Howell, with his goal just over five minutes into the final period making the difference as the Vikings, from Weldon Spring, Mo., in St. Charles County, defeated Edwardsville 3-2 in a Mid-States Club Hockey Association game Thursday night at RP Lumber Center in Edwardsville.

It was a close game all the way through, with Poettker scoring the equalizer in the second period, shortly after Konnor Goclan gave the Tigers a 2-1 lead on the power play, then scored in the third period on a nice shot that gave the Vikings the win in the Municipal Division game.

The Tigers gave a good, solid effort for the entire 45 minutes, but are currently having trouble putting pucks into the net, which has been their biggest concern early on in the MSCHA season.

"Obviously, we'd like to score, and it would be different," said Edwardsville head coach Jason Walker. "We saw some good things out there, so our focus right now is to find ways to put pucks in the back of the net."

It was the Tigers' fourth game of the season and the effort has been there in every game early on, but the scoring troubles have been rather costly to the team.

"We've played four games and scored five goals," Walker said, "so that's not an option. We've got to figure out a way to generate some more offense, but overall, I thought we played well tonight. We were shorthanded at the defensive position; I felt the guys that stepped in and played at that spot played really well. There's a lot of positive things and we'll continue to work at it."

Goclan particularly had a good game, scoring the goal that put the Tigers ahead briefly in the second period, while Fred Bramstedt carried a big load defensively and on the penalty kill and passed with flying colors.

"He (Goclan) played a good game," Walker said. "He played an incredible amount of minutes and Fred Bramstedt killing penalties for us and he's basically out there for all the kills and he was able to get out there and help us score on that play. We're close, we just need to generate some more offense."

Although the Tigers couldn't pick up the two points for the win in a very tough Municipal Division, Edwardsville is holding its own with the teams in the division, which includes many of St. Louis' best, and it's a very encouraging sign for the team.

"We've played well," Walker said, "and our emphasis right now is just trying to figure out a way to generate some more offense to give us a little bit more breathing room as far as not magnifying our mistakes we make."



The Vikings also played well, dug in their heels and came up with a solid effort as well, despite also being shorthanded.

"We're feeling good," said Francis Howell assistant coach Ryan Farber, who ran the team for head coach Larry Bumb, who was out due to illness. "The boys, they dug deep and got the win. They did what they needed to do. We're short-manned and we got out there and did what we had to do. We pulled together."

The overall game was a very good one also, as Francis Howell dug deep with most of their key players being absent and pulled out a good team win.

"Yeah, like I said, we were depleted," Farber said, "we didn't have a lot of our team here. The boys just had to dig deep. It was a tough win for them and they did what they had to do."

The Vikings stayed unbeaten at 6-0-0 to get the season underway, and it's something that both the players and coaches are very proud of, especially in a tough division such as the Municipal, where every point is very precious.

"That's right," Farber said. "Kept it undefeated, too."

Francis Howell has been playing well since the season started, and Thursday night was their best team game of the season.

"I think tonight was probably our best team game so far. It's kind of overall, the boys really pulled together, it wasn't a one-man show, they did what they had to do," Farber said. "As far as the rest of the season and the beginning of the season, it's in the past and we just keep moving forward."

With their undefeated record to start off, Farber knows that if the Vikings can also hold their own against the league's traditional powers, they'll be alright as well.

"That's right," Farber said. "I think we can. So I think we'll be alright."

The Vikings are a very solid team that works hard every night, and the efforts have paid off handsomely so far

"Just a solid, hard-working team," Farber said. "They come out, they work hard and they play their game."

As far as the remainder of the season, Farber is hoping for continued solid efforts while everyone stays off the injured list, knowing that when the Vikings have their entire team, they can compete with anyone in the league

"You know, hope everyone stays healthy," Farber said, "hopefully, we'll get more guys showing up to every game. And our full team is just a different animal. So we would like to keep that undefeated streak going and make a good run. We feel good about it."

Francis Howell was able to capitalize on an early power play, scoring eight seconds after David Hensley was sent off for tripping, with Colton Kozma tipping in a centering pass from Riley Wright at 2:19 to give the Vikings a 1-0 lead. The Tigers equalized on a shorthanded goal at 12:32, after a bench minor for too many men on the ice. Connor Morrison took a pass from Hensley, broke in, and scored to tie the game 1-1, which is how the score stood after the first period.

The Tigers took a 2-1 lead on the power play when, with Erik Anderson off for roughing, Goclan scored an unassisted goal off a scramble in front at 5:49 to put the Tigers in front. The lead lasted all of 47 seconds when Anderson found Poettker, who scored from close in to tie the game at 2-2. The two teams did have some opportunities, but both goalies stood up to the challenges to keep the game tied after the second period.

Poettker scored what proved to be the game-winner at 5:05 of the third when he broke in alone and scored unassisted to give the Vikings a 3-2 lead. Both teams had a plethora of good chances the rest of the way, with the Tigers pulling the goalie in the final minute to rescue a point, but couldn't do so as Francis Howell held on to win

For the game, the Vikings outshot the Tigers 39-27.

The Tigers tied with Rockwood Lafayette 1-1 on Monday night at the Maryville University Ice Center, with Bramstedt scoring at 5:13 of the first, assisted by Will Lukowski and Sean Armstrong, only to see the Lancers tie the game with 13 seconds left to share the points with Edwardsville.

The Tigers are now 0-2-2 and play Friday night against Rockwood Marquette at Maryville Ice Center in Town and Country, Mo. in an 8:10 p.m. face-off, then have a

rematch against the Vikings on Nov. 28 at St. Peters, Mo. Rec-Plex South at 8 p.m., returning home to RP Lumber Center against Marquette on Dec. 1 in an 8:30 p.m. face-



off.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)