

Tigers go to 4-0 on year with pair of Wednesday wins

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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O'FALLON – Edwardsville's girls basketballers are off to another good start, the Tigers winning twice Wednesday in the C&C Sports Stop Lady Panther Tip-Off Classic at O'Fallon's Panther Dome and auxiliary gym to start the season at 4-0.

The Tigers scored a 69-38 win over Hazelwood Central in a Wednesday midday contest, then defeated McCluer North 59-23 after breaking a 7-7 quarter-time tie with a 34-9 second quarter.

Against the Hawks, the Tigers got off to a very good start and took a 21-4 lead at quarter time and were never threatened. “We started out really well,” said Tiger coach Lori Blade, “and we hit some shots and got some turnovers in transition; we were ready to go, which is important in a game like that – they tend to speed you up, and they did at times, but overall I thought we did a pretty good job at handling the pace they wanted to go at.”

The Hawks went into the game having won their first two of the tournament; Blade knew Central would be a good opponent and wanted to get out of the gates quickly to establish control of the game. “That's always important because they are a quality team,” Blade said. “They can shoot the three, so really, no lead is safe, but they are scrappy and very physical – that's what I was going to be interested to see, how well we boarded with them and defended to help.

“For the most part, I thought we did a pretty good job for how early it is. We still have some things to work on, but overall I was really pleased with how well we stepped up to match how hard they played – they play hard.

“In spurts we were pretty disciplined offensively, but in other spurts we weren't; that's a credit to Hazelwood doing what they were doing to us at times, some of it is self-discipline and knowing what we want and not taking what they were giving us all the time.”

EHS got off to a great start, scoring the first 13 points of the game before Central got on the board and were never seriously threatened, going up 21-4 at quarter time and then 38-17 at the long break.

Getting ahead early and keeping the lead allowed Blade to insert players into the game to see how things would mesh in different situations. “It's tough for those young kids to come in in that physical a game, but they held their own, which is good,” Blade said.

Against the Hawks, Kate Martin led the way with 24 points, with Myriah Noodle-Hayward and Quierra Love picking up 11 points each and Rachel Pranger eight; Martin had 11 rebounds with Noodle-Hayward getting nine and Pranger four. Against the Stars, Martin had 20 points and Pranger 13 with Noodle-Hayward adding nine points.

The Tigers open their Southwestern Conference campaign at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 30 at Collinsville before their home opener at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 5 against Belleville East.

