

Elle Evans Has Clutch Night, Scores 14 Points, With Key Threes In Overtime Win Over O'Fallon

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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville junior forward Elle Evans had a big night in the Tigers' rivalry game against O'Fallon, scoring 14 points, but hit a big three to put her team close in regulation, then connected on a pair of threes in overtime to help Edwardsville take a 67-62 win over the Panthers at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

It was the first meeting between the two teams since O'Fallon knocked the Tigers out of the IHSA Class 4A sectional, winning the semifinal at the OTHS Panther Dome in 2020. Evans hit a three with 32.2 seconds left in regulation to pull Edwardsville to within three, then after the Tigers leveled the scores before the buzzer.

"Oh, yeah, I knew we needed points," Evans said during a post-game interview, "so I was just, I had an open look, so I just let it fly, and it went in. So, I just felt great."

Evans then hit the first basket of the overtime, a three up top to give the Tigers the lead 60-57. It gave her team the momentum from the start of the period in going on to the win.

"I had an open look again," Evans said. "I knew I made the last one, so i just let it fly again, and it went in."

The win was very important to the Tigers, given it was O'Fallon that knocked them out of the tournament a year ago.

"Losing to them last year, it just makes us want to beat them even more," Evans said, "and going into overtime, I mean, it's just big for the team and for us all."

The Tigers rallied from being down 52-44 with just over two minutes left in regulation, and Evans' clutch threes were a big factor in the comeback win.

"Yeah, like I said earlier, I was open, I just let them fly," Evans said. "Earlier in the game, they weren't falling in, but you've got to have a short memory and just keep letting them fly. So that's what I did."

As with everyone else, Evans is very happy to be playing the season after so much doubt, and she feels things may be coming back to normal.

"Oh, of course," Evans said. "Earlier this year, we were not having a season, like, with not having school most of the time. But now, we're going back to school. I mean, it's all kind of like coming together. Like, I know it's a short season, but I'd rather do that than not play at all."

The most important number coming from the game is that the Tigers are now 7-0, and host Belleville East on Saturday afternoon. When asked what will the Tigers do for an encore, Evans laughed and looked forward to what's ahead.

"We can't look past anyone," Evans said with a big smile, "so we'll come out strong on Saturday and hopefully get the win."