

Tigers outside shooting leads to big win over Warriors

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Edwardsville's Kyler Davis (1) is guarded by Granite City's Darrell Miller (11) during the Tigers' 69-35 win over the Warriors at Granite City's Memorial Gym Friday night.

GRANITE CITY – Something Edwardsville's basketball team prides itself in is in its shooting, especially from three-point range.

Case in point: The Tigers connected from beyond the arc 14 times, including seven straight three-balls in the second quarter, on their way to a 69-35 Southwestern Conference rout of Granite City at Granite City's Memorial Gym Friday night.

“We get a lot of reps like that in practice,” said the Tigers' Kyler Davis, who had 12 points in the win. “We take game-type shots all the time.”

The Tigers' hot outside shooting also gave them the opportunity to get the ball inside for easy baskets – exactly what the EHS game plan was. “Once the three-pointers started falling, they came out closer to us and it let us get the ball in,” Davis said.

“They're like a well-oiled machine,” said Warrior coach Steve Roustio. “Coach (Mike) Waldo's been there for (27) years; they know exactly what they're supposed to do and how to do it. It's quite obvious why they're 4-0 (in the SWC).”

The Warriors played the Tigers pretty tight in the opening minutes, scoring the first basket 2:04 into the game on a lay-in from Jalen Banks. That was the only time Granite would see the lead, however, as Monty Sharpe and AJ Epenesa gave Edwardsville the lead, then Davis connected from three-point range for the first time to extend the lead to 7-2.

From there on out, it was all Tigers, though the Warriors did come to within 7-5 in the opening term. The term ended on a Dan Marinko triple and a Epenesa putback at the siren to give the Tigers a 14-8 lead.

One thing Edwardsville did was keep an eye out on Granite's Kenny Berry, and they executed that to near-perfection; Berry finished with six points and those points came in the final quarter, long after the issue had been decided.

“We wanted to limit his touches and limit the open shots,” Waldo said. “The scout team gave them some really good looks in practice, and it worked out very well.”

When asked about his side's performance, Waldo said “we played our best game of the season. We did things very well, just took what they gave us and really worked hard on defense.”

That the Tigers did while catching fire from behind the arc, and it wasn't just one person; several Tigers contributed to the second-term explosion that essentially put the game away.

In addition to Davis' 12 points, Epenesa finished with a game-high 13 points for the Tigers, with Mark Smith scoring 10; the Warriors were led by Banks with 11 points.

Next up for the Tigers is an opening-round match with Normal University High in the State Farm Classic in Bloomington Dec. 26; the Warriors meet up with Decatur MacArthur in an opening-round match of the Collinsville-Schnucks Holiday Classic Dec. 27.