

Harris Leads With 29 Points, As Edwardsville Honors Seniors With 65-34 Win Over Belleville West In Regular Season Final

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Senior forward Syd Harris led the way with 29 points as Edwardsville started the game with a 10-1 run and never looked back as the Tigers won their annual Senior Night game over Belleville West 65-34 in the regular-season home finale Thursday night at Lucco-Jackson Gym.



In the annual pregame ceremonies, Emma Garner, Elle Evans, Macy Silvey and Harris, along with since-graduated Kate Conner, and their families were saluted and thanked for their contributions to the Tigers' program and also before the game, former head coach Lori Blade was honored with a replica of the Tigers' home court along with her many accomplishments as a coach at both Carrollton and Edwardsville.

As for the game itself, the Tigers came out with much intensity and attended to their business very efficiently in going on to the win.

"Awesome to get to see the seniors play together again," Happe said, "and I thought they all did a really good job. In the first half, I think we played some really good defense. They hit more shots in the second half, but I thought we really played as a team."

The Tigers' run to start the proceedings set the tone for the rest of the game, and Happe was very happy with the team's effort.

"It was a great team effort and they played hard," Coach Happe said. "We had a lot of hustle plays, which is always great to see and kids get on the ground, so always important to see before we get into postseason."

Happe also had very kind words for the senior class, making their mark on a very successful program.

"They've done so much for us," Happe said, "and we've still got time left with them. So we're going to make the most of it."

Ja'Mya Company hit on a free throw almost two minutes in to give the Maroons a 1-0 lead, and after that, Edwardsville went on to score 10 straight points, getting a pair of baskets each from Evans and Harris, along with a basket from Silvey, to go ahead 10-1. Maliah Sparks scored to end the string, making the score 10-3, after which Harris and Silvey both sank threes, Evans scored on a drive to the basket and got a free throw from Ella Cook to give the Tigers a 19-3 lead at quarter time.

Jalynn Rook scored for West to open the second quarter, with Evans hitting a pair of free throws and Harris scoring to up the advantage to 23-5. Rook then hit a three to cut the lead to 23-8, with Harris then leading a 7-2 Edwardsville run to put the Tigers up 30-10 at halftime.

The two teams traded baskets to start the second half, with the Tigers going up 34-14, with baskets from Harris, Silvey and Evans, along with a pair of Cook free throws allowing Edwardsville to up their lead to 42-14. To the Maroons' credit, West kept hanging in and got threes from Keyara Baerga-Plumey and Rook to help trim the Edwardsville lead to 47-22 after three quarters.

Rook hit a pair of threes at the start of the fourth quarter to help the Maroons trim the lead to 49-25, but the Tigers kept pulling away, outscoring West in the period 19-12, with freshman Zay Hoover connecting on a three up top to the cheers of her teammates before the final buzzer to give Edwardsville its 65-34 win.

Along with Harris' 29 points, Silvey added 10 points, with Evans hitting for 12 points, Ellie Neath and Garner each had four points, Hoover netted three points, Molly Peel had two points and Cook scored a single point.

Rook led the Maroons with 16 points, while Sparks had seven points, Baerga-Plumey scored five points and both Kennedy Williams and Company hit for three points apiece.

The Maroons end the regular season 14-13 and host Collinsville in their own Class 4A regional semifinal Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. The Tigers wind up the regular season 25-4 and also host a regional, playing the winner of a play-in game between Granite City and Pekin Tuesday night at 6 p.m. Happe's looking forward to the start of the playoffs.

"Yep, one game at a time and glad to be home for some of it," Happe said with a smile.



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