

Southwestern steams past East Alton-Wood River behind 21-point outing by Maddie Greeling

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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WOOD RIVER – **Piasa Southwestern** went into Monday night's non-conference girls basketball clash with **East Alton-Wood River** having come off a loss in final of the Pana Tournament to defending IHSA Class 1A champion Moweaqua Central A&M.

The Piasa Birds wanted to get back on a winning track, and they did just that, storming out to a 28-4 lead at quarter time and going on to defeat the Oilers 75-13 at Wood River's Memorial Gym Monday night behind a **21-point performance from Maddie Greeling**.

The Birds' goals were simple going into the game, said Southwestern coach Steve Wooley. "I was very happy (with his team's performance)," Wooley said. "Coming in, we knew they weren't going to be a real strong team, so our goals were to get a lot of kids in there, coming off the bench for us and get a lot of reps running our offensive sets.

"I just wanted to see hustle. It's easy sometimes, when you're seeing a weaker opponent, it's easy to play down a little bit; we don't want to get into that mode when we're on a roller coaster, playing up and down, so I was happy to see the hustle tonight. That's what I was looking for."

"We knew we had to come in very disciplined on our defense and just try to go through the offenses we've been in and try not to get into foul trouble and give them easy baskets," Greeling said. "I'm very proud of my team tonight; a lot of girls came off the bench and were hot. Everyone played very well tonight."

The Piasa Birds haven't changed that much, felt Oiler coach Emily Van Natta, herself a former Oiler. "Ten years ago, they were then," Van Natta said. "My senior year was 10-11 years ago; we lost six games and two of them were to Southwestern, so it's nothing out of the ordinary."

What Van Natta would like for her current crop of Oilers to learn from this game is to see how successful teams like the Birds are year in and year out and emulate what they have accomplished. "I like challenges," Van Natta said. "My girls need to see that there are small schools that are good and it can happen, so that's where I want us to be in a few years."

Besides Greeling's 21-point effort, the Piasa Birds got 13 points from Kelsey Rhoades and 10 points from Malea Bailey; EA-WR had points from only two players, Becca Renken with seven and Carly Campbell with six.

The Birds went to 5-3 on the season, while the Oilers fell to 0-5 on the year. For Southwestern, next up is a Saturday trip to Vandalia for a match-up against the Vandals, while the Oilers travel to Greenville Tuesday before hosting Staunton Thursday.

