

Tigers dominate Belleville on Senior Night with 75-6 triumph

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Senior Night for the **Edwardsville wrestling team** was a very special event.

The Tigers honored their senior wrestlers, including **Bobby Burnside, Gabe Jackson, Chris Prosser, Mason Taylor, Mario Trice and James Watters**, in a pre-match ceremony, then went out to defeat Belleville East by a 75-6 score in a Southwestern Conference meet at Jon Davis Wrestling Center Wednesday night.

“I thought the kids wrestled hard,” said **Tiger coach Jon Wagner**, “they came out and wrestled hard and did what they should do. We're proud of the effort and it was great to see them victorious on Senior Night and get ready for Saturday (when the Tigers host Mexico, Mo., Civic Memorial, Quincy, Chicago Marist and Niles Notre Dame of Chicago for the schools' Alumni Day festivities beginning at 11 a.m.).”

And with the IHSA postseason wrestling tournaments on the horizon, Thursday's meet was good preparation for the Tigers, Wagner felt. “With the postseason coming up, we're trying to tune up for that,” Wagner said. “I think they're getting antsy to get that going, but we've got some work to do before that first.”

The meet began pretty quickly with 103-pounder Noah Surtin scoring a 1:51 pin over the Lancers Trey Fernandez to put the Tigers up 6-0, with Dylan Wright following up Surtin's pin with a 1:48 pin of Lunden Pasnokat at 112 to increase the lead to 12-0 in Edwardsville favor. Deontae Yancey and Jalen Yancey then were awarded forfeits at 120 and 126 before Jack Evans took on Hunter Procasky at 132, Evans scoring a 7-0 decision over Procasky to up the lead to 27-0.

Devion Yancey took to the mat at 138 against the Lancers' Justin Sanders, Yancey pinning Sanders in 1:45 for six more team points for Edwardsville, increasing the lead to 33-0. That brought up Rafael Roman at 145, Roman taking on Alex Eastman and scoring a 17-1 technical fall decision over Eastman for five more team points for Edwardsville, upping the lead to 38-0 halfway through the meet.

Baylor Montgomery at 152 opened the second half of the meet with a 1:32 pin of Alex Garza to increase the lead to 44-0, with Gabe Jackson earning six more team points for the Tigers with a 4:15 pin of Tim Eschenfelder at 160 and Taylor picking up five more team points thanks to a 16-0 technical fall decision over Brandon Jenkins at 170.

Prosser then took to the mat at 182 and pinned the Lancers' Josh Jones in 1:23 for six more team points for Edwardsville, which brought Cole Mikulait to the mat at 220 against East's DeWayne Hill. Mikulait, however, injured his left elbow in the first period and could not continue, awarding the bout to Hill on an injury default. Burnside then closed out the match with a 40-second pin of Darrell Simmons to give the Tigers their final margin of victory.

The win kept the Tigers unbeaten in the SWC with one more meet to go against East St. Louis. The SWC title is always a goal of Wagner's and the Tigers. “We've got one more left against East St. Louis,” Wagner said, “Get through that one and we clinch the Southwestern Conference championship; we take that really serious. It's always a goal of ours and we're one away from reaching that goal.”

The Tigers will take on the Flyers as part of a triangular with Chatham-Glenwood on the road Jan. 28.