

Strohmeier, Epenesa, Colley lead Tigers past Warriors despite 31-point explosion by Berry

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
February 13 2016 7:45 AM





GRANITE CITY – Edwardsville and Granite City had a basketball game Friday night at Granite City's Memorial Gym that was almost a throwback to an old-school boxing match that were a staple in that the two teams were almost like evenly matched fighters standing toe-to-toe, throwing their best shots at each other right in the middle of the ring.

Both teams gave it their best shots at each other, but in the end, the Tigers ended up 54-47 winners of the Warriors on Granite City's Senior Night, EHS going to 19-4 overall and 10-0 in the Southwestern Conference, the Tigers overcoming a 31-point effort by the Warriors' Kenny Berry and A.J. Epenesa having to fight off foul trouble all night. The Warriors fell to 12-11 overall, 5-5 in the league

“I thought our guys did a lot of things well tonight,” said **Tiger coach Mike Waldo**. “I thought thought we executed a lot of things well against a lot of different defenses; I thought **Oliver Stephen** had a great game defensively and getting us open; he did a great job of getting us open on numerous occasions tonight.

“I thought our guys did a great job executing against a lot of different defenses and defensively, I thought we did a lot of things well.”

“I felt that our guys fought the whole night,” said **Warrior coach Steve Roustio**. “I was proud of the fact they were able to buy into a game plan and make every effort to execute it. I felt Jake Roustio did an outstanding job on Oliver Stephen; last time we played them, we had Jake guard him, he was able to stop him, but we had to change defenses and he got freed up to make some shots.

“Tonight, we weren't going to let him loose, and like I said, he did a pretty good job. Unfortunately for us, and fortunately for Edwardsville, their margin of error is just so great, they've got guys if someone is having an off night, they just plug up the gap. **(Chrys) Colley** just stepped up and made a couple of nice shots and kind of separated the margin there and kind of changed the complexion of the game.”

Colley's effort – he also had 13 points for Edwardsville – was acknowledged by Waldo as well. “Chrys Colley has been a great player for us all year, and he was again tonight,” Waldo said.

The Tigers held a four-point lead early in the third term over the Warriors and Waldo elected to go into a four-corner offense to run some time off the clock, partially because Epenesa was on the bench in foul trouble. “We had the lead and we had A.J. on the bench with fouls, so we thought that was the best course,” Waldo said.

Edwardsville drained some three minutes from the clock and managed to get to a six-point lead at 30-24 when Mark Smith drained a putback, then went to 33-24 when Colley hit a three-ball with 1:24 left in the term. “I thought our guys did what we asked them to do,” Waldo said.

Caleb Strohmeier led the Tigers with 14 points, with Epenesa and Colley each getting 13 and Mark Smith 12. Berry's 31 led the Warriors, with Jake Roustio getting eight.

In the junior varsity curtain raiser, the Tigers defeated the Warriors 75-49 as **Jack Marinko scored 27 points**.

Next up for the Tigers is a visit to Collinsville Tuesday night while the Warriors host O'Fallon Tuesday night.



