

Smith joins 1,000-point club, Tigers advance to Collinsville Holiday Tourney title game against Althoff

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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COLLINSVILLE – Edwardsville's Mark Smith joined a prestigious club Thursday night.

The senior guard scored his 1,000th career point during the **Tigers' Collinsville-Prairie Farms Holiday Classic semifinal game** against **Springfield Southeast**.

Of more importance to Smith and his teammates was that Edwardsville broke open a close game in the second half and went on to defeat Springfield Southeast 66-41 to reach Friday night's final, where the 10-1 Tigers will face Belleville Althoff, who defeated East St. Louis 83-80 in overtime, at 7:30 p.m. at Fletcher Gym. The third-place game between the Spartans and Flyers precedes the final at 6 p.m.

Smith wound up with a 30-point night to help break open the game, which stood at 23-15 in EHS' favor at the half, going 11-of-17 from the floor with four three-point shots and 4-for-5 from the free-throw line. **Oliver Stephen** added 15 points, all from behind the arc, to help the Tigers pull away from Southeast; he now has 18 three-pointers for the tournament, one short of the record for most three-pointers in a tournament held by Bob Anderson of Peoria Central in 1996 and tied by Jake Jobe of Quincy in 2001 (Stephen had nine against McCluer North and four against Lincoln earlier in the tournament).

A.J. Epenesa had four points and 13 rebounds in the win; the senior power forward is just shy of reaching 1,000 points in his career as well; Nathan Kolesa came off the bench to score six points, Jack Marinko had five, Jackson Best four and Caleb Strohmeier two points.

The Spartans fell to 9-2 on the year; they were led by Treyvon Williams' 15 points, with Isaiah Walton adding nine and Anthony Fairlee six.

In other games Thursday, **Granite City** dropped a pair of decisions, falling to Hazelwood East 56-48 in a consolation bracket quarterfinal game and then 59-58 in overtime to Riverview Gardens in a consolation fifth-place semifinal game; the Warriors fell to 0-12 on the season.

Against Hazelwood East, Freddy Edwards led GCHS with 17 points and had 11 rebounds, with Jalyn Harper adding 12 points and six rebounds and Zidane Moore 11 points. Javon Fultz led Hazelwood with 14 points, with William Gilyard adding 12 and Jordan Gilmore 11. The Warriors meet Oakville at noon today in the auxiliary gym for seventh place in the consolation bracket.



