

# Edwardsville girls go to 20-0 with 69-57 win over St. Joseph's

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**EDWARDSVILLE** – Edwardsville's girls basketball team is standing at 20-0 at the moment, but the Tigers still have a few things they can learn, feels **EHS coach Lori Blade**.

“We did build a lead,” Blade said following the Tigers' 69-57 win over **St. Joseph's at Lucco-Jackson Gym** Wednesday night, “and we're learning time management a little bit, so that's good for us even though they outscored us in the fourth quarter; it's a good situation for us to be in.”

The Tigers did build a lead on the Angels en route to the win, with **Rachel Pranger** leading the way with 22 points on the night.

“We're handling it a little better than we did the other day (in Edwardsville's Sunday night win over Whitney Young of Chicago); we didn't give up as many threes to them because they can flat-out shoot it, but we put the at the free throw way too many times. That's a good team, don't get me wrong – Julie (Matheny, the Angels' coach) does a great job, but I'm disappointed we gave up 57 points when we limited their three-point shooting.”

Edwardsville's strategy was what Blade described as a “pick your poison” type of strategy; they focused on taking away the Angels' post players. “That's exactly what

they were doing,” Matheny said. “They were collapsing down on both Kelly (McLaughlin) and Alex (Kerr), we just weren't consistent as far as getting shots out of the perimeter. I've got to give them a ton of respect for being able to defend the three-point line.

“We were trying to stay matched up on (Edwardsville's) shooters outside and then rebound; they come off screens, they set up screens, they shoot so well. For high school basketball players, they're really smooth; it's just fun playing against that competition. They're just stronger and a little quicker than we are.”

Edwardsville built up a small lead on St. Joe's in the opening quarter, getting out to a 17-11 lead at quarter time and then extending it to 37-23 at the half and then 57-39 at three-quarter time; the Angels did make a bit of a comeback on the Tigers, coming as close at 65-53 at one point in the final quarter, but Edwardsville held steady.

“It was a good overall team effort,” Blade said of the Tigers. “They're a handful; when you shoot like they do and throw in the bigs, they're an awful good team.”

Edwardsville did manage to get two big wins on the week, against Whitney Young and St. Joe's, and the results did please Blade. “It was good for us either way,” Blade said. “We've got a big week next week; we've got (Belleville East Tuesday and at Belleville West Jan. 26 as the Tigers return to Southwestern Conference play to close out the regular season); it's been a tough three weeks in January with some good tests for us and a good number of games.”

Besides Pranger's 22 with eight rebounds, **Kate Martin** had 16 points for the Tigers, **Makenzie Silvey** 14 and **Criste'on Waters** 10. **McLaughlin** led the 10-4 Angels with 17 points and Kerr added 11, with Mary LaBelle and Erika Pudlowski each chipping in seven.

Following the Tigers' games against the Belleville schools next week, they finish the season Jan. 31 at Granite City, Feb. 2 against East St. Louis, Feb. 7 at O'Fallon and Feb. 9 at Alton before beginning the IHSA Class 4A playoffs the week of Feb. 13.



