

Martin's 21 points guides Tigers past Chatham Glenwood in opener at Lady Panther Tip-Off Classic

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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O'FALLON – For the opening game of a new season, things went pretty well for the most part for Edwardsville High's girls basketball team.

Senior Kate Martin led all scorers with 21 points, including five threes, as the Tigers defeated Chatham Glenwood 64-40 in their season opener at the C&C Sports Stop Lady Panther Tip-Off Classic Saturday afternoon at the Panther Dome in O'Fallon.

The Tigers played well most of the way on both ends of the floor, but as is the case in many openers, there's going to be a few flaws.

“At times, they did,” said Tiger coach Lori Blade. “There were times when they sped us up, and we should be a little bit better settled in than what we were, especially in the first half. But then in the second half, I thought we did settle in a little bit better. We got in foul trouble, which is part of being aggressive in practice and carrying it over to how the game's going to be called. So we'll make the adjustments with that.

“But overall, it was good, but we have some things to figure out,” Blade also said. “It's early, and we'll get it figured out. But we have to guard a little bit better than we did overall, and we have to rebound better, and we definitely have to take better care of the basketball.”

The first quarter started out evenly, with the Tigers jumping to an early 7-5 advantage in the opening three minutes. Edwardsville then went on a 13-6 run the period, getting baskets from Rachel Pranger, Quierra Love, Myriah Noodel-Hayward and Megan Silvey to help extend its lead to 20-11 at the end of the quarter.

In the second quarter, Edwardsville started to click offensively, getting good looks that resulted in baskets for Martin and Noodel-Hayward to extend its lead, then near the end, Martin hit back-to-back threes to help the Tigers take a 40-18 lead into the half. The Tigers' aggressive defense helped create the many scoring opportunities, despite getting into foul trouble.

“In the second quarter, I thought we did a good job when they went to the zone of finding kids,” Blade said. “We missed some kids, but it's early. As long as we know what we're supposed to be looking for, I'm OK with that if you throw the ball away early; that's a part of the game. But some of it is disconcerting if you don't see what's there, and understand and know all the options that are there.

“Considering the foul trouble we got in, and kids with very little varsity experience got a lot of playing time today, we did alright,” Blade continued. “But we have to get better.”

Martin continued her hot shooting from behind the arc in the third quarter, hitting three times from long range as the Tigers continued to extend their lead. Love and Jaylen Townsend also chipped in with baskets during the quarter, and Rachel Vinyard also hit on a three to give Edwardsville a 58-37 advantage over the Titans going into the final quarter.

“Kate shot it really well from the three point line,” Blade said. “She really did, which was good to see. But she also defended great, very well. . .and I know she got into foul trouble. But she's a handful; she's awfully good. Kate had to run the point a lot today; we've got to keep (Love) on the floor, so that Kate can do some other things offensively as well.”

The final period saw Edwardsville further extend its lead, getting baskets from Martin and Townsend to help the Tigers win going away. In addition to Martin's 21, Love had eight points, Pranger and Noodel-Hayward chipped in with six and Lauren Taplin had five. In all, 10 Tiger players scored in the game.

“We share the ball really well,” Blade said, “that we did, and we'll do that. We have very unselfish kids that are going to do their job. But it was time for a game, and now, we can go back and break it down a little bit, figure out what we need to get better at, and what we need to focus on, and things like that.”

The Titans were lead by Makenzie Bray and Ciara Lahr, who had nine points each. Maya Black added seven while Suzie Green scored five for Glenwood.

But the most important thing for the Tigers was getting their players needed playing time, and overall, things went just fine.

“It was,' Blade said. “We got a lot of experience for kids that need to get some. . .so overall, it's a good win for us. We'll just go back and get back to work on Monday.”

The Tigers get back to tournament play on Tuesday afternoon against Metro High of St. Louis, with the tip coming at 4:30 p.m. Edwardsville then plays twice on Wednesday against a pair of North St. Louis County schools, meeting Hazelwood Central at 11:30 a.m., then going against McCluer North at 6:30 p.m.









[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)