

Harris Scores 23 Points, Tigers Go On 21-0 Run In First Quarter To Defeat Belleville East

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville went on a 21-0 run after conceding the opening basket as junior forward Sydney Harris led the Tigers with 23 points in a 66-45 win over Belleville East Saturday afternoon at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

The Tigers took control in the first quarter, scoring 19 unanswered points in the first quarter, then the first basket of the second, and never looked back as the Tigers once again played very well.

"They did," said Edwardsville head coach Caty Happe. "It's a great way to end the week. It's been a really hard week, so being able to get some other kids in, and they just finished off the week the way they should."

The 21-0 run by the Tigers got everything rolling on the day, and Happe feels it's a very good sign for her team.

"We're starting games really tough," Happe said, "and we just need to sustain that through the beginning of each quarter."

The most important aspect of the game was that all the Tigers' players contributed something positive to the win.

"Absolutely," Happe said. "I thought we had great ball movement, and we passed the ball well, and that led to open shots, and that's what we need, everybody be able to help us."

The Lancers kept battling throughout the entire game, and kept coming all 32 minutes, a sign of a good team.

"They are," Happe said. "They never quit, and they play hard, they're hustling, and they're diving over balls. It's a great team to play, and they never give up."

Both team's defenses ruled the first two-plus minutes of the game, as neither team were able to find the range until Ava Hamilton hit from the line to give East the first lead at 2-0. From there, the Tigers scored the next 19 points, starting with baskets from Elle Evans and Harris to make it 4-2. After the COVID time out, Harris connected on both a three-point play and a three to up the Tiger lead to 10-2, then both a basket and a three from Macy Silvey, and baskets from Emerson Weller and Harris gave the Tigers a 19-2 lead after one quarter.

Edwardsville's run extended into the start of the second quarter when Weller scored inside to up the lead to 21-2. A three from Grace Riley with 6:03 left in the first half ended the Tiger run at 21-5, and after a Katelynne Roberts basket and an exchange of baskets to make it 25-7, both Riley and Harris traded threes to give the Tigers a 28-10 advantage. Edwardsville finished the half by going on a 10-2 run to take a 38-12 lead at halftime.

Roberts began the second half by hitting a pair of free throws, and back-to-back baskets from Hamilton and Amiya Cole put the Lancers to within 38-16. Following a three by Evans, a free throw from Tyler Butler, a three from Cole and a basket by Orianna Brown cut the Edwardsville lead to 41-22. The Tigers then went on a 10-2 run led by Harris and Silvey to make it 51-24, with an exchange of baskets at the end of the quarter making it 54-29 at three quarter time.

Another exchange of baskets opened the fourth quarter, and a further exchange of free throws made the score 58-33, Edwardsville. Ariana Bennett connected from outside to give the Tigers a 60-33 edge, and from there, the Lancers outscored Edwardsville 11-5, but the Tigers came out on top with the 65-44 win.

Besides Harris' 23 points, Silvey added 13 points, Weller had nine points, Evans had seven, Roberts scored six, Bennett had five points and both Ashlyn Hauk and Kaitlyn Morningstar scored one point each. East was led by Cole's 12 points, with Butler scoring eight points, Riley and Laylah Jackson each had six points, Brown had five points and Hamilton had four points.

The Tigers are now 9-0 on the year, and host Highland on Monday evening before a rematch at O'Fallon on Wednesday night. Happe will be looking for one important thing from her team this coming week.

"Really, just some consistency," Happe said. "Eight games in two weeks is a lot, so continuing to hold that mental edge all the time."

And while being unbeaten so far this season is very nice, Happe is looking for something more important in her players.

"It's awesome to be," Happe said. "But it's more important that we're getting better each game, and that's what they're doing, which is good."









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