

Edwardsville girls thrash East St. Louis 58-36

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Edwardsville's girls thumped East St. Louis 58-36 to clinch a sixth consecutive Southwestern Conference title on Thursday night at Edwardsville.

The win improved Edwardsville's girls to 24-0 on the season and leaves the team only two more regular season games with O'Fallon and Alton before the regional begins.

After the first period, the game was knotted at 9-9, then Edwardsville led at halftime 23-21 before pulling away to a 38-27 lead after three quarters. In the fourth quarter, the Lady Tigers tallied 20 points, while East St. Louis scored nine points.

Edwardsville coach Lori Blade beamed proudly about her girls after the game and said, "This is pretty sweet. It was a very physical game. I thought we were very aggressive in the second half. We talked about how we had to be aggressive and run the ball some."

Blade said she thought her team hit several key free throws late in the game when East St. Louis started fouling incessantly to try to get the ball back.

"Nobody expected us to compete," Blade said of how her young team was assessed in the pre-season. "These kids have a lot of heart, it is especially unexpected with young kids. They are a fun group to work with."

Sophomore Mackenzie Silvey led all scorers with 19 points. She said she thought her team played reall well and agreed that it was a very physical contest.

"It was probably our most physical game of the year," she said. "We have had a really good season."

Amayha Dycus, the Lady Tigers' point guard, said she felt it was a physical confrontation with East St. Louis and she thought one of the keys for the team's success was setting screens and moving to the basket more quickly.

Silvey's 19 points was followed by Freshman Rachel Pranger with 14 points; Criste'on Waters with nine points. Brelennair Cox had 13 points to pace East St. Louis. The Lady Tigers' last Southwestern Conference loss was in 2009. Edwardsville is rated No. 4 in the latest Class 4A girls poll. Blade said she believes her team is improving each game.

"People have seen us and we keep adjusting," Blade added. "We are taking things one game at a time."