

Eagles Pick Up First Ever Win Over Edwardsville In Opening Round Of Visitation Academy Christmas Tournament

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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TOWN AND COUNTRY, MO. – Both the Civic Memorial Eagles and the Edwardsville Tigers girls basketball teams were invited back to play in one of, if not the most, prestigious Christmas tournaments in St. Louis. It just so happens they had to play each

other in the first round, immediately sending one of them down to the consolation bracket.

CM, the No. 5 seed, wore white and was the home team against Edwardsville, the No. 12 seed, in the Visitation Academy Christmas Tournament opening round. CM came out on top by a score of 45-36 and improve to 8-4 on the season while Edwardsville slips to 3-7.

It was CM's first win over Edwardsville in girls basketball after now 15 meetings.

Aubree Wallace made the start for the Eagles and played some significant minutes. She scored a team-high 11 points, five of which came from the free throw line in the fourth quarter to help put the Tigers away.



“It’s nice to have her back,” CM head coach Mike Arbuthnot said about Wallace, who played just her third game back after overcoming a torn ACL back in February. “She’s our floor leader and she does what she does, a great job.”

13 points came from CM's bench who stepped up in a big way Saturday night.

“We’ve been looking for that second and third scorer and tonight I think we did it more of a combination of four or five people. That was nice to see,” Arbuthnot said.

“Our bench really came to play today,” he added. “Reagan Twente hit a couple of shots for us that really helped us out and the defensive effort from Thein and Huddleston and those girls.”

CM’s second-leading scorer was sophomore Meredith Brueckner with eight. Twente and Olivia Durbin each scored six. Marlee Durbin and Maya Tuckson scored five each, Avari Combes had four, and Huddleston had two.

Due to seven CM turnovers in the first quarter and having to sub out Combes who picked up her third personal foul early on, the Eagles trailed 8-6 after the first quarter. But they only allowed a single point from Edwardsville in the second and took a 17-9 lead into halftime.

Arbuthnot said his team needed to “settle down” in the second half, which they did.

CM widened the gap to 30-17 after the third quarter and never looked back. They held off the Tigers to go on and win the game.

Emerson Weller led the Tigers with her 10-point performance followed closely by Zay Hoover with nine. Mia Semith and Ellie Neath each scored four. Ashlyn Hauk, Kaitlyn Morningstar, and Lainey McFarlin each scored three while Blakely Hocket scored two.



Both teams saw eight different scorers in the relatively low-scoring affair.

The win against Edwardsville comes off of back-to-back losses for the Eagles against Alton and Waterloo.

“This is a step forward,” Arbuthnot said. His team played with an intensity that he hasn’t really seen yet this season. “That’s the way we have to play,” he added.

The Eagles will move on to the second round of this tournament in back-to-back years. They’ll take on No. 4 seeded Pattonville in the second round on Dec. 26th at 4 p.m. at Visitation Academy. The Pirates beat 13th-seeded Westminster 47-35 in the opening round.

Until then, CM will play a Mississippi Valley Conference game against Highland (12-2) tomorrow night (Monday, Dec. 18) with a 6 p.m. tip-off.

As for the Tigers, they’ll take on Rochester on Thursday before they get back into tournament action. They’ll play Westminster in the second round of the consolation bracket.