

# Simply The Best: Flyers' Macaleab Rich Showcases His Talent In Big Win Over Tigers

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EDWARDSVILLE - East St. Louis senior forward Macaleab Rich had developed into one of the St. Louis area's most complete and versatile players and in a Southwestern Conference win on Jan. 3 at Edwardsville 68-35, he led the way for the 9-1 Flyers, scoring 16 points and also had four dunks in the game, including a spectacular over-the-head reverse dunk in the second quarter.



Rich is currently averaging 20.3 points and 9.1 rebounds per game for the Flyers after the win over the Tigers.

Rich also has 32 assists, 13 steals, and nine blocks in helping the Flyers to become one of the top teams in the area and an IHSA Class 3A state contender.

In a postgame interview that followed the win at Edwardsville, Rich, who has had a standout season as one of the Flyers' leaders, said he was feeling good and is anxious to help his teammates and keep East Side going in the right direction.



"I'm feeling good," Rich said. "Just coming back from a 10-day break, coming back with the guys, just having fun on the court, executing our plays, and just doing what we do."

It is very important now, with the Southwestern Conference season underway in earnest in January and February as the Flyers begin to look forward to March Madness and the IHSA postseason ahead.

"Oh, we feel really confident," Rich said. "Just going in there every day, just getting better. One percent better every day, just working with the guys, just preparing for the end goal and that's to win the state championship."





The Flyers won the 2019 Class 3A championship in what was perhaps the biggest day in Southwestern Conference history, with Belleville West repeating as Class 4A champions later that day. East Side was apparently on its way to the 2020 title before the tournaments were canceled by the IHSA, due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Flyers are looking to win the title in 2023 and it would be a long-awaited and well-deserved championship indeed.

"Yes, sir, I feel like we do, too," a very confident Rich said. "We just keep working every day, just push and push every day to get better."

Just before the start of the season, Rich signed to play for Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kan., in the Big XII Conference, and since signing with the Wildcats, he's been able to focus on leadership and playing his best, helping the Flyers to their current success.

"Yeah, I'm just focusing on being a leader right now," Rich said, "just getting all the guys involved, just doing what I do to help the team."

As far as the second half of the season is concerned, Rich is looking at one main goal for the team as they pursue the Southwestern Conference crown - and much, much more.

Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.