

# Weller Leads With 16 Points, Morningstar Adds 14, Tigers Use 16-4 Lead At Start Of Second Period To Top Kahoks

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COLLINSVILLE - Senior forward Emerson Weller led the way with 16 points, while senior Kaitlyn Morningstar added 14 points as Edwardsville's girls' basketball team ended the first quarter with a 7-0 run and extended it at the start of the second quarter to 16-4 as the Tigers won over Collinsville 51-30 in a Southwestern Conference game Thursday night at Vergil Fletcher Gym.

It's the fourth consecutive win for Edwardsville, who is now 7-8 after starting the season 2-5, and the Tigers have come back tremendously in their recent stretch, including going 2-2 at the Visitation Christmas Tournament.

"I am feeling good," said Edwardsville head coach Caty Happe after the win. "That's a really good Collinsville team, so to come in from the start, we really came out aggressive, which is what we've needed to do, and we did some good things against their kids."

The run at the end of the first quarter, going into the second, was the difference in the game, as the Tigers took control from there and never looked back.

"Yeah, and it wasn't just one kid," Happe said. "It was a total team effort, which is awesome to see. And we're just starting to do the little things a little bit better right now."

Both Weller and Morningstar played well throughout, and Happe was very pleased about how the points came about. And how the team has stuck together throughout as well.

"They did and they were quiet points," Happe said. "It was steady throughout the game and we've just done a great job playing together. I just couldn't be more proud of this group for their continued effort to fight. A lot of people could have quit with a lot of losses early on and they want to continue to get better."

It's a continuing trademark of Edwardsville teams that they keep on striving and never give up, no matter how difficult things can get.

"They do," Happe said. "I told you the first game that the last game off the season, we're going to be a completely different team and if we continue on this route, that's exactly where we'll be."

The Tigers have indeed fought back to get close to the break-even point in their record and it's definitely a good sign for the club.

"It is and honestly, most days, I don't even know what our record is," Happe said. "It's are we getting better and are we having a little bit of fun with it?"

The Kahoks jumped out to an early 4-1 lead on baskets by Megan Janson and Talesha Gilmore, but a three tied the game and after an exchange of baskets and made it 6-6, the Tigers went on their 7-0 run to end the quarter as Weller hit a pair of free throws, Morningstar scored and Ellie Neath canned a three to put Edwardsville up 13-6 at the end of the first period. It became 17-8 quickly at the start of the second on baskets by Zay Hoover and Morningstar, sandwiched between a basket by Danajah Willis basket, then went further ahead, led by Morningstar and Mia Semith to go ahead 29-14 and eventually 30-18 at the interval.

An exchange of baskets opened the second half, with free throws by Weller, a three by Morningstar and another Weller basket gave Edwardsville a 9-2 run and a 39-20 lead after three quarters. The Kahoks started the fourth quarter with an 8-2 run to cut the lead down to 41-28, but the Tigers had nine of the game's final 11 points, highlighted by a three-point play by Morningstar, to give Edwardsville its 51-30 win.

To go along with Weller's 16 points and Morningstar's 14 points, Ellie Neath added eight points, Hoover hit for four points, Semith and Blakely Hockett each scored three points, Layne Logan had two points and Lydia Struble had a single point.

The Kahoks were led by Janson's nine points, while Ella Guerrero hit for seven points, Gilmore had six points and Deaira Spears, Ella Hrabusicky, Willis and Jenna Scheller all scored two points each.

The Tigers are now 7-8 and will play in the opening game of the St. Joseph's Academy Shootout against the host Angels Saturday morning at 10 a.m., then host Belleville West Tuesday night before playing their rematch against Alton at the Redbirds Nest next Thursday night, with both games starting at 7:30 p.m.

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