



Kloster Scores Eight Points In Overtime, 20 For Game, Allen Has 21 As Edwardsville Takes SWC Thriller At Collinsville 58-52

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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COLLINSVILLE - Isayah Kloster scored 20 points, including eight of his team's 10 points in overtime, with Malik Allen hitting for 21 points as Edwardsville defeated Collinsville 58-52 for the Tigers' biggest win of the season Friday night at Vergil Fletcher Gym.

Edwardsville and Collinsville traded the lead many times in the second half, especially in the fourth quarter, before the Tigers took control in the overtime in a game where both teams played well and gave the fans in attendance their money's worth in a thriller.

"It was a great Southwestern Conference game and really competitive against two good teams," said Edwardsville head coach Dustin Battas, "and we're super proud of our guys. We executed a lot of things well and our guys tried so hard. We had a couple of guys play 36 minutes, A.J. (Tillman) and Malik, we had a lot of good contributions off the bench. So just happy for our guys and they get the reward of a win, because they've been trying really hard in practice and I thought they prepared really well for this game."

To win at a venue such as Fletcher Gym makes it a very sweet win, indeed.

"It is," Battas said. "It's always a good place to come play, it's always competitive and Collinsville has always had a lot of good teams over the years and our guys take pride in competing and take pride in playing in fun environments like this. So it was great. We're excited."

The Tigers were able to rally back in the overtime period, reeling off an 8-0 run after the score was tied 50-50 to put the game away, with Kloster coming up clutch in the period.

"Isayah was the man tonight," Battas said. "He did a lot of really good things. He's been battling so much with his ankle and an injury. Some of it is even mental; you get down and it's hard when you're not in a routine and not getting to play. So, he was excellent tonight and we're so proud of him. He's just a tremendous leader on top of being a tremendous basketball player. So yeah, he was unbelievable tonight. And I thought the guys around him did a really good job with taking care of the ball and executing the things that we did in practice."

The Tigers were helped in the third quarter with their three-point shooting, as Edwardsville used threes to stay in the game and it also turned out to be a big factor as well.

"Yes," Battas said. "In the third quarter, we wanted to spread them out and try and take advantage of our guard play. And those guys, to their credit, made those shots and that's what gave us the lead."

The lead see-sawed throughout the fourth quarter, with neither team leading by more than five points as the teams kept battling for the advantage, keeping the fans on the edge of their seats.

"Yeah, I think the fans got their five or six dollars worth tonight, hopefully," Battas said. "I think the expectation is in the Southwestern Conference, they're all going to be hard, they're all going to be competitive. And we just feel good about being able to come out on the winning end tonight."

It's the most significant win of the year for Edwardsville and Battas feels that the Tigers can build some momentum from such a big win.

"Yeah, we hope to," Battas said. "Our guys try hard every day. We've had some close games that we've lost, we've had some close games that we've won. And tonight, I think we've shown some growth, we've shown that when we have our guys all together and playing like we've been practicing and everybody healthy, we can be a good team, too. Just really proud of our guys and I thought that A.J. Tillman was excellent in taking care

of the ball and executed a lot of things well. And I thought that all of our guys really, really, really competed at a high level."

The game started out with both teams trading baskets, with Jamorie Wysinger and Nick Horras hitting baskets that put the Kahoks up early 8-4, forcing an Edwardsville time out. Another exchange gave Collinsville a 10-6 lead at the end of the first quarter, with the exchange continuing into the start of the second before Allen hit the first of his threes to give Edwardsville a 13-12 lead. Another three from Alec Marchetto gave the Tigers a 16-14 lead, which forced a Collinsville time out, after which Adam Rimar tied the game and Wysinger hit a three and a basket to give the Kahoks a 21-16 advantage. A pair of Tillman free throws cut the Collinsville lead to 21-18 at halftime.

A three by Allen at the start of the second half tied the game 21-21, and a Kloster three after a Collinsville basket gave the Tigers the lead again at 24-23. From there, the two teams traded the lead several times, with Edwardsville hitting their threes consistently well to keep them in the game. A pair of threes by Allen gave Edwardsville a 35-30 lead at the end of the third and at the start of the fourth quarter, the teams traded threes before an Allen basket gave the Tigers a 40-33 lead. Threes from Jake Wilkinson and Wysinger brought Collinsville back to 40-39, with the Tigers maintaining a three-point lead until a three from Wysinger with 2:14 left in regulation tied the game at 46-46. Kris Crosby hit a pair of free throws with 1:18 to go to give Edwardsville the lead back at 48-46, but Chambers hit a pair of free throws, the second coming after a pair of lane violations by the Tigers gave him a second and third chance, to tie the game 48-48 with 19.7 seconds left. Tillman missed a three at the buzzer to keep the game tied 48-48 to force overtime.

Both teams traded baskets to start the overtime, with Kloster taking over after that, hitting a pair of free throws, then made a brilliant spin move on a defender to score with 50.2 seconds left, making the score 54-50. A Tillman basket and another pair of free throws by Kloster late put the Tigers up 58-50 before Chase Reynolds scored at the buzzer to make the final 58-52 for Edwardsville.

To go along with Allen's 21 points and Kloster's 20 points, Tillman and Crosby both scored six points each, while Marchetto had three points and Jonathan Stump scored two points. The Kahoks were led by Wysinger with 18 points, while Wilkinson had 11 points, Rimar scored 10 points, Horras scored six points, Reynolds hit for five points and Chambers scored two points.

The Tigers are now 10-7 on the year and stay in conference play this coming week, playing at Belleville West on Tuesday, then hosts Alton next Friday night, with both games starting at 7:30 p.m., then play in the Jersey Mid-Winter Classic, playing against Cahokia, Granite City and the host Panthers Jan. 17, 18 and 20 respectively, the first two games tipping off at 6 p.m., then play the final game against the Panthers at 7:30 p.m.



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