

# **Weller, Hoover Score 12 Points Each, Tigers' Run Cuts Lead To Three, Wildcats Come Back To Hold Off Edwardsville 56-47**

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EDWARDSVILLE - Both Emerson Weller and Zay Hoover scored 12 points each as Edwardsville came from behind in the third and fourth quarter to come to within 43-40, but a big three-pointer by Sydney Bradley sparked a Westminster Christian run at the end as the Wildcats, of west St. Louis County, defeated the Tigers 56-47 in a girls basketball game Tuesday night at Lucco-Jackson Gym.



The Wildcats aggressive and swarming defense gave Edwardsville trouble in the first half, creating many turnovers, but the Tigers were able to come back in the second half, but Westminster's lead was too much to overcome.

"Way too many turnovers in the first half against their press," said Edwardsville head coach Caty Happe. "They probably doubled out shot attempts and when you turn the ball over, that happens. So we settled in a little bit in that second half and were able to break it down, but a little too late."

The Tigers' troubles being able to play a complete game was a factor once again, as the Tigers were able to rally, but this time, fell short. Edwardsville never gave in and kept striving throughout, to the team's tremendous credit.

"Yeah, for sure," Happe said. "We've done that time and time again, but it's being able to play four quarters. So, it's great they didn't quit and I told them I'm really proud of them for not quitting. But over halfway through the season, we've got to be able to put together four quarters of basketball together if we want to compete towards the end."

The Wildcats got the better of the second chance points, points off the rebounds and other plays, making them at the right times.

"They beat us to every 50-50 ball, they were just more physical inside and out," Happe said. "And it's really tough with (Julia) Coleman's length at the top of the press. But obviously, things to learn from. They're all fixable things, so it's getting back at it and really working consciously fixing those."

The Tigers lost to the Wildcats in the Visitation Christmas Tournament on Dec. 26 and Westminster's inside game also gave the Tigers much trouble as well.

"Yeah, I felt we sat in the zone a little too long there," Happe said. "We were going to make them hit shots, but what really killed us was in the paint, it wasn't on the outside. So we had the right game plan, we just didn't necessarily stop what we wanted to stop."

The Tigers have also been playing without both Ellie Neath and Dallas Jenkins, who are both out injured, and Happe feels it's been tough playing without Neath, but also thinks other players have stepped up to fill the gap.

"Very tough," Happe said. "She's an emotional leader for us, although she takes care of the ball. She's that voice on the court, so while she's out, somebody's got to step into that role. But it's giving kids opportunities and I thought tonight, some of our younger kids gave us some really good minutes. Lydia (Struble), Layne (Logan), Lainey (McFarlin), Mia (Semith) really did some good things in there and are going to work their way in."

The first quarter was an up-and-down affair to start, as both teams traded the lead before baskets from Struble, Blakely Hockett and Weller gave Edwardsville a 13-7 lead, forcing a Westminster time out. After the time out, Bradley scored to cut the lead to 13-9 at the end of the period. After an exchange of baskets to open the second quarter, Bradley scored to make it 15-13, with Hoover sinking a three to open up an 18-13 lead for Edwardsville. The Wildcats then went on a 13-2 run, led by Addie Kane and Jordan Williams, as the Westminster pressure forced numerous Tigers turnovers. Williams hitting a three before the end of the period to put the Wildcats up 26-20 at halftime.

The Wildcats kept the pressure up at the start of the third, scoring the period's opening nine points to go further in front 35-20 before a Weller free throw ended the run. The teams then exchanged points to put Westminster up 41-23 before the Tigers started a comeback bid as Weller, Hockett and McFarlin all scored to cut the Wildcat lead to 41-29 after three quarters. Weller and Kaitlyn Morningstar started the fourth quarter by scoring cut to further increase the run to 12-0 and cut the lead to 41-35. After an exchange of baskets, Ashlyn Hauk scored to put the Tigers to within 43-40, but the three-ball by Bradley made it 46-40 and gave Westminster the momentum back. The Wildcats then outscored Edwardsville 10-7 the rest of the way to give Westminster its 56-47 win.



Kane led the Wildcats with 18 points. while Bradley added 14 points, Essence Robertson scored 11 points, Williams had seven points and Coleman came up with six points. To go along with both Weller and Hoover's 12 points, Hockett came up with nine points, Hauk scored five points, McFarlin hit for three points and Morningstar, Logan and Struble all scored two points each.

The Wildcats are now 6-6 on the year, while the Tigers go to 8-11 and travel to West County to face Whitfield, who will be playing their first game in nearly a month after illness swept through their team, forcing postponements of many of their games. The tip-off is set for 7 p.m. on Thursday and Happe is looking ahead to playing the Warriors.

"They have a very good program," Happe said. "So, we gotta be ready to get back at it."





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