

Kaitlyn Morningstar Provides Talent, Leadership For Tigers, Is An iCAN Clinic Female Athlete Of Month

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EDWARDSVILLE - Kaitlyn Morningstar has been one of the most reliable and key players on the Edwardsville High girls' basketball team and has also provided valuable leadership to the Tigers this season.



The Tigers are 8-11 after losing to Westminster Christian of west St. Louis County 56-47 on Jan. 17 at Lucco-Jackson Gym, but the team has shown much resolve and a fighting spirit that has kept Edwardsville in many of its games so far this season.

Morningstar, for her part, has averaged 8.1 points and 7.8 rebounds per game to go along with 28 assists, 23 steals, and a blocked shot. She scored only two points on the

night against the Wildcats, but helped provide her leadership during a stretch where the Tigers cut an 18-point deficit to three early in the fourth quarter before Westminster held off the comeback and went on to its win.

"I thought in the fourth quarter, we had a pretty good spurt," Morningstar said in a postgame interview after the Westminster game. "It obviously wasn't the whole tempo of the whole game, that we should have come out, since the first three minutes, because the first three minutes determined the whole game. But at least we had a spurt in the fourth, but it wasn't enough to get the job done today."

Morningstar is an iCAN Clinic Female Athlete of the Month for The Tigers.

The Wildcats are also a very good team who play a very aggressive, swarming style and it caused the Tigers headaches in the first half when Westminster came from behind to take a 26-20 lead, and in the third quarter, where the Wildcats led by as many as 18 points before the Tigers rallied.

"Yeah, they're a really long team," Morningstar said, "so we know we couldn't pass the ball over the top. And just finding different ways to get around their really long defense was definitely one of our struggles."

Despite the loss, the Tigers have consistently and constantly improved all season and Morningstar is very proud of her team's efforts.

"I feel like just coming off that super, super close Alton loss," Morningstar said, referring to a game last week where the undefeated Redbirds came from behind to take the win over the Tigers, "since Alton's undefeated, I feel like we just need to get back into zone, or just play like that team that we did against Alton. It doesn't matter what team we play, what it says on their shirt. We just need to give every team our best game every night."

The Tigers have a challenge ahead from another good West County team, Whitfield, coming up Thursday evening on the road. This will be the Warriors' first game in almost a month after having missed most of December and the Holidays with various illnesses sweeping through the team, oftentimes leading to four healthy players available. Whitfield postponed their games in that time and will be itching to get back on the court and play.

"I expect them to be hungry for a game," Morningstar said, "because even though they haven't played in over a month, I feel like they will be really hungry to play, so I feel like we'll have a really good game from them and I think it'll be a really great game."

Morningstar does feel like the Tigers have made progress and will be ready for the remainder of the season going into the IHSA Class 4A playoffs in late February and early March.

"I think we're definitely improving," Morningstar said. "If you saw that Alton game, we definitely had a better game against them the last time than we played them the first time. And in this game, we just need to get back into it and get ready for Thursday for sure."