



Gaston's Three At The Buzzer Gives Granite Dramatic 51-50 Win Over Edwardsville In Jersey Mid-Winter Classic

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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Thank you to [@GCHS_Warriors](#) on Twitter for the buzzer-beater video.





JERSEYVILLE - Ivan Gaston sank a three-ball at the buzzer to help Granite City take a dramatic 51-50 win over Edwardsville on the second day of the Jersey Mid-Winter Classic Wednesday night at Havens Gym.

Gaston's buzzer-beater was the only lead the Warriors had in the second half, but it was enough to send Granite to a 2-0 record in the round-robin tournament, taking control with the final day coming on Friday.

It was a very well-played game by both sides and the Warriors were able to get the last shot to fall in taking the win.

"Whenever you play a well-coached team like Edwardsville, you have to find ways to keep the game close," said Granite head coach Gerard Moore. "You can't make many mistakes defensively or turn the ball over. You have to execute and take and make good shots."

The Tigers stayed in control most of the way, but the Warriors had some runs and kept things close to the end.

"I felt that both teams played really well," Moore said. "it's unfortunate someone had to lose. I felt Edwardsville was in control from the jump, but we were able to make some runs to keep the game close to give ourselves a chance at the end."

In the final minute, Johnnie Smith canned a three from deep in the corner to tie the game 48-48. Edwardsville held for the last shot, with A.J. Tillman being fouled with 5.1 seconds to go. Tillman hit both free throws to give the Tigers a 50-48 lead. The Warriors immediately called time out to set up a play, but Edwardsville had three fouls to give and did so, the last one coming with three seconds left.

Granite called time again to set up another play, but the Tiger defense deflected the ball out of bounds with 1.1 seconds left. The ball came to Gaston off a scramble and hit the winner as time expired to give the Warriors the win.

Smith led Granite with 11 points, while Trevon Bond added 10 points, Gaston scored nine points, including his winner, Alvin Valentine hit for eight points, Mario Brown had four points and both Alex Boyer and Jayden Moore each scored two points.

Malik Allen led the Tigers with 13 points, with Johnnie Robinson added nine points, Isayah Kloster hit for eight points, Tillman came up with seven points, Kris Crosby scored six points and Jake Curry had four points.

The Warriors are now 12-9, while Edwardsville had their four-game winning streak snapped and are now 13-8, only the Tigers' third loss in their last 13 games. Edwardsville plays Cahokia in their final game on Friday at 6 p.m., while the Warriors meet the host Panthers at 7:30 p.m. in the final game of the tournament. The result for the Comanches and Jersey was not available.

Moore had much praise for the Tigers after the game.

"This was a well-played game and unfortunately, there are no ties in basketball," Moore said, "someone had to lose. My guys were extremely happy, but it was bittersweet for me, because I know the time and effort the Edwardsville kids and coaches put into winning and it's never fun losing a game like that. Edwardsville was really playing well and is really well-coached by one of the best in the area in coach (Dustin) Battas. They have a tremendous staff and program and I wish those guys nothing but the best as they move forward."



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