



# **Tillman Leads With 14 Points, Allen Adds 11, Marchetto Hits Pair Of Key Three-Pointers As Tigers Go On To 51-43 Win Over Kahoks**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
February 15 2023 8:26 AM



EDWARDSVILLE - A.J. Tillman led Edwardsville with 14 points, while Malik Allen came up with 11 points and Alec Marchetto hit on a pair of key three-point shots to help the Tigers to a 51-43 win over Collinsville in a Southwestern Conference basketball game Tuesday night at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

The win gave the Tigers its 20th win of the year and kept alive their chances to finish in the top two spots in the Southwestern Conference, with O'Fallon defeating East St. Louis to clinch the conference championship with one game remaining on Friday night.

The Kahoks did come to within four points twice in the fourth quarter, but Edwardsville was able to hold off on the rallies to put the game away.

"Our guys really tried hard and got the early lead," said Tigers head coach Dustin Battas, "and for the most part, maintained the lead the whole game. They cut it closer than maybe we wanted, but I thought our guys really took care of the ball down the stretch and got key rebounds when we needed them. It's a lot of work to limit their guys in scoring and hold them to 43 points, with as many guys they have that can shoot it, it's just difficult. So I thought our guys were really good and our guys really battled."

Marchetto's three after the Kahoks had pulled to within 40-35 halfway through the final quarter turned out to be the biggest basket of the game, as it gave the Tigers some breathing room.

"Marchetto, he can make them," Battas said, "and he knows that. He's in there to shoot those and he's got the green light and he really works hard at that in practice. Those were huge; we told him after the game how big those threes he made for us were."

Tillman had a big start to the game in the opening period to get Edwardsville on track as well.

"A.J.'s really had a great year for us," Battas said, "and he is really key to everything we do, because he has the ball all the time and I thought his reads on ball screen coverage were great. Just the willingness to take what the defense gave him. Looks like our stats, only had one turnover, five assists, so that's a tremendous night for A.J. And we have those expectations for him, because we think he's really good. So we're happy for him tonight he played so well."

After an exchange of baskets to start the game, Tillman scored five straight points and Kris Crosby hit on a three to give Edwardsville an early 10-2 lead that forced a Collinsville time out. After that, led by Jamorie Wysinger and Chase Reynolds, the Kahoks cut the lead to 12-8, but a three by Jonathan Stump helped the Tigers to a 15-10 lead after the first quarter. Free throws from Isayah Kloster and a basket from Crosby extended the lead to 19-10, with the Kahoks coming back on a 6-0 run climaxed by a Zach Chambers three-point play to cut the lead to 19-16. Collinsville outscored Edwardsville 4-3 the remainder of the term to come within 22-20 at halftime.

At the start of the second half, Wysinger hit a long two to tie the game 22-22, but Jake Curry, Kloster and Allen all led the Tigers on a 7-0 run to go ahead 29-22. The Tigers extended the lead to 37-27, mainly thanks to Allen, and led 40-30 after the third quarter. The Kahoks went to work at the start of the fourth quarter with a 5-0 run, as Wysinger and Nick Horras helped cut the lead to 40-35, but Marchetto answered with his big three that made the score 43-35, giving Edwardsville the momentum. The Kahoks got baskets

from Jake Wilkinson to cut the lead to 43-39, but Tillman helped put the game away with key baskets, including a three-point play with 52.1 seconds left to help the Tigers go on to their 51-43 win.

To go along with Tillman's 14 points and Allen's 11, Kloster had nine points for Edwardsville, while Marchetto added six points, Crosby hit for five points and both Curry and Stump scored three points each. The Kahoks were led by Chambers, who had 15 points, while Horras added 10 points, Wysinger had eight points, Wilkinson hit for six points and Reynolds hit for four points.