

Emily Sykes Leads With Eight Points, Collinsville Scores Game's First 12 Points, Warriors Lose Season Opener To Collinsville 70-24

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY - Emily Sykes led Granite City's girls basketball team with eight points, as Collinsville scored the game's first 12 points and led after the first quarter 29-5 en route to a 70-24 win over the Warriors in Granite's season opener Thursday night at Granite City's Memorial Gym.

After the Kahoks scored the first 12 points, Collinsville went on a 17-5 run the rest of the quarter and went on to their second win of the new season. The Warriors, however, didn't give up and kept playing hard throughout the entire game.

"I'm proud of the girls the way they didn't give up," said Warriors' assistant coach Craig Sykes, who sat in for head coach Greg Vaughn. "We know we have some things we've got to work on, getting them back in shape, finishing some plays, work on our shooting, working on the lay-ups. We've got a lot of things we've got to do, but I think they're capable of it, so we're going to get back at it again tomorrow."

Collinsville Coach Colin Moore is very excited about the start of his Kahoks this season at 2-0.

"I'm just pleased with how hard they worked pretty much the whole first half and into the third quarter," Moore said about the Granite City encounter.

Sykes felt that preseason practice went well for the team, in which the players worked hard and got ready for the new season.

"I've been working with the JV and coach Vaughn's been working with the varsity," Sykes said, "and we meet up at the beginning. We do some drills, then we split up. So I think he's planning on keeping them together a little bit longer to do some running and get them in better shape for the next game."

It's going to be a typical Granite City athletic team, one that works hard and gives their all every night and refuses to give in or give up, playing hard until the final buzzer.

"Oh, yeah, they didn't give up and played until the last second," Sykes said. "I told them as we were walking in we outscored them in the last 10 seconds of the game by 3-0," he said with a smile and laugh. "So we're going to take that for the next practice and move on and forget about this one."



Sykes has some very achievable goals for the Warriors this season.

"As far as goals go, we've got to work better," Sykes said. "We hope when we play them again, it's not quite as bad. We'd like to make it a little bit more competitive with the game, get into better shape. I think this team is better than what that scoreboard was, so we do have a lot of work we've got to do."

Led by a pair of free throws from Talesha Gilmore, a three from Katie Bardwell, a pair of baskets from Ella Guerrero and a three by Karly VanDyke, the Kahoks scored the game's first 12 points to go up on top before Emily Sykes scored the first basket of the season for Granite to make it 12-2. A three from Guerrero triggered another Kahok run, this being 17-3, with much of the damage done by VanDyke, Lily Carlisle and Gilmore, bringing the score to 28-2 before Megan Sykes banked home a three, as the Kahoks added a free throw to make the score 29-5 at the end of the first quarter.

The second quarter saw the Kahoks extend the lead to 40-5 on the strength of another Bardwell three, baskets by Danajah Willis, VanDyke and a three-point play by Gilmore. Emily Sykes scored to make the score 40-7, and near the end of the half, back-to-back baskets by Makayla Tanksley and Sophia Mangi made the halftime score 47-11 for Collinsville.

The second half saw the Kahoks continuing to extend their lead, outscoring the Warriors 17-8, but Granite started out by cutting the lead to 48-16, perhaps their best run of play on the night. During the running clock fourth quarter, Collinsville outscored Granite 7-5, but the Warriors were able to score the final three points on a free throw by Tanksley and a basket by Makayla Burgess to make the final 70-24 for Collinsville.

The Kahoks were led by Gilmore's 13 points as one of five players in double figures. Guerrero has 12 points, Bardwell had 11 points, both Carsyn Moad and Carlisle had 10 points each, VanDyke scored nine points and both Willis and Karley Call had five points apiece.

The Warriors were led by Emily Sykes' eight points, while Megan Sykes and Tanksley had five points each, Sophia Mangi scored three points, Alexis Ruiz had two points and Isabella Mangi had a single point.

The Kahoks open up the season at 2-0, while the Warriors start off 0-1 and next host Belleville East Monday night, then go on the road for the first time to play at Cahokia Nov. 28, both games starting at 7:30 p.m. Sykes knows that the Warriors will be ready for their game against the Lancers.

"Oh, year, he'll (Vaughn) will have them ready," Sykes said. "So we'll be back. This is just a little bump in the road to start the season. We'll get back in the gym tomorrow and start working for our next game, put this one behind us and forget about it."



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