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## Eagles Use Hot Shooting and Defense to Surge Past BU 80-68

### Eastern makes 10-of-18 from 3-point stripe and sinks 54 percent for the game

[box score](#)

If the Eastern Washington University men's basketball team liked the way it looked at the top of the Big Sky Conference standings entering the game, they'll really like the way it looks now.

Four players scored in double figures on a hot-shooting night for the Eagles, and EWU surged past Boston University 80-68 Friday (Nov. 22) in Irvine, Calif., in the 2K Sports Classic benefitting the Wounded Warrior Project. It was the first of three games in three days for the Eagles in the tourney.

Eastern entered the game on top of the Big Sky standings with two other teams at 2-1 on the season, and improved to 3-1 on the year with the convincing win. The Terriers, picked to win the Patriot League title this season, are now 2-2 after finishing 17-13 a year ago.

"I'm really proud of our players – we played a very complete game," said Eastern head coach Jim Hayford, whose team made 54 percent of its shots while holding the Terriers to 38 percent. "We played defense the way we wanted to. That was a very experience, efficient and well-coached team, and we held them to 38 percent.

"So we did it on the defensive end, and we were plus 12 in rebounding so we did it on the rebounding end too," he continued. "As far as our own offensive efficiency, we made 54 percent overall and 55 percent from three. It's just a complete basketball game and I'm really proud."

Sophomore Tyler Harvey sank 5-of-7 treys and poured in a team-high 21 points, with Venky Jois finishing with 20 points, eight rebounds and three assists. Point guard Drew Brandon had his second double-double in four games with 15 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists, and Ognjen Miljkovic came off the bench to contribute 14 points on 6-of-9 shooting.

"He's a really good player," Hayford said of his new point guard, who is averaging 11.3 points, 10.3 rebounds, 7.3 assists and 2.5 steals per game thus far. "What I like about him is he is really unaffected – he's going to play at his own speed and he plays hard. He's one of the best rebounding guards I've ever coached. Drew is obviously a great addition to our program. We had all these pieces coming back, but we needed to go find a point guard. He certainly is meeting our expectations."

Miljkovic, a wiry 6-foot-7 freshman forward, played 26 minutes because of a better match-up situation against the Terriers. Meanwhile, 6-foot-10 starter Martin Seiferth was shotless in eight minutes of action.

"Martin might end up being the leading scorer tomorrow, but for us that was the best match-up tonight," said Hayford. "As a freshman, O.G. played really, really tough. I'm proud of him."

In all, the Eagles made 54 percent of their shots and led by as many as 14 points in the second half after leading at halftime 39-34. The Eagles sank 10-of-18 3-pointers, and also out-rebounded Boston University 43-31.

Junior Parker Kelly added seven points to the Eagle cause, but it was his defense on D.J. Irving that made a bigger impact on the game. Irving, the preseason Patriot League Player of the Year, scored nine points in the first half on 3-of-3 shooting, but missed all six of his shots in a scoreless second half.

The Eagles trailed early 26-19, but used a 12-2 run to open a four-point advantage late in the first half. Miljkovic scored five of the points, and Jois had four in the surge.

A 13-4 run in the second half helped Eastern open its first double-digit lead of the game at 52-42 on a 3-pointer by Miljkovic with 14:50 remaining. The closest the Terriers came the rest of the way was seven, as the Eagles led by as many as 14 on five occasions.

"This Boston U team came out hot and they were throwing them in from everywhere," said Hayford. "Instead of hanging our head, they would throw a punch and we would come right back at them. There was no quit in us, just fight. They had a great start to the second half, but we matched that with energy. The result was a complete-game win."

The Eagles next take on LIU Brooklyn at 3 p.m. on Saturday (Nov. 23), then wrap up the tournament on Sunday (Nov. 24) when EWU plays host UC Irvine at 4 p.m.

"I told them I want more, I want more," said Hayford regarding what he told his team after Boston U victory. "It's fun being a coach and watching guys mature and develop. That's why you get into coaching. To see that growth through the offseason, I'm just really, really proud. We beat a team picked to win the Patriot League."

Both games will be broadcast by 700-AM ESPN, with Dennis Patchin calling the play-by-play in place of Larry Weir, who will handle play-by-play of EWU's football game this weekend. Saturday's basketball game will be broadcast on a delayed basis after the football broadcast and Sunday's will be live.

Following the tournament, Eastern plays a home game with Seattle on Friday, Nov. 29 at 6 p.m. at Reese Court. The Redhawks, who were 8-22 a year ago, are currently 2-2 with wins over Cal State Fullerton and The Evergreen State, and losses to Washington and Boise State. Seattle hosts UC Riverside on Nov. 25 prior to taking on the Eagles.

West Coast Conference powerhouse Saint Mary's will usher in an equally difficult month of December. Eastern travels to Moraga, Calif., on Dec. 8. to play the Gaels, who were 28-7 overall and 14-2 in the WCC in 2008.

