

## Lady Musketeers beat Mitchell, Southwestern to open the season

Written by George Browning  
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No one knew how good the Eastern High School girls' basketball team would be this year.

There was plenty of returning players, but the losses of players to graduation over the past two seasons would leave a lot of programs rebuilding.

Head Coach Mike McBride, just seems to be in re-load mentality as he has the Lady Musketeers flying out of the gate with a 2-0 record.

Eastern started the year with a thrilling 48-45 win over Mitchell, where they saw a 16-point lead disappear in the fourth quarter.

They followed that game with a 44-38 win over visiting Southwestern last Saturday.

Against the Lady Jackets of Mitchell, Eastern hit two threes in the third quarter to stretch their lead to 16, but never scored another field-goal.

+ "We hit back-to-back banked in three pointers and that gave us our lead," McBride said. "Mitchell called a timeout and had their backs against the wall and we relaxed a little bit and those two things combined to allow them back in it. We just really weren't strong with the ball during that stretch."

While Ernstberger hit some free throws, McBride said his team over-all didn't. The Lady Musketeers shot just 50 percent (15 of 30) from the charity stripe.

"We've got to do better with free throws," he said. "We have to step up there and make them."

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Senior Katie Ernstberger led the way with 14 points and helped seal the win at the free throw line.

“Katie did a really good job,” McBride said. “She has matured a lot with her game and her mental approach to it, as far as understanding things. I also ask a lot of her defensively because she is just so much quicker than most players. She is going to get the hard defensive assignment every game. She handled it well. She played all 32 minutes. She has come a long way. She is ready to step up to the challenge. We are looking forward to the future.”

McBride said Rachel Hamilton and Brooke Rodewig both had solid games and Bailey England hit a couple of threes early in the game.

“We played nine girls,” he said. “We have some depth and hopefully that will allow us to stay fresher longer.”

England was in the also played well category after game one, but in game 2, her sharp shooting took center stage.

The sophomore guard scored 12 points in the Lady Musketeers’ win over the the Lady Rebels.

Rodewig was on point shy of a double-double with 9 points and 10 rebounds.

Rebekah Feist and Hamilton chipped in with 8 points apiece.

Eastern totaled eight three-point baskets in the game and timely free throw shooting help seal the win.

The 2-0 Lady Musketeers will take the short trip down 60 Friday night to battle the Braves, but

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then will return home Saturday night to take on Providence.