

It's been a while since the West Washington girls' basketball program has made history, but Head Coach Wade Tomlinson and the seasoned Lady Senators did just that last week.

For the first time since they began playing girls' basketball at West Washington, the Lady Senators beat Salem and Eastern in the same year.

The latest of those victories was a 46-43 win over the Lady Musketeers.

"I am really pleased with the 4-1 start," Tomlinson said. "Our group of seniors is really playing hard. We haven't played great offensively, but we've been solid on defense at times. We have five kids who play good solid defense, but three of them are excellent defenders and that makes a difference."

As far as history goes, Tomlinson admitted to being surprised that with all the talented teams in West Washington's program history that they had never beaten both county rivals in the same year.

"Girls basketball started here in 1976, so that's the first time in 37 years," he said. "Surprisingly, we haven't celebrated or said a whole lot about it. That's what's good about having a deep senior class. They realize that it's a long season and every time they step on the court it can turn around. Winning helps their confidence, but we haven't focused on the past too much."

In the win over Eastern, West Washington had turnovers on five consecutive possessions and the Lady Musketeers built an 8-point advantage with less than three minutes to go.

Tomlinson said at that point, he began to think his team was in trouble.

Shana Keller stopped the bleeding for the Lady Senators when she hit a three. After a defensive stop led to a two-point basket for West Washington, they were right back in the game.

Another three tied the score and within a minute an 8-point deficit became a tie score.

The Lady Senators took the lead and held on for the win.

West Washington is off to a 4-1 start. It's the program's best start in more than a decade.

They aren't resting on that success, however.

Tomlinson said at this point, his team has maintained their focus every day and that must continue if they are to continue their winning ways.

"So far we are staying hungry and I don't mean just in games," he said. "We are staying hungry in practice and that's what keeps you sharp. The one area we have to improve is our shooting. We have to be a little more consistent in our shooting."

The Lady Senators will take on Crothersville Thursday and then will get an eight-day break from games until they travel to Henryville to play in the Washington County Invitational.

The Lady Senators will have a re-match with Eastern on Dec. 27 at 6 p.m. and Salem will play Henryville in the second game.

The winners of Friday's games will play at around 7:30 on Dec. 28 and Friday's loser will play at 6 p.m. Saturday.

Tomlinson said he is glad to see the girls have a chance to compete in a tournament here in the middle of the season.

"I like playing in a tournament setting and I especially like playing during Christmas Break," he said. "We've had seasons where there were three weeks between games and as a player it's hard to stay sharp with that much time off."

Thursday's game against Crothersville will be at West Washington.

The Lady Musketeers rebounded from their loss against the Lady Senators with a 41-36 win at Clarksville Saturday.

They are now 5-2 on the season and will also play one game between now and the county invitational when they host New Washington Thursday.