

No.4 Kirkwood women roll after slow start

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 16 January 2013 22:51 -

The players on the Kirkwood women's basketball team respect Coach Kim Muhl and like him a lot, but sometimes it seems like they play poorly just to torment him a little.

"Well, may-be," joked sophomore Kianna Jacobs, smiling mischievously at the suggestion. "He does get a little crazy at times."

The Eagles played miserably for the first 10 minutes against Iowa Central Wednesday night at Johnson Hall. They fired air-balls, passed the ball into the stands and generally messed up.

"That wasn't intentional," Jacobs insisted. "The first 10 minutes were rough. We did not like it at all."

The first 10 minutes were pretty awful, but the next 30 minutes were pretty darn good.

The fourth-ranked Eagles snapped out of their funk and rolled to a 74-50 victory over Iowa Central in an ICCAC game that kept them undefeated in the conference.

"The first 10 minutes were rough," agreed sophomore Bianca Dufelmeier, "but at least they never ran out on us."

Iowa Central took a 16-9 lead while Kirkwood was mucking around, but the Eagles caught fire and outscored the visitors 22-3 in the rest of the first half.

Kirkwood led 31-19 at intermission after the slow start and blasted to a 48-25 cushion in the early stages of the second half. Muhl has grown accustomed to his club's schizophrenia, but that doesn't mean he likes it.

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"That's just the way they are," he said. "That's the way this group is. You can kind of see it."

Fortunately for the Eagles, their funks don't last too long and they don't happen often enough to spoil a good season. Kirkwood raised its records to 16-3 overall and 5-0 in the ICCAC.

Jacobs, a 6-foot sophomore, did her share to get the club rolling with 24 points, 10 rebounds, three assists, two blocked shots and a steal.

"I had to play my role and pick my team up, and that's what I did," she said. "We kept pushing and pushing and knocking down shots."

Dufelmeier also did more than her fair share. The 5-foot-7 Aussie finished with 15 points, a career-high 13 rebounds and four assists, proving that a relatively short player can grab a bunch of rebounds.

Iowa Central (12-4, 3-2) has a penchant for launching 3-pointers, which gives backcourt players like Dufelmeier a chance to retrieve errant shots.

"Coach said they take 40 a game. So we were prepared for long rebounds," she said. "I was just watching it hit the rim. That was it."

Iowa Central attempted 35 3-pointers and hit 10 of them, accounting for 30 of its 50 points.

Muhl liked the way his team played in the last 10 minutes of the first half and for much of the second half, but was not overjoyed with the total performance.

"I'm not very happy," he said. "We won by 20, but we didn't close it real well. Little things."

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Babaye Oja led Iowa Central with 15 points.

IOWA CENTRAL (50): McRae 2 0-3 6, Doyle 1 0-0 3, Dentlinger 3 0-0 7, Easton 0 2-2 2, Harvey 2 0-0 5, Gregory 0 0-0 0, Seibert 1 0-0 3, Oja 6 0-2 15, Baker 0 0-0 0, Bengen 1 0-0 2, Koyamainavure 1 1-2 3, Binion 1 1-2 4, Yetmar 0 0-0 0. Totals 18 4-11 50.

KIRKWOOD (74): Jacobs 8 8-9 24, Chuol 5 1-2 11, Dufelmeier 6 1-1 15, Rohrbach 1 3-4 6, Fitzpatrick 4 0-0 9, Fallon 0 0-0 0, Hobbs 0 0-1 0, Gray 2 0-0 4, Faber 0 1-2 1, Henderson 1 0-0 2, Tow 1 0-0 2. Totals 28 14-19 74.

Halftime - Kirkwood 31, Iowa Central 19. 3-point goals - Iowa Central 10 (Oja 3, McRae 2, Doyle 1, Dentlinger 1, Harvey 1, Seibert 1, Binion 1), Kirkwood 4 (Dufelmeier 2, Rohrbach 1, Fitzpatrick 1).