

Fallon helps No.2 Eagles top DMACC

Written by Jim Ecker

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Kirkwood sophomore Mikayla Fallon has developed a successful theory for firing clutch 3-pointers this season.

Don't think. Shoot.

It worked perfect Saturday afternoon.

Fallon hit two clutch triples in the final stages to help the second-ranked Eagles top DMACC, 78-73, in a conference game at Johnson Hall.

Fallon made a 3-pointer to tie the game, 66-66, with 3:37 remaining and hit another one for a 73-71 edge with 50.5 seconds left to give Kirkwood the lead for good.

Fallon did not hesitate on the game-winner. She caught the ball on the wing, knew she was open and fired.

"That time I didn't think about it," she said. "It's like a mental thing for me. I knew I had to hit it."

Fallon, a 5-foot-9 guard from East Moline, Ill., finished with a team-high 16 points as Kirkwood raised its records to 13-3 overall and 2-1 in the ICCAC.

The Eagles built a 36-18 lead in the first half, but DMACC (9-6, 1-2) rallied and grabbed a 64-57 advantage with six minutes left for a 25-point change of direction.

"I think we were lackadaisical," said Fallon. "We were too relaxed. We thought we had it right off the bat, but they fought back and we had to get going. We did not play our best, but I liked

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our effort. We didn't give up."

Kirkwood caught a break when DMACC star Carlee Schuhmacher, a 6-foot-2 forward who has signed with North Carolina State, fouled out with 5:20 remaining and her team leading by seven points. The Eagles turned that seven-point deficit into a five-point victory with Schuhmacher on the bench.

"Carlee is kind of important to us," noted DMACC Coach Steve Krafcisin.

Kirkwood Coach Kim Muhl was not happy with the way his club squandered an 18-point lead, but he was gratified the Eagles found a way to win.

"We're a tired basketball team," he said. "We've played a tough schedule, and most of those kids are freshmen.

"What are we, 13 and 3? That's 16 games. Another four games and they're going to the tournament in high school. That's what people don't understand, is the wear and tear on the body."

Kirkwood played three ranked teams in three days at the Illinois Central Classic Dec. 28-29-30 before returning to conference action Saturday.

"This team is pretty resilient," said Muhl. "We've hit that January lull a little earlier than I would have thought. But if we can win and be somewhat tired and not play your best, thank goodness for that."

Ariel Sneed collected 15 points and 12 rebounds for Kirkwood. Danielle Woolfolk scored 12 points.

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Jalissa Felici and Taryn Wicks led DMACC with 19 points apiece. Schuhmacher finished with 17 points.

DMACC (73): Felici 5 6-8 19, Bunting 2 0-0 5, Wicks 5 9-13 19, Schuhmacher 5 6-8 17, Hall 3 1-2 9, Ray 2 0-1 4, Nelson 0 0-0 0, Thompson 0 0-0 0, Clarke 0 0-0 0, Rohrbach 0 0-0 0, Anderson 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 22-32 73.

KIRKWOOD (78): Sneed 5 5-7 15, Woolfolk 4 3-4 12, Tuttle 0 0-2 0, Fallon 4 5-6 16, Clark 3 0-0 6, Silva 2 2-2 7, Polite 3 0-1 7, Larson 0 0-0 0, Haynes 3 2-4 8, Bockholt 0 0-0 0, Kelso 2 3-4 7. Totals 26 20-30 78.

Halftime - Kirkwood 47, DMACC 34. 3-point goals - DMACC 7 (Felici 3, Hall 2, Bunting 1, Schuhmacher 1), Kirkwood 6 (Fallon 3, Woolfolk 1, Silva 1, Polite 1). Fouled out - Schuhmacher, Clark. Technical foul - DMACC Coach Krafcisin.