

Oh, Henry! Subs help Kirkwood prevail

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 04 January 2014 20:42 -

Everybody on the Kirkwood men's basketball team is cheering for Henry Uwadiae, a 6-foot-11 center from Nigeria who rarely gets to play for the Eagles.

Saturday, Big Henry gave his teammates something to cheer about.

Uwadiae and the rest of Kirkwood's bench brigade played important roles as the 16th-ranked Eagles defeated No.8 DMACC, 82-75, in a foul-plagued junior college basketball game at Johnson Hall.

Uwadiae had a big left-handed dunk that brought his teammates to their feet, blocked two shots and did a creditable job in the middle of a 2-1-2 zone defense with his long arms.

"He sparks our team," said Kirkwood Coach Bryan Petersen. "When Henry does something like that, it sparks our team. I was proud of Henry's effort."

Uwadiae played only six minutes, but they were six important minutes in a tight game.

"The team loves him," said sophomore Taylor Olson. "He brings a lot of energy to practice and in the games. We all realize that.

"We want him to succeed and we know that he can help us out. When he gets in there, we try to cheer him on. He needs that."

All of the big people in Kirkwood's starting lineup got in early foul trouble. Then the first two

Oh, Henry! Subs help Kirkwood prevail

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 04 January 2014 20:42 -

"biggs" off the bench had foul problems at well. Finally, Petersen gave Uwadiae a chance and was glad he did.

"I just want to contribute to the team," said Uwadiae, a redshirt freshman. "I love my teammates. I love our program and I'm proud of our success, and I just love to contribute."

Uwadiae originally committed to Wichita State, but now plans to play at Marshall University in West Virginia next year. Still raw, he's made big strides at Kirkwood but realizes he needs to keep improving.

"I know there's a reason I'm not out there," he said. "Whenever I'm called, I just want to do well."

Kirkwood's starting front line of Joe Tagarelli, Myzeah Batie-Gaddy and Jalen Currie played a total of just 32 minutes due to foul problems. Joseph Weeks, Chris Ward and Uwadiae - the next three big men on the roster - came off the bench and played 39 minutes to help the club. Jamaree Atwater also played a big role as a reserve.

"I just told the guys, that was a big-time team win," Petersen said after leaving the locker room. "Everybody had to be ready to go. Some of those guys were probably thinking they were not going to play, and they had to play crunch-time minutes when it counted."

The referees called 60 fouls in the 40-minute game - 31 on Kirkwood, 29 on DMACC - and that produced a steady parade to the foul line.

Olson cashed 16 of 18 free throws for Kirkwood and hit eight straight foul shots in the final 38 seconds to keep DMACC at bay. The Cedar Rapids Jefferson grad scored a game-high 24 points.

J.C. Fuller went 9 for 11 at the foul line and scored 20 points for the Eagles. Ajay Lawton went 9 for 10 at the stripe and scored 14. Kirkwood (11-3, 3-0) made 39 of 47 free throws and

Oh, Henry! Subs help Kirkwood prevail

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 04 January 2014 20:42 -

DMACC (14-3, 1-1) hit 33 of 42 in the choppy affair.

Derek Williams led the Bears with 17 points. Trey Sampson, a Xavier High School graduate, played 22 minutes for DMACC and scored five points as a reserve guard.

DMACC (75): Viser 1 2-2 4, Williams 4 6-6 17, Fuqua 4 5-7 13, Nazione 1 11-13 13, Steeve 0 0-0 0, Austin 3 0-0 8, Sampson 1 2-2 5, Guenther 0 4-6 4, Hurdle 4 3-4 11, DeFreitas 0 0-2 0. Totals 18 33-42 75.

KIRKWOOD (82): Fuller 5 9-11 20, Currie 0 1-2 1, Olson 3 16-18 24, Batie-Gaddy 1 0-0 2, Tagarelli 1 0-0 2, Atwater 2 1-2 7, Lawton 2 9-10 14, Weeks 2 0-0 4, Bussell 0 0-0 0, Ward 1 3-4 6, Uwadiae 1 0-0 2. Totals 18 39-47 82.

Halftime - Kirkwood 30, DMACC 30. 3-point goals - DMACC 6 (Williams 4, Viser, Sampson 1), Kirkwood 7 (Atwater 2, Olson 2, Fuller 1, Lawton 1, Ward 1). Fouled out - Fuqua, Nazione, Batie-Gaddy. Technical foul - Williams.