

Silva helps No.4 Eagles to easy win

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 22 January 2014 22:20 -

Kirkwood Coach Kim Muhl occasionally complains about his players and their perceived lack of effort at times, but he rarely complains about Taylor Silva.

If anything, Muhl thinks Silva sometimes tries too hard.

"She brings effort every day," Muhl said Wednesday night. "Her biggest problem, she brings too much effort sometimes and gets herself in trouble, but she's working on it.

"Great attitude," he said. "The mistakes she makes are usually because of playing hard, so it's hard to fault that a lot. You just try to correct it."

Silva made her second start of the season Wednesday at point guard and helped the Eagles defeat Southwestern, 66-44, in an ICCAC game at Johnson Hall.

The 5-foot-5 freshman from Bellevue, Neb., made three 3-pointers for nine points, collected six assists, grabbed three rebounds and made three steals as Kirkwood raised its records to 17-3 overall and 6-1 in the conference.

The Eagles are tied for second place in the ICCAC with Iowa Central, a game behind top-ranked NIACC.

Silva started in place of Danielle Woolfolk, who was benched in the first half for a violation of team rules. Silva, normally the backup point guard, stepped in and helped run the club.

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She knows her primary role on the team.

"The distributor," she said. "I worry more about my assists than I do my points. That's what a point guard should do. If somebody else has a better shot I'll give it to them, but I'm not going to pass up a wide-open shot, either."

Silva had offers to play NCAA Division II college basketball this year before Muhl offered her a spot at Kirkwood.

"Funny story," she said. "Coach actually was watching film of one of our rival high school's girls and he saw me on the film and called me up the next day. I came out for a visit and I loved it here.

"I had some Division II offers, but none of it felt like I wanted to be there, like that was the place for me. But coming to Kirkwood gave me the opportunity I wanted. I like the place I'm playing at right now."

Kirkwood did not play an exceptionally strong game Wednesday, but it was good enough to handle Southwestern (3-15, 1-6). Ariel Sneed led the Eagles with 12 points. Mikayla Fallon and Cassidy Clark scored 11 apiece.

Tyra Polite, who helped with the point-guard duties, picked up nine assists and six points.

Kirkwood shot only 12 for 42 on 3-pointers (28.6 percent) and never really clicked on offense. Muhl was not happy with the overall performance, which has been the case in recent games.

"Lethargic, not enough effort, no emotion, no intensity," he said. "It's going to come back and bite us."

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Silva is confident the Eagles will get it together.

"We just have to get over that little hump," she said. "Just that one extra stop, that one extra hustle play will make the difference in what we do, because we have the talent."

SOUTHWESTERN (44): Williamson 1 2-4 5, Vanderhoof 1 0-0 3, Knorr 6 3-4 16, Polson 6 1-2 13, Russell 1 0-0 2, Harris 1 2-4 4, Klockslem 0 0-0 0, Douglas 0 1-2 1, Sowers 0 0-0 0. Totals 16 9-16 44.

KIRKWOOD (66): Sneed 4 3-4 12, Tuttle 1 0-0 3, Silva 3 0-0 9, Fallon 4 0-0 11, Clark 5 1-1 11, Woolfolk 1 0-0 2, Polite 2 0-0 6, Larson 1 0-0 3, Haynes 2 0-0 4, Kelso 0 1-2 1, Robinson 1 2-3 4. Totals 24 6-9 66.

Halftime - Kirkwood 32, Southwestern 21. 3-point goals - Southwestern 3 (Williamson 1, Vanderhoof 1, Knorr 1), Kirkwood 12 (Silva 3, Fallon 3, Polite 2, Sneed 1, Tuttle 1, Clark 1, Larson 1).