

Larson triples her fun with No. 4 Eagles

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 28 January 2015 20:30 -



Kirkwood Coach Kim Muhl has given Kirsten Larson the green light to shoot a 3-pointer any time she wants.

That's smart coaching.

Larson broke the school record with nine 3-pointers and scored 27 points Wednesday night as the fourth-ranked Eagles spanked DMACC, 76-52, for their 14th straight win in an ICCAC conference game at Johnson Hall.

Larson, a sophomore from Belvidere, Ill., snapped the old school mark of eight triples by Diamon Beckford during the 2010-11 campaign.

Larson drilled three triples in the first 65 seconds and hit her fourth with the game barely three minutes old as the Eagles (18-4, 6-0) jumped to a quick 19-4 lead.

"There were a lot of wide-open looks and my team found me at the right time and I just knocked them down," she said modestly. "My shot just felt good tonight and everything was going good."

Larson finished 9 of 16 on 3-pointers. The record-breaker came with 15 seconds left in the game.

Muhl left his starters in the game because DMACC Coach Steve Krafcsin was still using a press defense with the game already decided. Muhl set he did not know Larson needed one

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more 3-pointer for the record,

but was glad she got it.

"She's a kid that works at it and she's gotten smarter in how to get open," he said. "She'll screen a little bit and she'll move and she'll hide.

"That's a benefit to her and she's bought into listening to that. You can't just stand there because people are going to start to guard you."

The DMACC Bears (14-8, 3-3) began the game in a porous zone defense. Krafcisin switched to a box-and-one and the Bears got back into the game, but the Eagles adjusted and won going away with a 27-7 surge in the second half.

Larson had made six 3-pointers in a game this season. She tied her own personal high early in the second half and kept firing. Her seventh triple made it 52-39, her eighth made it 71-46 and her ninth made it 76-49.



"I know most of the time when it's going to go in or be close and I know when it's going to be off," she said. "They all felt pretty good tonight. Some of them just went in and out."

There were a few clunkers along the way, but not many. "Sometimes my feet don't get set and I'm too rushed," she said.

Larson appreciates having the green light from Muhl, who has won 752 games during his 26 years at Kirkwood. "He always tells me to keep shooting and keep my head up," she remarked.

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Larson knew she needed one more 3-pointer to set the record. Like most of the others, it swished right through the net.

Tyra Polite collected 12 assists, with many of them on smooth left-handed passes to Larson.

"She always finds me at the right time," said Larson.

Taylor Silva collected seven assists. All told, Kirkwood had 26 assists on 30 field goals.

Polite is from Upper Darby, Pa., the same school that sent Beckford to Kirkwood. Polite also had seven points and six steals in a strong all-around performance for the Eagles.

"I'm on her all the time to get better, but she does a lot of things you can't teach," said Muhl. "You've got the East Coast swagger and the East Coast ballhandling. And she's left-handed, which makes her a little different. She's really clever with the ball."

Anna Martensen scored 12 points for Kirkwood.

Cassie Geopfert scored 17 points for DMACC.

DMACC (52): McAtee 1 0-0 3, Geopfert 5 4-6 17, Thompson 1 1-1 3, Vais 4 2-2 10, Anderson 0 0-1 0, Clarke 1 0-0 2, Green 0 0-0 0, Paulson 0 0-0 0, Harmon 2 3-4 9, Dumler 3 2-2 8. Totals 17 12-16 52.

KIRKWOOD (76): Silva 2 0-0 6, Polite 3 0-0 7, Larson 9 0-0 27, Martensen 5 2-6 12, Clark 2 0-0 4, Sneed 4 0-0 8, Miles 0 0-0 0, Downs 1 0-0 2, Isaac 3 0-0 7, Sudduth 1 0-0 3, Hutchins 0 0-0 0, Bockholt 0 0-0 0, Wood 0 0-0

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0. Totals 30 2-6 76.

Halftime - Kirkwood 38, DMACC 31. 3-point goals - DMACC 6 (Geopfert 3, Harmon 2, McAtee 1), Kirkwood 14 (Larson 9, Silva 2, Polite 1, Isaac 1, Sudduth 1).