

## Hutchins helps No. 6 Eagles chop Wood

Written by Jim Ecker

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Kirkwood Coach Kim Muhl thinks Cyerra Hutchins has the talent to play Division I basketball next season, but Hutchins doesn't know what she'll be doing a year from now.

She's pursuing a business degree and would like to run her own company some day. Maybe she'll play basketball next year or maybe she'll become a full-time student somewhere.

It's all up in the air.

"I'm not really sure if I'm going to play basketball after Kirkwood," Hutchins said Wednesday night. "I don't know if I want to focus on my schooling for now and go to Iowa.

"It depends on the money situation," she said. "I kind of want to stay in Iowa and stay around here. It depends on what schools are offering me and what."

Hutchins wants to own her own store some day, perhaps focusing on athletic clothing.

Hutchins showed why she could be in demand on the Division I recruiting trail with a solid all-around game Wednesday in a 78-49 victory over John Wood Community College at Johnson Hall.

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Hutchins made all five of her shots, including a sweet 3-pointer, and scored a game-high 14 points in just 18 minutes on the floor. She also had three assists, two rebounds and one steal as the sixth-ranked Eagles raised their record to 7-3.

Hutchins, a sophomore from Cedar Rapids Prairie, leads the balanced Eagles at 10.8 points per game. She's shooting 48.1 percent from the floor, 35.9 percent on 3-pointers and 75 percent at the foul line. She's averaging 3.2 rebounds and has collected 22 assists and 21 steals in 10 games despite being slowed this fall with mononucleosis.

"She can be Division I if she wants to. I think so," said Muhl. "She's a great '2' guard. She's a 5-9, 5-10 long '2' guard. They all want them, because she can shoot it."

Hutchins has received interest from Mount Mercy University, which plays at the NAIA level and offers scholarships, but that's been about it so far. That can change between now and the next signing period in April, especially if Hutchins continues to play well.

Muhl has limited her minutes to about 20 per game as she continues to work into top condition following her bout with mono, which bothered her for about five weeks from mid-October to late November.

"Oh my gosh. It was a long time," she said. "And getting back was difficult."

Hutchins also had mono during her junior season at Prairie and was better equipped to deal with the illness this time, in terms of proper nutrition and liquids to help maintain her strength and weight.

Hutchins was a reserve for much of her freshman campaign at Kirkwood last year until late in the season, when she assumed a more prominent role when a teammate was injured. She had several big games for the Eagles and it motivated her to prepare even harder for this year.

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"I can tell you it was a real energy boost," she said. "I was more confident in myself, Coach was confident in me."

Muhl said Hutchins returned a much better player this year.

"She had a great summer," he said. "Her biggest problem, we're trying not to go nuts here (with her playing time). She was out for five weeks, so her conditioning is not great yet, and it probably won't be until January or February, which is fine."

"Her strength right now, she's becoming well-rounded. She was pretty one-dimensional when she came here. Now she shoots with confidence, she'll drive the rim a little bit and she'll guard. She's not afraid to guard."

"In high school I think she was more concerned with taking it to the rim all the time. Now she'll shoot it. Every time she shoots people think it's going in."

Hutchins said she "feels fine," but understands Muhl's desire to limit her workload for the time being. It's a long season and she likes the way the club is coming together.

"I agree 100 percent with Coach," she said. "He says we're a work in progress. After every single game, we're a work in progress."

"I think we're putting everything together. We're getting ready for March."

Madison Wood collected a double-double for Kirkwood Wednesday with 10 points and 10 rebounds. Casey Miles and Caitlin Sudduth also scored 10 points for the Eagles.

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**JOHN WOOD (49):** Fox 4 0-0 9, Bailey 2 0-1 5, Watson 0 0-0 0, Plumer 3 1-2 7, Morris 3 1-1 7, Douglas 0 0-0 0, Melton 1 1-2 3, Gronewold 2 0-0 5, Bernal 3 4-4 10, Runner 1 1-2 3. Toals 19 8-12 49.

**KIRKWOOD (78):** Harris 2 1-2 7, Lemons 3 0-0 6, Miles 3 2-2 10, Downs 2 3-3 7, Wheatly 1 0-0 2, Oberman 2 0-0 5, Sudduth 4 2-2 10, Voss 1 0-0 2, Hutchins 5 3-4 14, Dampier 1 3-4 5, Jones 0 0-0 0, Wood 4 2-4 10. Totals 28 16-21 78.

Halftime - Kirkwood 37, John Wood 21. 3-point goals - John Wood 3 (Fox 1, Bailey 1, Gronewold 1), Kirkwood 6 (Harris 2, Miles 2, Oberman 1, Hutchins 1).