

No. 16 Eagles stun NIACC at regional

Written by Metro Sports Report

Friday, 11 May 2018 16:38 - Last Updated Friday, 11 May 2018 18:50



CLINTON - It's extremely hard to beat a good team in a postseason baseball tournament when you commit six errors, but the Kirkwood Eagles found a way Friday.

The 16th-ranked Eagles exploded for 10 runs in the top of the eighth inning and stunned NIACC, 13-5, in the second round of the regional tournament at Ashford University Field in Clinton.

Kirkwood (38-14-1) is scheduled to face seventh-ranked Southeastern (46-11) in the winners bracket final Saturday at 3 p.m.

The Eagles committed three of their errors in the bottom of the seventh inning to help NIACC grab a 5-3 lead, but instead of sulking they battled back and promptly took control of the game.

NIACC got sloppy on defense in the top of the eighth with two errors and a passed ball to help Kirkwood take a 6-5 lead, giving the Eagles a golden opportunity. They cashed in.

Korry Howell hit a two-run single to make it 8-5, and shortly later Izaya Fullard socked a two-run homer to make it 11-5. Spencer Wiskus drove in Ross Kramer with an RBI single to make it 12-5, then Kal Youngquist drew a bases-loaded walk for the 10th run of the inning to make it 13-5.

Adam Ketelsen, pitching in relief, retired NIACC in the bottom of the eighth and the Eagles won the game at that point by the tournament's eight-run mercy rule.

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The Eagles also won their first game in the tournament by the mercy rule, 9-1, over DMACC.

Ketelsen (8-1) pitched three innings in relief for the victory. NIACC scored four runs against Ketelsen, but none of those runs were earned due to Kirkwood errors. Cameron Leff pitched five strong innings for the Eagles, allowing one run on two hits.

Howell went 3-for-5 with two RBIs and three runs. Fullard was 3-for-5 with three RBIs and two runs. Wiskus and Joel Thompson drove in two runs. Kramer, Wiskus and Chili Moseley scored twice.

Southeastern won a four-game series against Kirkwood last weekend, 3-1, but two of those losses were by just one run.

The double-elimination tournament continues Saturday, Sunday and possibly Monday.

Kirkwood █ █ █ **110 010 0(10) - 13 12 6**

NIACC █ █ █ █ **000 011 3x - 5 5 2**

W - Ketelsen (8-1).