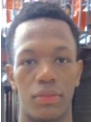


## No. 4 Eagles knocked off by Iowa Lakes

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 17 February 2019 06:39 -

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The Kirkwood Eagles have sunk from being the No. 1 team in the nation to the No. 2 team in their own league in a hurry.

Iowa Lakes handed the Eagles a damaging 82-75 loss in an ICCAC Conference game at Johnson Hall Saturday afternoon.

Kirkwood trails NIACC by a full game in the league standings now with three games left in the regular season in a battle for the No. 1 seed in the regional tournament.

The Eagles fell behind by 17 points early in the second half Saturday and never full recovered, despite a strong rally led by reserve guard Devonte Thedford. The Eagles got within one point at 61-60 and 68-67, but never got over the hump.

"The first 15 minutes of the game I thought we were really bad," said KCC Coach Bryan Petersen. "It didn't look like we had much energy.

"The good thing is, in the second half we didn't just lay down. We clawed our way back into it, so that was good."

Thedford, who had two points at halftime, poured in 21 in the second half with strong drives to the basket and finished with 23 points.

"He was great," said Petersen. "He stepped up when the team needed him"

Doug Wilson netted 24 points for Kirkwood, but the rest of the Eagles struggled. Thedford and

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Wilson combined to make 19 of 25 shots, but the rest of the group was 10 for 36 and missed open shots.

The Eagles were 3 for 20 on 3-pointers for 15 percent and missed 12 free throws in the seven-point loss.

"You can't shoot basically 50 percent from the foul line and expect to win a tough conference game," said Petersen, whose club was 14 for 26 at the charity stripe.

Kirkwood climbed to No. 1 in the NJCAA Division II national rankings two weeks ago, but since then the Eagles have lost two of three games to NIACC (95-81) and Iowa Lakes (82-75), with the only victory coming against Iowa Central in overtime (104-90).

Kirkwood has fallen to 21-4 overall and 9-2 in the conference, with half its losses coming in the last eight days.

"It's a long season for everybody," said Petersen. "We have to figure out how badly we want it."

Kevin Jennings shot 6 for 7 on 3-pointers and scored 22 points for Iowa Lakes (18-8, 8-3).

**IOWA LAKES (82):** M.Clayton 3 6-7 12, Grimes 3 0-2 7, Jennings 8 0-0 22, S.Clayton 2 6-8 10, Rau 2 1-1 5, Lewis 5 3-4 15, Friesner 1 0-0 2, Kikwaki 2 1-1 5, Robinson 1 0-0 2, Ards 1 0-0 2. Totals 28 17-23 82.

**KIRKWOOD (75):** Sims 1 0-3 2, Pickens 4 2-2 12, Kasperbauer 2 0-0 5, Wilson 9 6-9 24, Appel 0 0-0 0, Thedford 10 3-5 23, Sartorius 1 0-0 2, Stephenson 1 2-3 4, Gosnell 0 0-2 0, Arrington 1 1-2 3. Totals 29 14-26 75.

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Halftime - Iowa Lakes 40, Kirkwood 27. 3-point goals - Iowa Lakes 9 (Jennings 6, Lewis 2, Grimes 1), Kirkwood 3 (Pickens 2, Kasperbauer 1).