

Big rally saves KCC at nationals

Written by Metro Sports Report
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CLINTON, Miss. - The Kirkwood Eagles had one foot on the bus for the long ride back to Cedar Rapids Thursday, but a big rally kept them alive at the NJCAA Division II national softball tournament.

Kirkwood fell behind Madison, 8-0, in the second inning of an elimination game at Traceway Park, but the Eagles stormed all the way back for a 12-9 victory to play another day.

Kirkwood (2-1) will face Louisburg (2-1) in the double-elimination tournament Friday at noon. Eight teams are still playing in the tournament and eight have been eliminated.

The Eagles lost to DMACC, 6-3, in their first game Thursday to fall into the losers bracket. They had to play again right away and got off to a miserable start against Madison before igniting.

Kirkwood scored four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning to pull within 9-7, then the Eagles tacked on five more runs in the sixth to claim a 12-9 advantage in the wild contest.

Erin Hocker, who was the losing pitcher against DMACC, pitched three scoreless innings in relief against Madison and became the winning pitcher when Kirkwood's offense came alive.

Jayne Finn and Lauren Klaahsen were both 3-for-4 with a homer, three runs and two RBIs against Madison. Randyn Carter also went 3-for-4. Shelby Hulsebus and Taleah Smith had two hits. Sydney Albaugh and Smith had two RBIs.

Two former Metro softball stars helped DMACC top Kirkwood in the first game Thursday. Cedar Rapids Jefferson grad Avery Guy belted two homers and drove in five runs for the Bears. Cedar Rapids Prairie grad Morgan Lewis had two hits for DMACC.

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London Jackson and Klaahsen hit home runs against DMACC. Jackson was 2-for-3 with two RBIs.

The winners bracket semifinals feature DMACC against Phoenix and LSU Eunice against Highland. The losers bracket pits Kirkwood against Louisburg and Johnson County against Itawamba.

GAME 1

DMACC 102 020 1 - 6 12 0
Kirkwood 000 120 0 - 3 4 1

Swafford and Schumacher. Hocker and Butler. W - Swafford. L - Hocker. 2B - Stewart. HR - Jackson, Klaahsen. RBI - Jackson 2, Klaahsen.

GAME 2

Madison 620 100 0 - 9 10 2
Kirkwood 020 145 x - 12 15 3

Fink, Martin (5) and Ferch. Bouman, Hocker (5) and Barthelman, Butler (5). W - Hocker. L - Martin. 2B - Jackson, Carter. HR - Klaahsen, Finn. RBI - Hulsebus, Albaugh 2, Klaahsen 2, Finn 2, Carter, Smith 2. SB - Hulsebus, Smith.