

Lamaak finds good fit with Mustangs

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 14 January 2015 22:04 -



Kyle Lamaak played on some good intramural basketball teams at the University of Northern Iowa, but the Kennedy grad missed the real thing.

He's found what he was looking for at Mount Mercy.

Lamaak hit 8-for-9 shots and scored 18 points Wednesday night as the 18th-ranked Mustangs bounced Viterbo, 85-73, in a Midwest Collegiate Conference game at the Hennessey Recreation Center.

Lamaak graduated from Kennedy in 2011 and spent 2 1/2 years at UNI, but he yearned for serious competition.

"I really missed the game," he said. "I went to school for awhile and I just really missed it."

Mount Mercy Coach Paul Gavin tried to recruit Lamaak at Kennedy four years ago. So when Lamaak decided he wanted to play college basketball, he gave Gavin a call.

"He said there's a spot for me to play, so I jumped on that," he said.

Lamaak spent one semester at Kirkwood last winter, preparing for his official transfer to Mount

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Mercy this fall. He's a fourth-year junior with the Mustangs with another full year of basketball to go.

"We recruited him in high school, but he was a little burnt out on basketball," said Gavin. "He just wanted to compete again. The love of the game was rekindled last year and he remembered us. It's been a good fit for both of us."

Lamaak, a 6-foot-4 forward, played at 200 pounds at Kennedy. He climbed to 240 pounds during his years at UNI, but he's trimmed down to 218 at Mount Mercy and getting back in shape. He played 21 minutes Wednesday and was a force around the basket.

"Most of my shots were wide-open layups. It was easy," he said. "My teammates did a really good job of finding me under the basket when I was open. All I had to do was put the ball in the hoop."

Jake Misener, who was Lamaak's classmate and teammate at Kennedy, took care of his old buddy Wednesday and finished with eight assists. Other Mustangs did a good job of finding Lamaak as well.



Lamaak led five Mustangs into double figures. Alex Houston stuffed the boxscore with 15 points, seven rebounds and four blocked shots. Dondre Osborne did likewise with 12 points, six rebounds, five steals and four assists.

James Boonstoppel, a 3-point specialist, drilled four triples and scored 14. Ian Matos had 10 points for Mount Mercy (14-3, 2-0).

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Gavin called it another "workmanlike" victory, similar in style to other wins this season.

"We're competing hard for 30 minutes and teams are hanging with us," he said, "and then we kind of get that run and wear teams down. I think our depth and our balance are what it's all about."

Da'Quan Moore returned sooner than expected from a wrist injury and helped the Mustangs with eight points, three assists, two rebounds and a steal in 19 minutes off the bench. Gavin called Moore a "difference-maker" and was glad to have the 5-foot-8 junior from Waterloo back on the floor.

Lamaak wasn't sure what his role would be with Mount Mercy this season, but he's developed into a valuable reserve at power forward with his nose for the ball, aggressive nature and ability to compete.

"To be quite honest, I'm just glad I get in the game," he said. "I sat around and didn't play much basketball at UNI.

"I'm just blessed that I can play the game I love," he said. "I'm really happy that Coach Gavin gave me a chance to play."

Pete Drummond scored 21 points for Viterbo (9-9, 0-2).

VITERBO (73): Drummond 5 6-8 21, Diciaula 0 0-0 0, Bamke 3 4-4 12, Shepard 4 1-2 10, Engelstad 5 1-1 11, Fleischmann 0 0-0 0, Kennedy 0 0-0 0, Kastenschmidt 2 0-0 4, Poehls 0 0-0 0, Dreger 0 0-0 0, Hemauer 0 0-0 0, Haberman 4 4-5 15. Totals 23 16-20 73.

MOUNT MERCY (85): Houston 8 1-2 15, Osborne 3 6-6 12, Matos 4 1-1 10, Misener 0 1-2 1, Struss 1 2-2 4, Boonstoppel 5 0-0 14, Moore 3 0-0 8,

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Johnson 1 0-0 3, Price-Majors 0 0-2 0, Lamaak 8 2-4 18, Gogg 0 0-0 0.
Totals 32 13-19 85.

Halftime - Mount Mercy 40, Viterbo 32. 3-point goals - Viterbo 11 (Drummond 5, Haberman 3, Bamke 2, Shepard 1), Mount Mercy 8 (Boonstoppel 4, Moore 2, Matos 1, Johnson 1).