

Eagles top Louisburg in OT, make NJCAA semis

Written by Metro Sports Report

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DANVILLE, Ill. - Freshman Byron Harp scored nine points in overtime Wednesday night as the Kirkwood Eagles edged Louisburg, 89-83, in the quarterfinals of the NJCAA Division II national tournament in Danville, Ill.

The sixth-ranked Eagles (29-4) will face third-ranked Essex of New Jersey (28-4) in the semifinals Friday night at 6 p.m.

Kirkwood had a chance to win the game in the final seconds of regulation, but Harp and Da'Rion King missed shots.

The Eagles were clinging to a 78-77 lead in overtime when Harp went to work. His baskets gave the Eagles a pair of three-point leads at 80-77 and 82-79.

Kirkwood was leading 83-81 when Harp drilled a 3-pointer from the corner on an assist from Hunter Rhodes, making it 86-81 with 60 seconds left.

Louisburg pulled within 86-83, but Harp nailed two free throws with 19 seconds left to make it 88-83.

Louisburg missed a 3-pointer and Rhodes hit one free throw with 10.9 seconds left to finish the scoring.

Harp, a 6-foot-2 guard from Ankeny Centennial, scored nine of Kirkwood's 15 points in overtime.

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Kirkwood fell behind by nine points, 24-15, in the first half but rallied to pull within two points at intermission, 39-37.

The Eagles trailed 66-62 with four minutes remaining. Nick Richards scored on a driving shot to make it 66-64, then Jacob Olson gave the Eagles a 67-66 edge with 2:50 left with a 3-pointer. Olson scored again to make it 69-66 left with 2:15 remaining.

Rhodes gave Kirkwood a 74-71 lead with two free throws with 40.8 seconds left in regulation, but Raekwon Harney hit a 3-pointer with 30 seconds to go to tie it.

Kirkwood held for the last shot, but could not convert in the final seconds with two good opportunities.

Richards led Kirkwood with 22 points. Harp finished with 15 points. Rhodes scored 14 points, King 11 points and Olson 10.

Harney scored 25 points for ninth-ranked Louisburg College, which is located in North Carolina and finished the season with a 28-6 record.

KIRKWOOD (89): Bartlett 2 0-0 5, Rhodes 3 8-10 14, Richards 9 4-9 22, Olson 3 2-2 10, King 4 3-6 11, Jackson 2 0-0 4, Harp 5 4-4 15, Fagan 1 0-0 2, Meier 3 0-0 6, Wilson 0 0-0 0. Totals 32 21-31 89.

LOUISBURG (83): Hill 5 0-0 12, High 5 4-4 15, Hairston 4 0-0 9, Harney 7 9-11 25, Marshall 2 1-2 5, Vaughn 0 0-1 0, Delaware 1 2-2 4, Agee 3 0-0 8, Yates 2 1-1 5. Totals 29 17-21 83.

Halftime - Louisburg 39, Kirkwood 37. Regulation - Kirkwood 74, Louisburg 74. 3-point goals - Kirkwood 4 (Olson 2, Bartlett 1, Harp 1), Louisburg 8 (Hill 2, Harney 2, Agee 2, High 1, Hairston 1).