

No. 14 Eagles nipped by Marshalltown

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 30 November 2017 05:42 -



At first blush, you might think that a junior college basketball team from Marshalltown would feature a bunch of players from Iowa and around the midwest.

If so, you would be wrong.

The Marshalltown Tigers feature players from Spain, Taiwan, Senegal, Iceland, Serbia, Norway, Brazil, Sweden and Turkey. All told, 12 of their players hail from nine foreign countries. There are also six players from the United States, including two Iowans.

Their coach, Brynjar Brynharsson, is a native of Iceland who has recruiting ties all over the world.

That international crew from Marshalltown turned out to be one point better than the 14th-ranked Kirkwood Eagles Wednesday night.

Marshalltown scored the winning basket with 4.7 seconds left Wednesday as the Tigers trimmed the Eagles, 74-73, in an entertaining non-conference game at Johnson Hall.

Kirkwood had a man open in the corner for a 3-pointer at the buzzer, but the ball was not handled cleanly and time expired before the Eagles could launch a shot.

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There were 15 lead changes and eight ties in the 40-minute contest and it all came down to the final seconds.

Chris King gave Kirkwood a 73-72 lead with a strong drive to the basket with 13 seconds left, but Marshalltown responded with a driving layup by Oscar Kao with 4.7 seconds to go.

There was enough time for Kirkwood to respond, but the play did not go smoothly and the buzzer sounded on a tough loss.

Marshalltown has a strong team with an 8-2 record, but Kirkwood Coach Bryan Petersen was disappointed that his club did not find a way to win a tight ballgame.

"I'm just disappointed with how our team is responding to adversity right now," said Petersen, whose club fell to 5-3. "And I don't think we make enough winning plays."

Kirkwood owned a 47-39 lead early in the second half, but Marshalltown rode a 19-2 spurt into a 58-49 advantage.

Kirkwood recovered and took a 64-62 lead on a dunk by Doug Wilson, a 66-65 lead on another bucket by Wilson, a 71-70 edge on a 3-pointer by Carlo Marble and a 73-72 advantage on the layup by King with 13 seconds remaining.

Marshalltown answered each time, however, and went home with the victory.

Mohamed Thiam, a smooth 6-foot-9 forward from Senegal, led Marshalltown with 25 points and seven rebounds. He popped in three 3-pointers during Marshalltown's 19-2 run in the second half and was a tough match-up for Kirkwood all night.

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"He's a really good player. Credit to him," said Petersen. "That's what big-time players have to do, and that's what he did tonight."

Kao, who made the winning basket for Marshalltown, is a 6-foot guard from Taiwan. He finished with 17 points. Eduardo Lane, a 6-10 center from Brazil, scored 12 points for the Tigers.

King led Kirkwood with 17 points. Tajen Ross scored 15 and Wilson finished with 14.

Kirkwood has played a tough non-conference schedule this year and has suffered a few bumps in the road, but Petersen thinks the tough schedule will pay off in the long run.

"I hope so. That's why we do it," he said. "We want to get better. This is the time of year that you have to get better, especially with a young team."

"We don't like to lose," he said. "That's not why we're here. But at the same time, if you lose to good teams and learn from it, hopefully you will improve."

Kirkwood hosts Morton College Saturday at 3 p.m. in the second game of a doubleheader at Johnson Hall. The Kirkwood women host Iowa Western at 1 p.m.

MARSHALLTOWN (74): Kao 6 2-3 17, Thiam 9 3-4 25, Word 2 0-0 6, Vodovic 1 0-0 2, Lane 6 0-1 12, Foster 0 0-0 0, Ndiaye 2 0-0 4, Edwards 2 1-2 6, Tedesjo 0 0-0 0, Karadan 1 0-0 2. Totals 29 6-10 74.

KIRKWOOD (73): Stansbury 2 0-1 5, Marble 2 0-0 5, Ross 5 2-2 15, King 7 2-2 17, Wilsopn 7 0-4 14, Kale 2 0-0 4, Small 1 0-0 3, Johnson 0 0-0 0, Storey 1 1-1 3, Arrington 3 1-2 7. Totals 30 6-12 73.

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Halftime - Kirkwood 39, Marshalltown 37. 3-point goals - Marshalltown 10 (Thiam 4, Kao 3, Word 2, Edwards 1), Kirkwood 7 (Ross 3, Stansbury 1, Marble 1, King 1, Small 1).