

Ashton finds new home at Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 19 November 2014 22:18 -



Jordan Ashton hasn't had this much fun playing basketball since he led Mount Pleasant High School to the Class 3A state title in 2012 and was named captain of the all-tournament team.

Ashton spent two years at Northwest Missouri State, an NCAA Division II school in Maryville, Mo., before transferring to Kirkwood Community College, where he's fit in comfortably this season and is leading the Eagles in scoring at 16.6 per game.

Ashton tossed in a game-high 18 points Wednesday night as the Eagles cruised past the Loras junior varsity team, 117-55, at Johnson Hall for their seventh straight victory to begin the season.

Ashton, a 6-foot-4 guard, was redshirted at Northwest Missouri State as a true freshman in 2012-13 and played sparingly last year, scoring 37 points in 15 games. He had an episode with an irregular heartbeat last season and the coaching staff wanted him to take a medical redshirt this year, even though he was pronounced healthy and cleared to play.

Ashton decided to cast his lot somewhere else. Kirkwood Coach Bryan Petersen heard the news and acted quickly.

Ashton finds new home at Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 19 November 2014 22:18 -

"A couple of days after I decided to leave, Coach Petersen called me," he said. "I didn't really know much about Kirkwood, but I knew they were good. They had a good tradition and everything. I decided to come check it out and I liked it."

Petersen knew Ashton was a good player and received nothing but high recommendations from his sources in the basketball community.

"So I jumped all over it and tried to get him," he said. "It took a little bit of time, but we were able to get him."

Ashton averaged 18.4 points as a senior at Mount Pleasant and was named the Class 3A Player of the Year in Iowa. The University of Northern Iowa invited him to join their club as a preferred walk-on, but he decided to attend Northwest Missouri State instead.

Two years later, he's starting for Kirkwood and having a great time. He poured in a career-best 34 points in a 90-85 victory over Marshalltown and has fit comfortably into the program.

"I like it a lot," he said. "I like everything - the coaches, my team and we're off to a good start. We have to keep it up."

"I wanted to come here, take a year to get better and stronger and develop my game and then hopefully move to a higher level."

Ashton will have one year of eligibility at Kirkwood before needing to find another school. Petersen thinks he has a legitimate shot of playing at the NCAA Division I level next season.

Ashton finds new home at Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 19 November 2014 22:18 -

"I don't think it's too far off, to be honest with you," the coach said. "The way he shoots the basketball and his size and his basketball IQ, I think he could help a lot of programs. I think as a shooter he's definitely at that level."

Petersen said Ashton will have to show Division I coaches that he can play defense and rebound at a high level. Ashton knows that and has been working on those aspects of his game.

"He's been very solid," said Petersen. "I'm glad we have him. He knows how to play. He's been through it before. This is Year 3 for him in college basketball, so that's a huge advantage for him."

Kirkwood's game against the Loras JV was a glorified scrimmage that counts in the victory column for the Eagles. Matt Lassen collected 15 points, eight rebounds, four assists and three steals for the Eagles.

Chike Ukah shot 6-for-6 from the field and finished with 13 points and three blocked shots. Joe Tagarelli had 10 points and nine rebounds. Kareem Martin Jr. scored 10 points. Hunter Rhodes and Jacob Olson had nine points apiece. Josh Bartlett had eight points in nine minutes.

LORAS JV (55): Busch 4 2-2 13, Rubio 2 0-0 5, Shute 0 0-0 0, Derby 5 2-2 15, Larsen 1 0-2 2, Correa 0 0-2 0, Barry 0 0-0 0, Butzow 1 1-1 3, Claussen 7 0-0 17. Totals 20 5-9 55.

KIRKWOOD (117): Singleton 3 0-0 6, Lawton 1 2-2 4, Lassen 5 3-3 15, Ashton 6 5-5 18, Tagarelli 4 2-2 10, Bartlett 3 0-0 8, Rhodes 4 0-0 9, Weeks 3 0-0 6, Olson 3 3-4 9, Cowser 0 5-6 5, Martin 4 1-2 10, Ukah 6 1-1 13, Hyberg 2 0-1 4. Totals 44 22-26 117.

Ashton finds new home at Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 19 November 2014 22:18 -

Halftime - Kirkwood 56, Loras JV 25. 3-point goals - Loras 10 (Busch 3, Derby 3, Claussen 3, Rubio 1), Kirkwood 7 (Lassen 2, Bartlett 2, Ashton 1, Rhodes 1, Martin 1). Fouled out - Larsen.