

No. 4 Eagles top Tritons in OT

Written by Jim Ecker

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Kirkwood All-American Doug Wilson probably slept like a baby after Wednesday night's game.

He earned it. So did his teammates.

Wilson sparkled in the second half as the fourth-ranked Eagles survived Iowa Central, 104-90, in overtime in a fast-paced ICCAC conference game at Johnson Hall.

Wilson scored only two points in the first half and was not happy with the way things went, but he made amends with a sensational performance in the second half and overtime.

Wilson played all 25 minutes after intermission - all 20 minutes in the second half and all five minutes in overtime - and poured in 25 points during that span to finish with 27.

He became a Point-A-Minute scoring machine when the Eagles needed him the most.

"I was a little fatigued," he allowed, "but I also expected it. I'm looking to play 25 minutes when my team needs me to."

Wilson, a 6-foot-7 sophomore from Des Moines, connected on 12 of 14 shots in the second half

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with slick moves around the rim and quick drives to the basket.

"He's a great player," said Kirkwood Coach Bryan Petersen, who needed his star player on the floor for his scoring, rebounding and defense. "He had a tough first half. I was really proud of how he was able to channel his emotions and come out in the second half and do what he did.

"He made some huge plays for us."

Wilson felt he got banged around a little bit in the first half and was called for a technical foul when he said something to an official after a no-call on a drive to the basket, but did not let anything get in his way in the second half.

"My teammates and coaches really did a good job of making sure I kept my head up and played my game," he said. "I just got back into my groove in the second half."

Wilson had lots of help in the scoring department as Kirkwood raised its records to 21-3 overall and 9-1 in the conference, staying a half-game behind NIACC in the league standings.

Allante Pickens, held scoreless in a lopsided loss at NIACC on Saturday, responded with six 3-pointers and 20 points against Iowa Central. Luke Appel also scored 20 points before fouling out with 1:55 left in the second half.

Devonte Thedford gave Kirkwood a big boost off the bench with 16 points on strong moves to the basket at critical times. Seybian Sims grabbed 10 rebounds, helping the Eagles to a 47-27 bulge on the boards.

Kirkwood led 86-83 late in the second half, but Bryce Armstrong of Iowa Central drilled a 3-pointer from the corner to tie the game with 5.9 seconds remaining.

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The Eagles missed two shots to win the game in the final seconds of regulation and Wilson's put-back came after the buzzer. Kirkwood dominated overtime, 18-4, to dodge a bullet.

"I was really proud of the group in how we played in overtime," said Petersen. "We really did a nice job then."

Kemryn Jenkins scored 28 points for Iowa Central (10-16, 2-8). Royshawn Webb, a Cedar Rapids Jefferson grad, played a strong game and finished with 25 points for the Tritons.

IOWA CENTRAL (90): Armstrong 5 1-2 12, Kramer 3 0-0 9, Webb 11 0-0 25, Bailey 2 0-0 4, Kephart 1 0-0 2, La Pointe 0 0-0 0, Jenkins 9 6-8 28, Moss 1 0-0 2, Jarvis 2 0-0 4, Dalton 1 2-4 4. Totals 35 9-14 90.

KIRKWOOD (104): Sims 2 2-2 7, Pickens 7 0-0 20, Kasperbauer 3 0-0 8, Wilson 13 1-4 27, Appel 7 6-10 20, Thedford 7 2-2 16, Sartorius 1 0-0 3, Stephenson 1 1-2 3, Gosnell 0 0-0 0, Arrington 0 0-0 0. Totals 41 12-20 104.

Halftime - Kirkwood 43, Iowa Central 39. 3-point goals - Iowa Central 11 (Jenkins 4, Kramer 3, Webb 3, Armstrong 1), Kirkwood 10 (Pickens 6, Kasperbauer 2, Sims 1, Sartorius 1).