

Hobbs helps Kirkwood women top DMACC

Written by Jim Ecker

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The dysfunctional Kirkwood women's basketball team won another game Thursday night.

Coach Kim Muhl uses that word all the time to describe his team. He gets no argument from his players.

"Dysfunctional is us," freshman guard Lexi Hobbs said humorously with a smile. "We are VERY dysfunctional. It works, though."

The third-ranked Eagles topped No.15 DMACC, 60-53, at Johnson Hall for their 13th straight victory despite committing 20 turnovers, shooting 55 percent at the foul line and getting beaten on the backboards.

"Dysfunctional," moaned Muhl, reaching for his favorite word.

As Hobbs noted, it's working. The Eagles, who gave Muhl his 700th victory on Saturday, raised their records to 20-3 overall and 9-0 in the conference.

"They're dysfunctional, but they get it done," the coach said. "They get through it, some way."

Hobbs, a 5-foot-9 guard from Dunlap, Ill. (near Peoria), helped by collecting 12 points and nine rebounds in 17 minutes off the bench. She led the Eagles in rebounding and shared scoring honors with Kianna Jacobs.

Hobbs thinks the key is teamwork and blending the club's overall talent together.

"We just all complement each other," she said. "We all have our weaknesses and our strengths."

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We stick together."

Muhl has been frustrated (and sometimes bemused) by his inability to get through to his players. He claims he might have more success if he tried "modern" methods of communication.

Hobbs had heard that before.

"Everytime he's like, 'You would get this play right if you would check your twitter or facebook or if I text-messed it to you,'" she remarked. "We say, 'OK, Coach.'

"Yes, he's always on us about that."

The dysfunctional Eagles had to survive a scare at the end Thursday. DMACC (16-6, 5-3) pulled within 54-53 with two minutes left, seeking to hand Kirkwood a rare defeat at home, but the Eagles produced when it counted.

Jacobs hit two free throws to make it 56-53. The visitors, coached by former Iowa Hawkeye Steve Krafcisin, missed a 3-pointer that would have tied the score and missed a putback before Kirkwood grabbed the rebound.

Whitney Rohrbach fed Whitney Henderson for a layup and 58-53 advantage with 50 seconds remaining. DMACC missed another 3-pointer and Rohrbach made two free throws with 7.6 seconds left to secure the 60-53 conquest.

"We didn't play very smart tonight. We played well enough," said Muhl.

"We didn't rebound very well, because they were too busy being mad at me. And that's the way it is."

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Actually, Muhl saw a few bright spots.

"They're slowly starting to buy in a little bit," he said. "They haven't bought in totally, but they're starting to pass the ball a little better to each other."

Muhl liked the way Hobbs played as a key reserve. "She was great the first half," he said.

Alexis Fitzpatrick contributed 10 points, eight assists and five steals for Kirkwood.

DMACC (53): Felici 1 4-6 7, Wicks 3 1-2 7, Schuhmacher 5 4-6 14, McCoy 0 2-2 2, Fynaardt 2 2-2 6, Bunting 0 0-0 0, Ray 1 0-0 3, Binder 0 0-0 0, Frisch 2 0-2 4, Kullmer 3 0-0 7, Robeoltman 1 0-0 3. Totals 18 13-20 53.

KIRKWOOD (60): Jacobs 4 4-8 12, Chuol 3 0-1 6, Dufelmeier 3 0-0 7, Rohrbach 2 1-1 5, Fitzpatrick 3 2-2 10, Fallon 0 0-0 0, Hobbs 4 2-2 12, Gray 0 0-0 0, Faber 1 1-2 3, Henderson 1 1-2 3, Tow 1 0-2 2. Totals 22 11-20 60.

Halftime - Kirkwood 33, DMACC 28. 3-point goals - DMACC 4 (Felici 1, Ray 1, Kullmer 1, Robeoltman 1), Kirkwood 5 (Fitzpatrick 2, Hobbs 2, Rohrbach 1).