

## Faber helps No.3 Eagles belt Ellsworth

Written by Jim Ecker

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Haley Faber took a little good-natured teasing from her teammates Saturday afternoon as she chatted with a reporter.

Faber had just helped No.3 Kirkwood pound Ellsworth, 78-42, with a nice flurry in the second half, but the 6-foot freshman has rarely been interviewed this year as she's adjusted to life as a reserve with modest stats.

That led to the teasing as teammates reached for their cell-phone cameras to capture the moment of Faber talking about her role on the team.

It was a good role Saturday as Faber scored eight points, grabbed four rebounds and blocked two shots in just 10 minutes of action.

"It was good to get some momentum going," she said.

Faber has played in all 24 games for Kirkwood as a reserve post player. She's averaging 2.8 points and 1.9 rebounds, but Coach Kim Muhl has seen steady improvement.

"I think she's coming on more and more as she starts to get more comfortable. She's good," he said.

"We're working on her conditioning. Once we get that, she'll be a nice player and give us more minutes because she can shoot the ball. She's really good."

Faber was a two-sport athlete at Dowling Catholic High School. She played on the varsity basketball team for all four years and was named second team all-CIML as a senior, averaging 9.4 points, 4.8 rebounds and 2.7 assists.

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She was the Class 4A state champion in the discus last May and placed third in the same event at the Drake Relays.

Faber enrolled at Drake University and joined the women's basketball team there as an invited walk-on this past summer, then changed her mind and switched to Kirkwood. She worked out with the NCAA Division I Bulldogs for more than a month.

"I was with them over the summer and then I came here at the end of July," she said. "It just wasn't the right fit."

Kirkwood has a good supply of post players with Kianna Jacobs, Friday Chuol, Whitney Henderson, Krissi Tow and Faber. Jacobs and Chuol are the starters, with Henderson, Tow and Faber in relief.

"I want to get more in shape, so if someone gets in foul trouble I can help," said Faber. "I think that's what he (Muhl) wants right now, being more aggressive off the bench."

Faber scored all eight of her points Saturday during an 11-5 spurt as the Eagles (21-3, 10-0) grabbed a 59-33 lead. She made three field goals near the basket and also hit a soft 10-foot jumper.

"She could be a nice player for us," said Muhl. "Today was good. She did some nice things."

Jacobs led Kirkwood with 20 points, 10 rebounds, three steals and two blocked shots. Bianca Dufelmeier contributed 11 points and eight assists. Alexis Fitzpatrick had seven assists.

The Eagles thumped Ellsworth on the backboards, 55-29. The Eagles shot 9 for 19 on 3-pointers and were 15 of 16 at the foul line.

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Celine Jolicoeur led Ellsworth (9-14, 2-7) with 19 points. Former Cedar Rapids Jefferson prep Brittney Steffeny scored 10 points for the Panthers.

ELLSWORTH (42): Campbell 2 1-2 5, Lambert 2 0-0 4, Johnson 1 0-0 2, Steffeny 4 1-4 10, Olsen 1 0-3 2, Jolicoeur 3 13-14 19, Mejia 0 0-0 0, Heusinkveld 0 0-0 0. Totals 13 15-24 42.

KIRKWOOD (78): Jacobs 6 8-8 20, Chuol 1 2-2 4, Dufelmeier 4 0-0 11, Rohrbach 2 3-4 7, Fitzpatrick 2 0-0 5, Fallon 1 0-0 3, Hobbs 2 0-0 6, Gray 2 0-0 6, Faber 4 0-0 8, Henderson 1 0-0 2, Tow 2 2-2 6. Totals 27 15-16 78.

Halftime - Kirkwood 30, Ellsworth 15. 3-point goals - Ellsworth 1 (Steffeny 1), Kirkwood 9 (Dufelmeier 3, Hobbs 2, Gray 2, Fitzpatrick 1, Fallon 1).