

No.13 Eagles stumble at home

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 08 January 2014 23:21 -

The Kirkwood men's basketball team entered Wednesday night's contest against Marshalltown with a perfect 8-0 record at home and an impressive scoring average of 86.3 points per game, but the Eagles can kiss those numbers goodbye.

Marshalltown dominated the 13th-ranked Eagles much of the night and spanked the home team, 66-51, in a non-conference affair at Johnson Hall.

It was Kirkwood's worst margin of defeat this season and its lowest output of the year by 20 points.

"Marshalltown was ready to play and we weren't. That's the bottom line," said KCC Coach Bryan Petersen. "They played with more energy, they executed better. Their guys wanted it more than we did."

Marshalltown is a Division I junior college basketball team and Kirkwood competes at the Division II level, which reflects a different financial commitment to their programs. The visiting Tigers appeared to have players who were a little longer and a little quicker, as well as better jumpers and better shooters.

The Tigers (8-7) bolted to a 23-point lead at 49-26 in the second half and withstood a five-minute rally by the Eagles, who used a 13-1 spurt to pull within 11 points at 50-39. Marshalltown promptly reeled off eight straight points for a 58-39 advantage and that was that.

"It was too late. It takes so much energy to make up that deficit," Petersen said. "You can't do that (fall behind by 23), especially at home. It's disappointing."

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"But a lot of that is on me, too," he said. "It's not just the guys. It's on me as well. I've got to get them ready."

Marshalltown beat Kirkwood on the backboards (39-30), made 10 more trips to the foul line and hit four more 3-pointers than the Eagles. Kirkwood shot a woeful 3 for 17 on 3-pointers and was a weak 6 for 13 at the foul line.

"We just did not have any urgency tonight," said Petersen. "We don't have an excuse for this. We have to be ready to go. It's a home game. When you're on your home floor, you expect to win."

Petersen saluted the victors.

"When you play with good energy and you're playing for your team, good things happen," he said. "And that's what they did."

"They were attacking, we were on our heels. We did not attack them."

Joe Tagarelli led Kirkwood with 19 points. Taylor Olson scored 10 points. Henry Uwadiae, a 6-foot-11 center from Nigeria, sparked the Eagles with six rebounds and four blocked shots in 12 minutes off the bench.

Mike Rodriguez topped Marshalltown with 16 points. Troidell Carter collected 15 points and 14 rebounds. Guilherme Verardo scored 14 points.

MARSHALLTOWN (66): Rodriguez 4 6-7 16, Green 3 1-4 8, Gatali 2 2-4 7, Carter 6 36 15, Cunningham 3 0-0 6, Johnson 0 0-0 0, Strong 0 0-0 0, Verardo 5 1-2 14. Totals 23 13-23 66.

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KIRKWOOD (51): Fuller 3 0-0 6, Currie 1 0-1 2, Olson 3 1-2 10, Batie-Gaddy 1 0-0 2, Tagarelli 8 3-5 19, Atwater 0 0-00, Lawton 1 1-2 3, Lassen 0 0-0 0, Weeks 2 0-0 4, Ward 1 0-0 2, Uwadiae 1 1-3 3. Totals 21 6-13 51.

Halftime - Marshalltown 34, Kirkwood 22. 3-point goals - Marshalltown 7 (Verardo 3, Rodriguez 2, Green 1, Gatali 1), Kirkwood 3 (Olson 3). Fouled out - Gatali.