Written by Jim Ecker Thursday, 07 March 2019 05:58 -



The Kirkwood women's basketball team plans to spend the weekend in Mason City, but the Eagles are not going there for the fine cuisine or weather.

The fourth-ranked Eagles are headed to Mason City for the final two rounds of the NJCAA Division II regional tournament, with a trip to the national tournament the ultimate prize.

Kirkwood reached the semifinals of the regional Wednesday night by pounding Southwestern, 87-49, in the opening round at Johnson Hall.

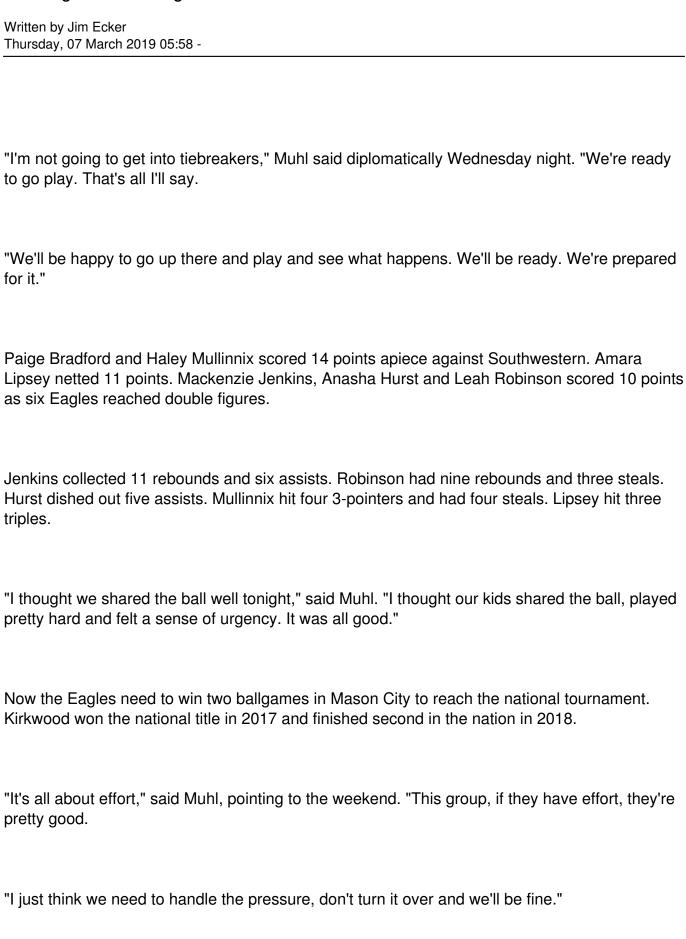
The Eagles led, 47-11, at halftime and put the game on cruise control in the second half.

Kirkwood (26-6) will face DMACC (16-14) in the semifinals Saturday at 3 p.m. in Mason City. NIACC (25-5) will meet Iowa Central (18-12) in the other semifinal, with the winners colliding Sunday for the regional title.

NIACC, which is located in Mason City, is hosting the semifinals and finals as the No. 1 seed in the regional. NIACC and Kirkwood tied for the conference title and swapped six-point victories during the regular season, but NIACC got the No. 1 seed based on point differential against all the other teams in the ICCAC conference.

Kirkwood Coach Kim Muhl does not like the way "point differential" was employed to break the tie, thinking it can lead to unsportsmanlike conduct by teams that might be inclined to run up the score against a hapless opponent. It did not escape Muhl's attention that NIACC scored 131 points against winless Ellsworth when NIACC and Kirkwood were battling for the No. 1 seed.

No. 4 Eagles cruise in regional



Tina Lair-Van Meter scored 13 points for Southwestern (11-18).

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SOUTHWESTERN (49): Hunter 2 0-0 4, Brice 0 4-4 4, Moya 1 3-4 5, Romo 2 0-0 5, Lair-Van Meter 6 1-1 13, Haynes 1 1-2 3, Willis 2 2-2 7, Aviles 0 2-2 2, Jordan 3 0-1 6. Totals 17 13-16 49.

KIRKWOOD (87): Bradford 6 2-2 14, Jenkins 5 0-0 10, Gaston 2 0-0 4, Hurst 4 0-0 10, Mullinnix 5 0-0 14, Lipsey 3 2-2 11, Kennedy 0 0-0 0, Myers 0 1-2 1, Tomaszewski 3 0-0 7, Robinson 2 5-6 10, Mensen 2 2-2 6. Totals 22 12-14 87.

Halftime - Kirkwood 47, Southwestern 11. 3-point goals - Southwestern 2 (Romo 1, Willis 1), Kirkwood 9 (Mullinnix 4, Lipsey 3, Tomaszewski 1, Robinson 1).