Tigers roll to 25-18, 25-22 win in Alton Volleyball Regional opener

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
October 26 2016 6:15 AM

ALTON – Edwardsville's girls volleyball team is on a mission.

The goal is a simple one: Win an IHSA regional championship.

The Tigers haven't won a regional since 2013; to get out of the regional is one of their goals.

"I think it's definitely a motivator for this group, much like the (Southwestern Conference) title was," said **EHS coach Jami Parker** after the Tigers eliminated **Chatham Glenwood** 25-18, 25-22 in Tuesday night's IHSA Class 4A Alton Regional semifinal at Alton High's gym.

The win put the Tigers at 29-6 for the and sent them to Thursday's regional final against Quincy, who defeated Springfield 25-13, 25-17 in Tuesday's nightcap; the match is set for 6 p.m. Thursday, with the winner advancing to next week's Chatham Glenwood Sectional against the O'Fallon Regional winner; that semifinal match will be played at Belleville West at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, with that winner going to the sectional final at 6 p.m. Nov. 3 to advance to the Normal Community Supersectional. Chatham was eliminated at 18-13.

"I definitely think it's a motivator to work through the playoffs," Parker said. "Everybody wants to win, including us; that's definitely a goal this year."

Parker felt the Tigers came out a bit tight. "I think we did," Parker said. "We were playing really loose and really well at (last weekend's tournament at LaGrange Lyons in the Chicago suburbs); tonight, it was just the playoffs, it has a different feel to it.

"We have some experience, but we a lot of youth on the team too; it was just one of those where we came out a little bit tight tonight. I think that, after we get a game under our belt, we'll work it out and we'll be back Thursday."

"We kind of played tight tonight," the Tigers' **Kate Martin** said. "We didn't play to the best of our ability; I think we got the thought of 'it's playoffs' in our head too much. We know now that we need to play the way we have been playing and play looser and have more fun.

"We know we have the first regional game down; the next regional game, we'll know what to expect and we'll do better next time."

Edwardsville got out to a 3-1 lead early on, but the Titans bounced back to tie the game at 4-4 before the Tigers got on a run to grab a 9-5 lead to force Chatham to call time out. The Titans scored the next two points to get back to 9-7 before Edwardsville opened up a small lead at 14-12.

Chatham then went on a four-point run to take the lead before Edwardsville countered with a two-point burst to tie it at 16-16. The teams traded the next several points before the Tigers took the lead for good at 19-17, then closed out the game with a five-point burst at 19-18 to take the win.

The Titans scored the first two points of Game 2, but the Tigers got back to 2-2 before the two teams traded points to get the game to 4-4 before Chatham moved head at 6-4. Edwardsville bounced back and went ahead themselves as the teams traded the lead before Chatham forged ahead at 12-9.

Edwardsville bounced back and tied it at 12-12 before taking the lead for good with a burst that made it 15-13. Chatham refused to go away and stayed with Edwardsville, getting to within a point four times, but Edwardsville kept coming up with the answers to Titan challenges to hold on to the lead; the closest the Titans could get from that point in the game was two points, but a hit going wide gave the game and the match to Edwardsville for the final point.

Martin, Nikki Meyer and Shelbey Saye each had five points from serve for the Tigers, with Saye acing once. Martin and Rachel Pranger had 10 kills each, with Martin and Corinne Timmerman each recording two blocks; Rachel Verdun had 21 assists and Megan Woll 17 digs, with Meyer adding eight digs.

"It'd be huge" if the Tigers could get out of the regional, Martin said. "We all really want it; it's been a goal of ours since the beginning of the season to win the regional and go farther. It'd be amazing and really fun if we won."