

Knights topple Lovejoy for IHSA Class 1A girls volleyball championship

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CLASS 1A METRO EAST LUTHERAN REGIONAL FINAL

METRO EAST LUTHERAN 21-25-25, LOVEJOY 25-19-19:

EDWARDSVILLE - Metro East Lutheran rallied as a team in game two of a IHSA Class 1A girls volleyball regional final match against Lovejoy at home and pushed on to another championship.

The Knights had to survive a scare from Lovejoy in the Knights' Class 1A regional final at Hooks Gym Thursday, but advanced with a 21-25, 25-19, 25-19 win over the Wildcats.

The 11-22-1 Knights moved to next week's Lebanon Sectional, where Clay City, 25-22, 25-14 winners over Oblong in their own regional final, will await at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday. That winner meets the Woodlawn-Farina South Central winner in the other semifinal, set for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, in a 6 p.m. Thursday match for a trip to the Nov. 5 Christopher Supersectional.

After falling in the first game, the Knights rallied together and pulled out the next two games. Lovejoy did rally some late in the third game after being behind 24-17, claiming two points, but then the Knights pushed through to capture the 25-19 final game victory.

Metro-East coach Jon Giordano said every night in these playoff situations is always its own experience.

“During the last two games, we had some nice stretches playing well,” Giordano said. “Getting back into it in the second game set the stage for the third game. It is so easy to get tentative and play not to lose and not play to win. I think we struggled with that early tonight.”

Giordano said the team came out of their shells more in game two and began to spread the ball around more offensively.



The coach credited **Danielle Timmermann** and **Lydia Flaherty** both with “phenomenal” efforts.

Timmermann was all over the court both at the net and in the middle of the playing area, demonstrated by her nine kills and 29 digs. Flaherty had 37 assists for the Knights.

“The first game was definitely a rough game, but we came back in the second game,” Timmermann said.

Five of last seven years MELHS has won the regional, Coach Giordano said. Last year, MELHS faced Clay City in the sectional and he said his team had a lot of work to do in preparation for that Tuesday match.

Timmermann said she thought MELHS had a good shot against Clay City this time in the sectional.

“We just have to play together as a team,” she said.

The Metro East Lutheran stats were as follows:

Lydia Flaherty - 37 assists, 8 service points, 2 aces

Danielle Timmermann - 9 kills, 29 digs, 6 service points, 2 aces

Ashlee Robinson - 10 kills, 5 blocks

Ellen Schulte -10 kills, 5 blocks, 11 service points, 3 aces

Emily Schwarz -18 digs

Emma Eberhart - 7 service points, 14 digs

