



REGIONAL CHAMPIONS: Tigers boys volleyball team prevails in tight match against Maroons

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GRANITE CITY – Edwardsville's boys volleyball team advanced to their own IHSA sectional tournament as the Tigers eliminated Belleville West, coming from behind twice to defeat their Southwestern Conference rival Maroons 25-22, 25-21 in Wednesday evening's IHSA Granite City regional final at Memorial Gym.

“You always have to work for a regional championship,” Edwardsville head boys volleyball coach Andy Bersett said. “The way they do regionals now, there are no cupcakes to the regional championship. Belleville West is playing good volleyball at the end of the year. That is the testament to their coach. They played almost perfect in that first set.”

“We made some errors in the second game and weren’t clicking. It was a good testament to our guys that they stayed the course. It was 16-7 and I looked over at one of my assistant coaches and said this is going to be difficult to come back. We just took it one point at a time. I am impressed by the way our team came back. I give them credit for staying in every point.”

The first game Wednesday was tight throughout between the Tigers and Maroons, tied at 15-all, then Belleville broke ahead to a 21-18 lead. The Tigers went on a run and scored seven consecutive points to notch a 25-21 first-game win.

In game two, Belleville dominated the early stages, rolling to a 16-7 lead. The Tigers' Jack Grimm smashed a spike that set the tone for a comeback and took the score to 17-9. Belleville West increased its lead to 20-19, then Edwardsville again bounded back with the score 22-21 Belleville. The Tigers scored four consecutive points for a 25-21 second-game triumph.

The Tigers went to 24-8 on the year with the win, while the Maroons bowed out at 16-20-1. EHS will take on Belleville East regional champ O'Fallon, 25-22, 25-15 winners over Belleville Althoff Wednesday, at 6 p.m. Friday in a sectional semifinal contest at Liberty Middle School in Edwardsville; Friday's other sectional semifinal pits Chicago-area schools Frankfort Lincoln-Way East against New Lenox Lincoln-Way Central at 6 p.m. Friday at Tinley Park Andrew, with Friday's winners going up against each other with a state quarterfinal berth on the line at 6 p.m. Tuesday at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

The sectional champ meets the Winnetka New Trier sectional champ in a state quarterfinal match at 11 a.m. June 2 at Hoffman Estates High School in suburban Chicago; the state semifinals and final will be played June 3.

Grimm led EHS with an eight-kill night, with Nick Allen getting seven kills and Evan Billiter adding five kills on the night; Lucas Verdun contributed 24 assists and four kills, while Bob Dresner had eight digs and Verdun had eight points on serve with an ace. Allen and Grimm scored six points each with Allen getting an ace on the evening.







