



Bode, rest of boys volleyball team, proud to bring regional crown back to Edwardsville

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE – Bringing the regional volleyball championship back to Edwardsville meant a lot to senior Will Bode and the other seniors.

Last year, Belleville West snapped Edwardsville's streak of five consecutive boys' volleyball titles, so the 25-22, 25-21 regional title win carried great meaning for Bode. Bode is known for his versatility and hustle on the court. He has been a key cog for Edwardsville's boys team the past two seasons.

Edwardsville hosts rival O'Fallon in the sectional semifinals today at Liberty Middle School. Edwardsville is 25-8 going into tonight, while O'Fallon is 27-9-1.

The Edwardsville Sectional title match is set for 6 p.m. Tuesday at Lucco-Jackson Gymnasium.

The Tigers stretched out a first game win against Belleville on Wednesday, then started slowly in the second game. Belleville West jumped to a 16-7 lead in game two, but Bode and the rest of the group kept playing hard and took things one point at a time to regroup.

“We just couldn’t get a hit in the court at the start of the second game,” he said. “The blocks really helped in the win. We blocked a lot of (Timothy) Neff’s middle swings. He usually gives us trouble.

“It is great to get the regional title back. We are all excited and want to keep going.”

Junior Lucas Verdun said the middle was a big key for the Tigers against Belleville West.

“Jack Grimm and Nick Allen are my go-to guys when we need a point,” he said. “Our middle has been great the last few weeks. The regional championship means a lot but we have more to win.”

Junior Bob Dresner has been another key for the Tigers late in the season.

“I think we were able to come together as a team and come back strong,” Dresner said of the Belleville West match. Belleville West put up a heck of a challenge. It was great to win after losing to them last year. We all came together in the second game. We have a lot of talent and a lot of talent coming back next year.”

New Lenox Lincoln-Way Central and Frankfort Lincoln-Way East collide at 6 tonight at Tinley Park Andrew to determine who will play Edwardsville or O’Fallon on Tuesday, May 30.