

Edwardsville Holds Their Own, Plays Well But Falls To Lockport In IHSA Boys Volleyball Sectional Final 27-25, 25-21, Ends Season 12-2

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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MINOOKA - Edwardsville's boys' volleyball team gave a wonderful showing, going toe-to-toe with a team that has been ranked in the state's top ten all season, but Lockport defeated the Tigers in the final of the IHSA's Minooka sectional 27-25, 25-21 Tuesday evening at Minooka High.

The Porters advanced to the state finals this weekend at Glen Ellyn Glenbard West high with the win, and the Tigers gave them everything they wanted in what turned out to be a very close match.

"We played a team that was ranked in the top ten teams this season," said Edwardsville head coach Scott Smith, "we challenged them at the net, and they had a strong, strong attack. And after we played them, I'm proud of our boys for representing our region and all of southern Illinois. It wasn't a blowout game for them, but our guys were wonderful at the net."

The Tigers started out slow but picked up momentum as the match went along, and in the second set, took the lead, only to see Lockport take the lead. But Edwardsville stayed strong and in the end, did have the momentum on its side despite the outcome.

"We came out dull, but then held the momentum until the end of the first set," Smith said. "In the second set, the momentum continued, we started out on a 5-0 run, we ended

up going up five at 12-7. But then, we were down 21-16, but we closed out with a four-point deficit."

The Porters were able to make the adjustments to the Tigers during the match, and Smith gave credit to them and their head coach, Nick Mraz.

"Their talented coach was able to make adjustments," Smith said, "and overcame our strong attacks."

Miles Bell had three kills, one dig and five blocks in the match for the Tigers, while Kaden Chiapelli served up three points along with an ace, three kills, 10 digs and a block, Tyler Cherenka had three points and 15 digs, Jacob Geisen had three points, six kills and six digs, John Kreke had two kills, Liam Marsh had three points and an ace, Evan Reid had a point, two kills, six digs and three blocks and Preston Weaver served up seven points and an ace, also having eight digs, 15 assists and a block.

Lockport advances to the state quarterfinals on Friday morning at Glenbard West, where they'll play Frankfort Lincoln-Way East, who defeated Chicago Marist 26-24, 26-24 in the Marist sectional final, at 10 a.m. The Tigers finish the season 12-2, and Smith couldn't be any prouder of his team's efforts all season, while saying goodbye to seniors Chiapelli and Weaver.

"I'm proud of the boys, and we're really going to miss Kaden and Preston," Smith said. "But I'm confident in the current juniors and sophomores that we have now."