

# **Garner, Conway Help Lead Way As Edwardsville Wins Tight Match Over O'Fallon 25-19, 25-23 In Southwestern Conference Girls Volleyball Thriller**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Kaitlyn Conway and Emma Garner helped lead the way for Edwardsville as the Tigers won a hard-fought, close match over O'Fallon 25-19, 25-23 in a tight Southwestern Conference match Tuesday evening at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

The win gave the Tigers a regular-season series sweep over the Panthers, having won the season opener Aug. 31 at the OTHS Panther Dome. And as with the opener, it was very much a nip-and-tuck affair.

"It went pretty good, and we had to take down a conference rival in a very tight match," said Edwardsville head coach Heather Ohlau. "It was very well-played on both sides, O'Fallon had a very strong defense that made our hitters earn every point, we were really scrappy and fought to keep a lot of balls in play. I'm very proud of the girls' effort as always. They earned this one tonight."

Conway had a big game defensively with 15 digs to help keep rallies alive, while Garner led the way offensively with eight kills, while Sydney Davis and Gabby Saye each contributed six kills apiece as the Tigers kept the Panthers at bay. the turning point of the match occurred in the second set, according to Ohlau.

"I don't know if there was exactly one key moment," Ohlau said, "but in the second set, we were down by four points, and the girls stepped up and came back to tie the set, and eventually took the lead."

It was definitely a good quality win, especially against a strong opponent such as O'Fallon, and it's a solid indicator of how good the Southwestern Conference really is.

"It's always nice to win these close matches," Ohlau said, "especially to show the strength of our conference,"

Along with the kills of Garner, Saye and Davis, Griffin and Ava Waltenberger served up five points each, while Maddie Vieth had 13 assists, with Griffin having 12, and Garner had six digs and Davis five to go along with Conway's eight.

The Tigers are now 14-3 and go across the river tonight to face St. Louis power Cor Jesu Academy, a Catholic power in Affton, Mo., and it'll be a good challenge for the Tigers in more ways than one.

"They're one of the best in Missouri, so it'll be a big test for us," Ohlau said. Another big test will be in the format, as Missouri schools play a best-of-five set match, as opposed to a best-of-three in Illinois.

"It's a three-set guarantee," Ohlau said, "so let's see how that goes."

Past that, the Tigers get back into the Southwestern Conference grind, plus on the weekends of Oct. 8-9 and 15-16, they'll play in back-to-back tournaments in Chicagoland, which will also present a big test for the team.

"It'll test our offense and defense against strong competition we haven't seen as we get into the second half of our season," Ohlau said. "It'll be another great challenge of course, but it gives us a chance to see the better teams up north that we don't normally get to see. We'll be ready to go."





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)