

Tigers Continue To Bounce Back From O'Fallon Loss, Defeat Kahoks 25-10, 25-12 In Annual Volley For The Cure Match

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High girls volleyball team continued to bounce back nicely from losing their 58-match Southwestern Conference winning streak to O'Fallon last week, taking charge from the start in defeating Collinsville 25-10, 25-12 in a league match Tuesday evening at Lucco-Jackson Gym.



In both sets, the Tigers overcame slow starts to put their stamp on the match, reeling off long point strings to take control early and defeat the Kahoks.

"Losses happen throughout the season, but being able to redirect our focus and bring it back and being able to produce another win is always nice," Edwardsville head girls volleyball coach Heather Ohlau said after the match.

The Tigers bounced back almost immediately from the loss to the Panthers by taking a hard-fought, thrilling five-set decision at Cor Jesu Academy in Affton, Mo., then coming back with a big performance against a very young Collinsville team has put the team back on track.

"Being able to come back against Cor Jese and being able to shake off the loss and focus on the next point, the next game," Ohlau said, "is something that we've got to do as we enter the postseason."

The annual Volley For The Cure match also holds a very special meaning to the Tigers, as the team wore pink jerseys and honored friends and relatives who have survived breast cancer, still fighting against it, or have died from breast cancer.

"The Volley For A Cure has always been a tradition that we started, probably close to 15 years ago," Ohlau said, "and it's something that we hold true and it's just an important event because so many of our players know someone or have family members that have been touched by breast cancer. So, being able to celebrate them and show that we can persevere and overcome, I think it just motivates our team on the court."

During the match, a silent auction was held and ticket sales from the match will be donated to help in the fight against breast cancer. During the match, current patients and survivors were honored and recognized and the players and coaching staff saluted someone close to them who has suffered from breast cancer.

"Yeah, I think to have those survivors in attendance just brings back the emotions," Ohlau said, "and know that we can always overcome and be greater than what we think we can do."

As far as the match went, all the players were on top of their games and played well and Collinsville also hung in and had some good moments.

"Collinsville had some scrappy defense," Ohlau said. "We were able to keep them out of system, which benefitted our side a little bit. But yeah, they kept pushing through, we were able to get several different players' different looks. And so, it was a nice match."

The first set started out with an exchange of points that put Collinsville up early 3-2 before Vyla Hupp took over

the serve and reeled off three straight points that put Edwardsville up 5-3. The Tigers then scored six of the 10 points to go up 11-7 before going on a 9-0 run to take the score to 20-7 as Hanna Matarelli served up eight straight points, then scored five on the set's final eight points to win 25-10 and take a one-set lead in the match.



The Kahoks started off well in the second set, as Alyssa Huckelberry served up back-to-back points to give Collinsville a 3-0 lead. The Tigers then reeled off six straight points to go up 6-3, then after the Kahoks scored on a well-placed shot from Jenna Scheller, Edwardsville scored 10 of the next 11 points, including nine in a row served up by Waltenberger, to bring the score to 16-5. After scoring four of the next five points to bring the set to 20-6, then three of the next four to make it 23-7, Collinsville came up with five points in a row behind strong serving from Addy Johnson and strong play from

Huckleberry to bring Collinsville to within 23-12. The Tigers scored the next two points, clinching the set and match 25-12.

Edwardsville goes to 16-4 on the season and plays at Belleville East on Thursday in a 5:30 p.m. start, then play in the St. Charles East tournament over the weekend before the Tigers host Alton on Oct. 11 and East St. Louis on Oct. 13 in their final two home Southwestern Conference matches before ending their home season against Breese Mater Dei Catholic Oct. 17.

"We have another tough conference match on Thursday against Belleville East at Belleville East," Ohlau said. "That's going to be what we focus tomorrow on in practice. Then we travel up to Aurora for the St. Charles East tournament."

The tough late-season schedule is done with one purpose in mind: Get ready for the grind of the IHSA Class 4A playoffs, which are coming soon.

"We put ourselves in this position to have a tough schedule coming down the home stretch to help us prepare for that tough stretch of the postseason," Ohlau said.







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