

O'Fallon Takes Control In Final Set - Eliminates Edwardsville In Girls Volleyball Class 4A Sectional Semifinal

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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BELLEVILLE - The O'Fallon High School girls volleyball team took control in the third and final set and went on to a 25-23, 23-25, 25-13 win over the Edwardsville Tigers in the IHSA Class 4A Normal Community sectional semifinal match Monday night at the Belleville West gym.

The Panthers advance to the sectional final Wednesday night against Moline, who won over the Iron in the other semifinal 25-23, 25-20, which will be played in Normal.

The Tigers and Panthers played an evenly matched first two sets, but O'Fallon took complete control in the third set and didn't allow Edwardsville a chance to get back into the set.



"We had a difficult time gaining momentum in the third set," said Edwardsville head coach Heather Ohlau. "They were the better team tonight."

Both teams battled hard throughout the match, with the first two sets being evenly played in an exciting match.

"Both teams played hard, offensively and defensively," Ohlau said. "There were a lot of rallies and both teams were up with the end of the season on the line. You have to do what you need to win."

Ohlau is very proud of her team for the way they battled and of her seniors --- Ava Walternberger, Vyla Hupp, Dallas Jenkins, Mackenzie Heberer and Claire Dunivan --- for taking an active leadership role on the team, bringing out the best in all the players.

"Our girls battled to the end," Ohlau said. "We just came up a little short. Our seniors took on a leadership role and led the team. They encouraged everyone on the court in practice to do better and they held everyone accountable," she added.

"This was a great group of seniors and they added a lot to the legacy of this program. We'll miss them."

The Panthers are now 31-6 and get to continue their season, while the Tigers end theirs 25-13.

The Tigers will be returning a very experienced and talented group in 2023 and Ohlau is already looking ahead to next season.

"Our younger girls had to step up and learn and play new positions," Ohlau said.

"And the future of the program is looking bright. I'm really looking forward to it."



[Colin Feeney also contributed to this story.](#)