

Edwardsville Leads Late In First Set, Early In Second Set, CBC Rallies To Defeat Tigers 25-22, 25-10 In Tigers' Boys Volleyball Home Opener

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High boys volleyball team held a lead late in the first set and also led early in the second set, but CBC rallied both times to take a 25-22, 25-10 win over the Tigers in their 2023 home opener Thursday evening at Lucco-Jackson Gym.

A young Tiger played well in both sets, but caught some bad breaks at the end of the first set, then unforced errors were their undoing in the second set as the Cadets took the match.

"We were actually up 22-21 in the first set and we a couple of bad breaks go against us," said first-year Edwardsville head coach Doug Allen, "and the next thing you know, the set was over. We went out to a 5-2 lead in the second set, then there were a lot of constant unforced errors. We have a young team and the boys seem to tighten up quickly. With experience, I think they'll learn to play their game together."

The roster is dotted with many freshmen and sophomores, and the Tigers start four sophomores and a freshman, but in the match against CBC, Edwardsville was missing one starter with a lower-body injury and another starter was out due to illness. There is one senior in the starting lineup, De'Shawn Larson, who's playing volleyball for the first time and is picking up on the game exceptionally well.

"His athleticism is really carrying him," Allen said of Larson. "He's really learning the game and he fits in well with the other guys."



There's a total of four seniors who are playing for the Tigers this season - Wyatt Blunt, Blake Hauschild, Dominik Kerpan and Larson - and despite the youth on the team, Allen does have high hopes for his club.

"I really have high hopes for this season," Allen said. "I knew going in that the first week was going to be very tough and we're going to get some experience very fast, with eight matches in eight days."

Against the Cadets, Blunt led with four points, an ace, a block and 13 assists, while Lucas Gebhardt served up three points and two aces to go along with four kills, Hauschild came up with four blocks, Logan Jasuits had three points and four kills, Ben Kreke had two kills and two blocks, Larson came up with five kills and five blocks and Brayden Wells had two points, an ace and an assist.

CBC is now 2-0 to start the season, while Edwardsville is 0-2 and will play at the Joliet West Tournament this weekend, facing quality opponents in Chicago Von Steuben and Oswego East on Friday night, then meets New Lenox Lincoln-Way West on Saturday morning in the group stage. Plus Allen expects both O'Fallon and Belleville East to be

the cream of the crop in the always-tough Southwestern Conference this season. But he's very familiar with his players and has a very good relationship with them.

"I've coached most of these boys for about four or five years," Allen said, "since they were in middle school. So we know each other well and we have a nice relationship. I just want to get past the beginning, get things moving and get into the season."

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