

Southwestern takes down EAWR in volleyball matchup

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EAST ALTON-WOOD RIVER- The traveling crowd from **Southwestern High School** almost doubled that of the home crowd at **East Alton Wood River High School** during this **Tuesday's varsity matchup** that ultimately resulted in a **Piasa Bird** win after three sets.

In the first set, the **Oilers'** seemed to have some difficulty keeping their eyes on the ball. On more than one occasion, the girls in maroon allowed several balls to go over their head, thinking that they were out of bounds when they were still in play.

Once the Oilers became more focused, it seemed like their opponents seemed to struggle themselves. In some of their attempts to spike the ball over the net, the Piasa Birds hit the ball downward against their own side of the net, which caused the Oilers to score.

Both of the teams figured out their specific problems and the game really got going. Several long volleys stood between both teams, and ultimately, the Oilers came out on top with a score of **25-21** after the extremely close set.

In the second set, the Piasa Birds truly had a hold over their opponents. Reminiscent of the first set, EAWR struggled with spiking like Southwestern, taking in nothing but net. Getting stuck at 13 points for four serves, the Oilers seemed to be making a comeback and aimed to secure the second set, ending the match. However, the girls in green and gold from Southwestern truly were not going down without a fight, and this boost allowed the Piasa Birds to wrap up the second set with a **25-19** victory.



With the sets tied 1-1, the third and final set of the night would determine either team's win. However, the game wouldn't end up as close as any of the teams thought. Tying scores seven times, the teams truly showed how well matched they were together. The last six serves were incredibly tense for both parties. Tied at 20 points each, the Piasa Birds made the final push against the Oilers. Before the last two serves of the game, the Oilers could only score one more point and the Piasa Birds bested their opponents **25-21**.

When asked about how her girls competed in their game, **Southwestern's Head Coach Julie Kinsler** was extremely honest about their performance.

"Well, it wasn't really that pretty. We had a lot of attacking errors, and Wood River was really scrappy all night," Kinsler said.

"Normally, we can pick apart a team defensively and find their holes but they didn't leave a lot of holes open," she said. "We struggled to spike the ball and attempt attacks, so we just began tipping and didn't really do that well with that."

Madison Greeling's 11 points, 10 kills and 18 digs helped Piasa Southwestern to the win.

Sam Burns added 18 points for the 17-7-3 Piasa Birds, while Hannah Blumstein had seven points, six kills and two blocks.

Morgan Moxey led the Oilers with six points, five kills and five assists, with Tori Covington adding five points and Natalie Mundel five kills.

Although her team won the evening's match, Kinsler said the team was missing the spark that they have had over the season. However, with some practice, the team should restore to their former glory.

"We've fallen a little flat over the past couple of weeks," she said, "we're due for a couple of good practices in a row to work on our connections."