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Lady 'Cats Advance To District Semifinals

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Lady 'Cats Advance To District Semifinals

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

The Bearcat Event Center played host to the Class 3, District 1 Tournament on Monday night, with all top seeds advancing to the semifinal round.

The Perryville Lady Pirates were given the luxury of a first-round bye with the No. 1 seed, while the district's remaining teams were all in action Monday night.

No. 4 Kennett dropped No. 5 New Madrid in the only three-set match of the evening (25-22, 21-25, 25-17), while No. 2 Notre Dame knocked off No. 7 Doniphan in two sets (25-19, 25-11).

The Lady 'Cats rolled to a 25-11, 25-17 win over No. 6 Fredericktown to advance in the tournament.

DHS Head coach Lauren Hutchcraft was pleased with her squad's performance, but felt that they were lacking intensity during the match.

"The girls played well, the only thing we were really lacking was intensity and drive tonight," she said. "We had some things that weren't going our way or how I wanted them to, but [intensity] was the big thing. I just want to see my team more fired up and playing together!"

Hannah Noe played a great game, nailing some big serves in the first set. The sophomore had 11 assists, 12 digs, 6 kills, 5 aces, and was 11/13 from the service line.

“Hannah Noe had some good serves in that first set. When you're playing in a district game, serves are huge. That's your first time to ‘attack’ the other team,” Hutchcraft continued. “When you've got kids who are going to serve aces, those don't go unnoticed.”

The Lady ‘Cats returned starter Erika Cobb in the contest, who was out with an illness during the regular-season finale against Notre Dame. The sophomore had a solid game on the front row, driving in 7 kills, 2 blocks, and 7 digs in the match.

“Erika Cobb has contributed all season long, but in a different capacity,” Hutchcraft said. “She played all the way around tonight, and I think she did a fine job - it was great having her back in the lineup.”

Freshman Jessica Lindsey had another outstanding performance, with 5 digs, 6 kills, 3 aces, and a perfect 12/12 from the service line.

“Jessie did do well tonight. I love to see her play,” Hutchcraft said. “I have the most fun watching her knock the snot out of the ball when she's on front row, but she can definitely serve and handle the ball on back row, too.”

Notre Dame is the last obstacle in the Lady ‘Cats path to a district title, but it will be no easy task; the Bulldogs have dominated the district tournament for the last decade, and they already hold two wins - in the SEMO Spike Tournament and last week in the regular-season finale - over Dexter in the 2011 season.

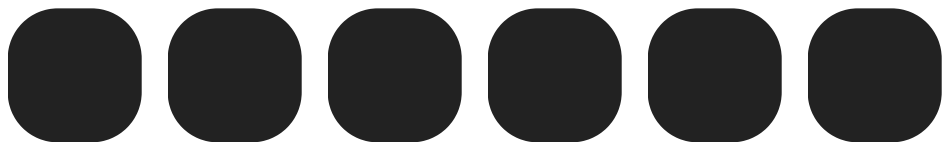
“My mindset is we better play to win tomorrow night because they can beat this team,” Hutchcraft said. “This will be our third time to see Notre Dame this season. The first time was in pool play in the SEMO Tournament, and the second time was last week during regular season. I told my girls they are going to have to play a whole heck-of-a lot better tomorrow night than they did tonight against Fredericktown if they want to win. The girls will have to be mentally prepared for tomorrow night's game.”

In Tuesday night’s semifinals, the Kennett Lady Indians will face Perryville at 5:00 p.m., with Dexter facing off against Notre Dame at 6:00. The winners of those games will meet in the Class 3, District 1 championship game at 8:00 p.m.

Thanks to Greg Mathis - gregmathisphotos.com - for the photo!

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