

Prairie regroup, makes some strides

VOLLEYBALL

By Jeff Linder

The Gazette

CEDAR RAPIDS - It wasn't the panic button that Kevin Geary pushed. It was the reset button.

'Coach said this week that we were starting over at 0-0,' said Cedar Rapids Prairie's Kelsi Ludvick.

Ludvick served a long string of points in the third game against Cedar Rapids Washington, and the Hawks won that match to highlight a 3-1 day at the Prairie Invitational volleyball tournament.

The Hawks entered the week at 3-12. They left their gym at 7-13 (or 4-1, using their logic), feeling a lot better about themselves.

'We switched some things around in our lineup,' Geary said. 'We wanted to shape some things up, try something different.' Apparently, the changes worked. The Hawks finished second in the five-team round robin behind Class 2A sixth-ranked Mediapolis.

'Maybe we had a little better focus,' Geary said.

'We can play very well.

It's just a matter of doing it on a consistent basis.' Prairie defeated Cedar Rapids Xavier in a five-set Mississippi Valley Conference match Tuesday. The Hawks had two matches go the full three games Saturday - against Ottumwa and Washington - and won them both.

The Hawks scored 10 straight points for a 10-1 lead in Game 3 against Washington, with Ludvick doing the damage at the service stripe. Prairie prevailed, 16-21, 21-15, 15-11.

'We wanted to make the libero move,' Ludvick said.

'It's exciting to see how much better we've gotten. We wanted the Washington match to be a win, for sure.' Mediapolis won each of its four matches, including a three-setter against Ottumwa, and improved to 26-1.

'We did a lot of good things. Our serving was phenomenal today,' Mediapolis Coach Dennis Jandrey said.

'I don't call serves. I let the kids do it themselves, and they do an excellent job knowing what to go after.' Washington (11-11), South Tama (12-10) and Ottumwa (17-9) each went 1-3 Saturday.

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