



Bullettes knocked out in semifinals

Davis County stuns No. 6 Mediapolis.

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MOUNT PLEASANT - The motto "Keep It Simple Stupid" works just about everywhere.

Davis County High School proved it worked on the volleyball court as well.

There was little preparation for sixth-ranked Mediapolis in Friday's Class 2A regional semifinal at Mount Pleasant High School, yet the Lady Mustangs beat the Bullettes in every facet in a stunning 25-22, 25-22, 27-25 sweep. Davis County (28-12) will face No. 10 West Liberty in Tuesday's regional final in Durant. And don't expect any major changes with just two days to prepare.

"We just did what got us here," said Davis County coach Marty Barnett, who is in her 32nd season but returned this season after a three-year hiatus. "We just played our game and really didn't do anything different. We didn't have much time to make many adjustments."

The Lady Mustangs' game was enough to keep Mediapolis (39-3) on its heels all night. The Bullettes rallied from a seven-point deficit to take a two-point lead in the first game, led late in the second game and had game-point in the final one after facing three match points. They couldn't finish any of the opportunities, and Davis County exuded confidence with each missed opportunity.

"This was the best we've played all season," Davis County outside hitter Aisha Boone said. "We were underdogs coming in. Both teams really wanted it and fought for everything, but we came out on top."

The Bullettes' multi-dimensional offense never found consistency, and there were timing issues that proved to be the difference in the first game. Davis County also was in position for just about every kind of shot. It was a complete effort that coach Dennis Jandrey never saw coming.

"They played well. They just didn't make any mistakes," he said. "We just didn't finish things off. They blocked us as well as anyone has, and it was just one of those things. They were very good tonight."

Davis County played with nothing to lose, and it showed right away. The Lady Mustangs turned a tight game into a 13-6 lead behind their own offense and Mediapolis mistakes. Mediapolis, a team used to putting together runs in matches, relied on a side-out style to get back into the contest. The Bullettes finally tied the game at 18 on a tip from Jessica Holsteen. Holsteen added a kill to go up 21-19, but a kill by Boone and three straight Bullette errors gave the Lady Mustangs a 23-21 lead. They finished it out on a pair of kills by Lauren Dewes, who came into the match with 335 kills and was one of Class 2A's top hitters. She had 13 kills on the night.

The Bullettes had a chance in the second game, as Kalyn Ertz served a four-point run to give them a 14-10 lead. They maintained a lead until Dewes came up with two straight kills to square the game at 17. The Lady Mustangs pulled ahead on a Mediapolis hitting error and built a 23-19 lead before the Bullettes rallied within a point on an ace by Ertz. However, the hard-serving Kari Wuthrich pounded an ace to secure the win.

"It just seemed like we couldn't get over the hump," Jandrey said. "I didn't think we attacked the ball well, and played more of a finesse game. It was like we were playing not to get beat."

Davis County controlled the final game until the end. The Lady Mustangs built a 14-9 advantage after Dewes slammed the second of two consecutive kills. Mediapolis, once again out of rhythm offensively, prevented the Lady Mustangs from putting together a big run, then put together one of its own on the strength of Kensley Heater's serve to cut the deficit to 20-19.

After Alexa Owen's kill gave the Lady Mustangs a 24-21 lead, the Bullettes fought off three match points and tied it on a tip by Ertz. Heidi Hillyard then had a kill off a block to give Mediapolis a 25-24 lead, but a kill by Dewes tied it, followed by a kill from Boone to give Davis County another match point. This time, the Lady Mustangs finished it off when 6-foot sophomore Rylee Eakins blocked Heater's attack for the win.

It was a simple game plan for the Lady Mustangs. They dug the ball out with consistency, found holes in Mediapolis' defense and simply outplayed one of the state's better teams.

"In the middle of the second game, we kind of realized we were on," Boone said. "We didn't really scout them at all, just worked on fundamentals. Our blockers got their hands on the ball and our back row picked it up. We just came in as this being another match."

Barnett has seen a lot in her long coaching career, but this tops the list.

"I've never been more proud of a team that I am right now," she said. "We knew Mediapolis wouldn't give up because I've known Dennis for years. Until that ball hit the floor and we were up two points, I knew it wasn't over."

"The pressure was on Mediapolis tonight, but this is what you work for, to be the best you can be at this point in the season," Barnett said. "We've just gotten better and better. We'll play West Liberty and go out and have a good time. This is fun."

Mediapolis

Kills - Kalyn Ertz 10, Kensley Heater 8, Jessica Holsteen 7, Heidi Hillyard 5, Rachel Holsteen 3, Liz Schulte

Assists - Aubrey Siegle 16, Kaci Keitzer 11

Serving - Siegle 8-8, J.Holsteen 6-6, Keitzer 9-9 (2 aces), Ertz 15-16 (2 aces), Heater 11-11 (1 ace), Lauren Schrock 6-7, Megan Hedges 13-13 (2 aces)

Blocks - Hillyard 2, J.Holsteen 2, Ertz 2, Heater, R.Holsteen

Digs - Heater 25, Hedges 6, Ertz 4, Schrock 4, Siegle 2, Schulte 2, J.Holsteen 2, Hillyard, Keitzer, R.Holsteen