

OVAC Volleyball Championships

Nobody Has Done It Quite Like Trail

OVAC-best 13th title for trophy case

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

STEUBENVILLE — There was a changing of the guard Saturday at Steubenville High School's Crimson Center.

Well, actually the old guard took its perch again.

Buckeye Trail captured its OVAC-best 13th volleyball tournament championship Saturday with a hard-fought, 22-25, 25-10, 25-23 victory against PVC rival Monroe Central in the Class AA title tilt.

The victory marked the Warriors' first conference

More Inside

Complete coverage of the rest of the championships/
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tournament crown since 2004 and snapped the Seminoles' string of titles at four.

Only one school — Indian Creek — has won five consecutive tournaments (1997-2001).

It was Buckeye Trail's eighth championship under the guidance of coach Jeff Beros, who has led the team since 1991.

"These kids have worked hard and it was one of their goals," Beros said of the championship.

See, Trail, Page B2

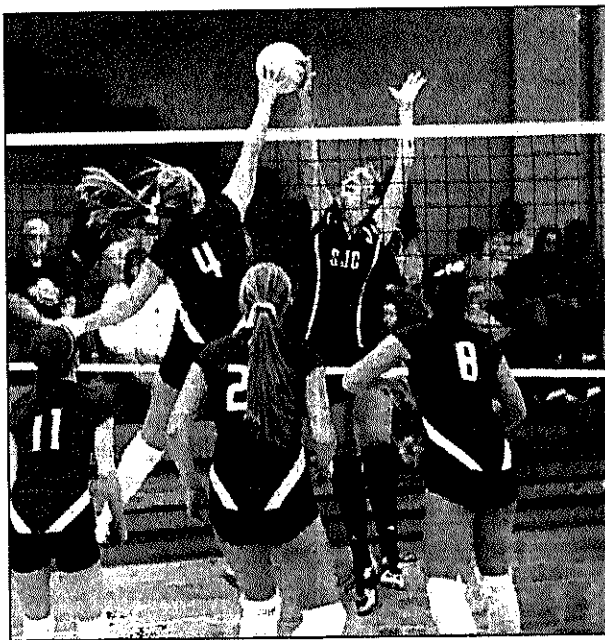


Photo by Mike Palmer

St. John Central's Alexis Sharpe (34) and Paden City's Amber Tallman (4) each get a hand on the ball Saturday. Looking on are the Wildcats' Amanda Sellers (11), Alli Bertozzi (22) and Amber Palmer.

Fighting Irish Too Much for Wildcats

St. John stakes claim to first championship

By RICK DeLUCA
For the News-Register
STEUBENVILLE —

Donnie Murray is a very happy man and a relieved coach this morning.

St. John Central's talented Irish handed Murray his first OVAC title as they held off a good Paden City squad, winning in straight sets, 26-24 and 25-18 to capture the OVAC Class A volleyball title at the Crimson Center on Saturday.

With the victory, Murray's club improved to 19-3 while Coach Fred King's Wildcats dropped to 22-6. The Irish bested Bridgeport in the semifinals and Paden

City topped Morgantown Trinity.

"It's something we worked at for two years," Murray said. "We started as early as last May. I didn't know a lot about the sport, but they taught me a lot. We sort of grew up together."

"I never coached a girls team before, so I had to learn a lot about coaching a girls team and they learned a lot about me."

St. John was paced by Andrea Lemasters with three points, six kills and two blocks, while Ellie Lemasters with five points, four aces, five kills and two blocks. Monica Figura had two points, one ace, one kill and six assists.

See, Irish, Page B2



Today's Results:
Q. Is Jarrett Brown an NFL-caliber quarterback?

Yes: 33%

No: 67%

ON THE LINE

Tomorrow's Poll:
Q. Should Ohio State drop outside the Top 25 after its loss to a Purdue team that had won once coming in?

Tell us what you think.

Register your answer at
www.theintelligencer.net
(The results of this poll are not scientific and represent only the opinions of Internet users who have chosen to participate.)



TRAIL

Continued from page B1

"We probably have put more time in last spring and summer than any of the other years because we were very young. We only have two seniors (Kaitlyn Wolfe and Lindsay Bardall). I'm proud of them. They didn't quit."

"This was a great victory for the program and the school."

And that's saying a lot considering Buckeye Trail's rich volleyball history, which includes more than 650 victories. Warriors spikers have brought home two Ohio Division-III state titles. The first came in 1989 under Rod Johnson and the second came in 1994 under Beros. Buckeye Trail also has a 1990 runner-up finish to its credit, as well state tournament appearances in 1992 and 1993. The boys' program, which competed from 1989-95, also was a state runner-up.

While many prep programs in all sports seem to be going through plenty of coaching turnover, Buckeye Trail's philosophy has remained basically unchanged since the first team took the court in 1977.

Johnson started the program, with Beros coming on as an assistant coach in 1989. Beros was handed the reins in 1991.

"That's one of the secrets to the success of our program, if we have any," Beros said. "All of coaches are former players, including by varsity assistant, Mike

Beaver, who played boy's volleyball at Trail.

"The coaches have been through the program and they know what to expect and do," Beros said.

That includes the coaches at the middle school level. Buckeye Trail's seventh- and eighth-grade teams are unbeaten this season.

"You have to have good coaches at the junior high level who know what they're doing," Beros said. "If you are to stay ahead of the pack or with it, you have to pretty much stay with it year-round. Our players do a lot of camps and clinics."

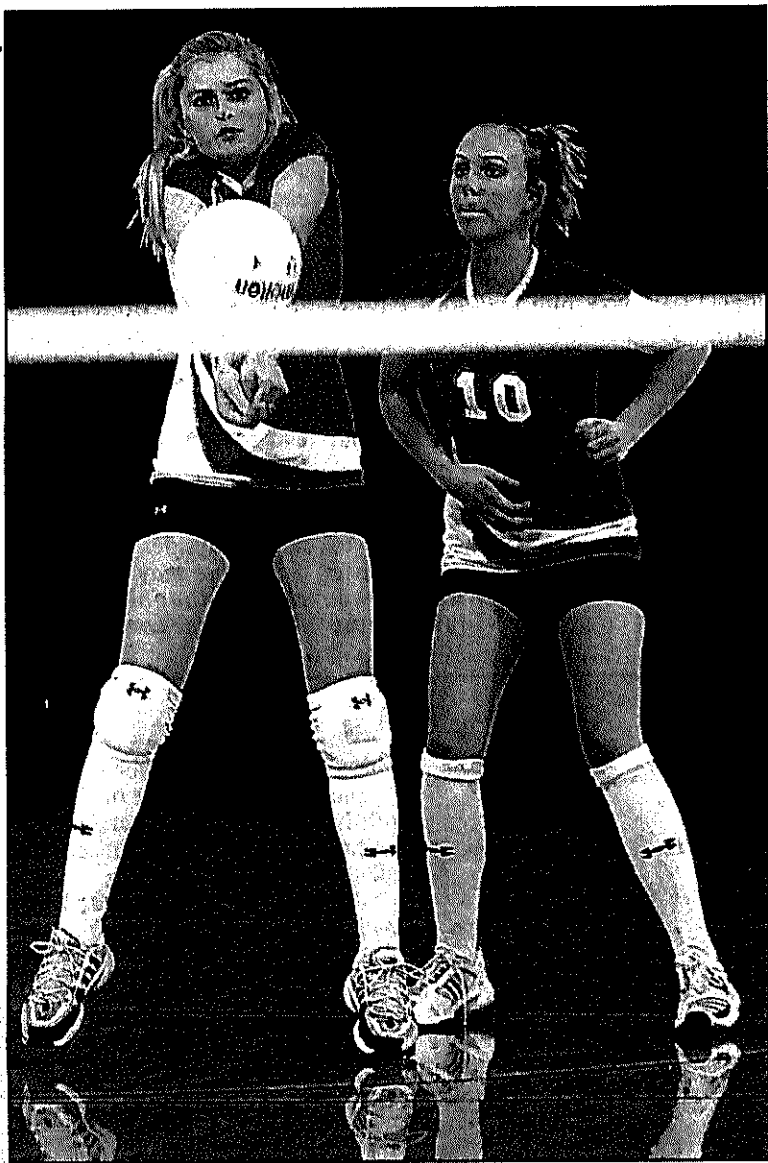
Camps and clinics enhance chances at success, but it still takes a team coming together to get things done. And Beros said he's been blessed to have so many talented players come through his program.

"We've been fortunate to have a great bunch of kids," he said. "They've been great to work with."

Buckeye Trail begins another quest for a state tournament appearance Wednesday against River at Meadowbrook High School. The Warriors are the top seed.

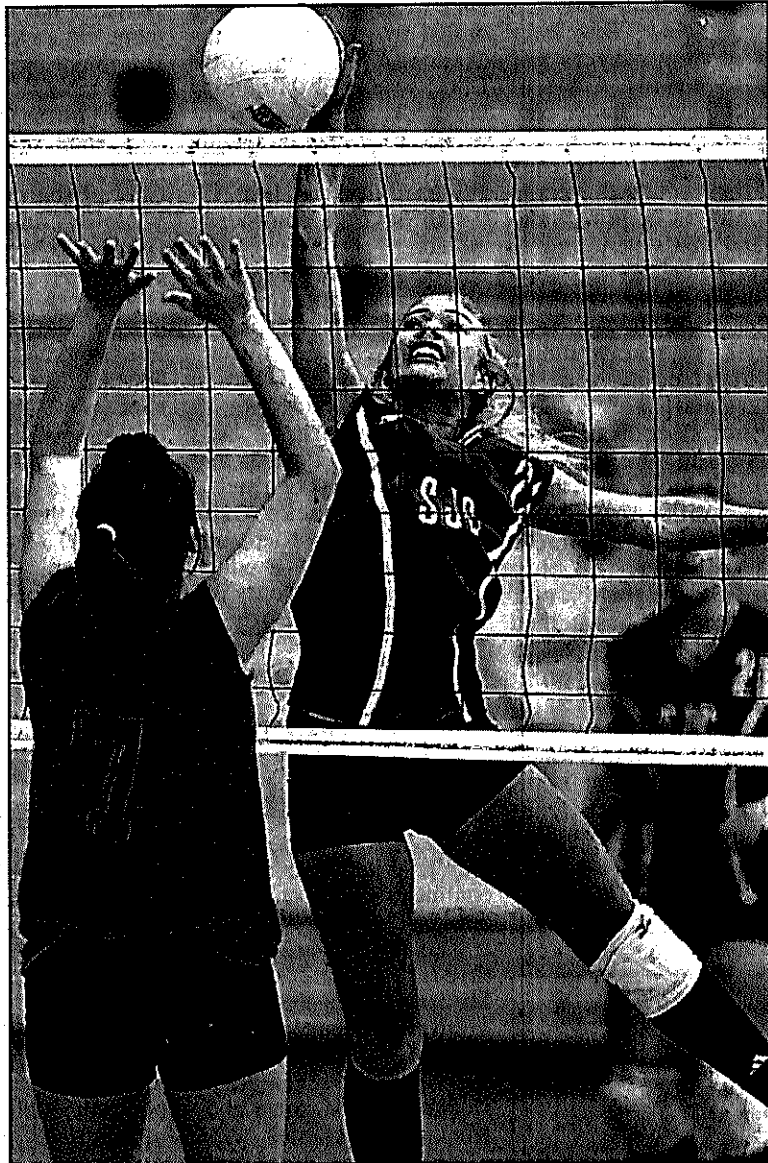
"(The OVAC Tournament) was a good tune up for us," Beros said. "We will need to play harder. Even though it was a good day (Saturday) it's no way good enough to win a district championship."

"We still have lots of things to work on."



Photo/PAUL KRAJNYAK

MONROE CENTRAL'S duo of Alex Kuhn (left) and Melissa Stimpert return a shot during a match earlier this week. The Lady Seminoles are seeking their fifth consecutive OVAC Volleyball crown at Saturday's annual championship tournament.



Photo/PAUL KRAJNYAK

ST. JOHN'S Monika Figura has been one of the key players for the St. John Central Lady Irish all season. She's helped guide the team to a 17-3 record entering this weekend's OVAC Volleyball Tournament at Steubenville High School.

OVAC volleyball titles on the line

• Annual championship tournament slated for Saturday at Steubenville

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The third consecutive weekend of Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Championships is upon us and it's time for volleyball to crown its champions.

The OVAC Volleyball Tournament will be held Saturday, starting at 9 a.m. at Steubenville High's Crimson Center and auxiliary gymnasium. The last several tournaments were held at Union Local High School.

The format for the tournament is the semifinal matches will go on concurrently in the two gyms with the top seed playing in the Crimson Center and the second seed in the other gym.

Immediately after the completion of the semifinals, the winning teams will meet for the title in the Crimson Center.

Class 1-A gets things under way at 9 a.m. The tournament will then proceed in order of size in three-hour windows. The 2-A commences at noon; 3-A at 3 p.m. and 4-A closes out the day at 7 p.m.

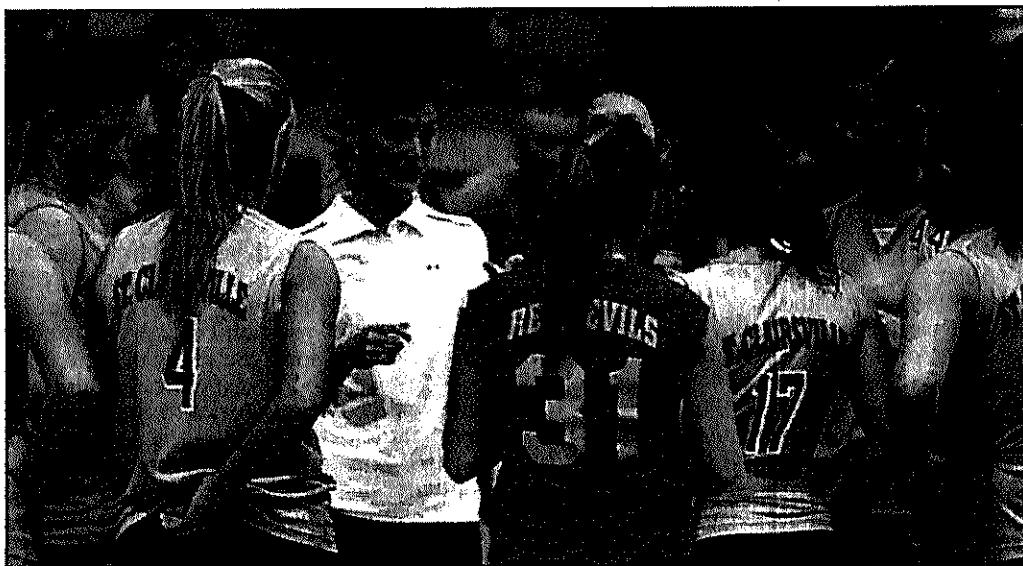
IN CLASS 1-A, St. John Central — on the strength of its 17-3 mark at the cut-off — garnered the top seed for the tournament.

The Irish will meet rival Bridgeport in the semifinal. The other semifinal pits second-seeded Paden City against first-year OVAC member Morgantown Trinity Christian.

All of the members of this field — outside of Trinity — own at least one OVAC banner.

Paden City leads the way with two pennants, but the Lady Wildcats haven't won the championship since 2005. Their other title came in 1993.

St. John Central hasn't visited the volleyball winner's circle since 1997, while



T-L File Photo/MIKE PALMER

ST. CLAIRSVILLE head coach Rebecca Hays addresses her team during a break in action earlier in the season. Hays and the Lady Red Devils are the second seed in the Class 3-A tournament, which will be held Saturday at Steubenville High School. The 3-A tournament will begin at approximately 3 p.m. *Additional images may be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com*

Bridgeport was the champion in 2004.

No one in Class 1-A has hoisted the wooden trophy other than Beallsville since 2006, but the Lady Blue Devils finished fifth in the 1-A standings, missing out on the tournament.

IN CLASS 2-A, the road through the title has ran through either Old Washington or Graysville each of the past five years.

Both Buckeye Trail and Monroe Central are back in the event this season.

"We've got a chance to win our fifth title in

a row, which has only been done once before (Indian Creek)," said Monroe head coach Troy Baker. "We had only one returning letterwinner from last year, so we have definitely gone through some growing pains. Trail's definitely the favorite, but we can't look past Steubenville Central because they are much-improved and well-coached."

The Lady Warriors of Coach Jeff Beres are the top seed with a 16-2 mark. The Lady Warriors have set the pace in OVAC volleyball. See, **OVAC**, Page B2

● OVAC

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ball circles with 12 total championships.

Trail will meet Barnesville (12-6) in the opening round. The Lady Shamrocks have never won an OVAC volleyball crown.

Steubenville Central posted a 15-5 mark before the cut-off date and edged out the four-time defending champion Lady Seminoles for the second seed by just half a point.

The Lady Crusaders have won two conference titles, but none since 1992.

IN CLASS 3-A, St. Clairsville is back to defend its class title, but the Lady Red Devils road is by no means an easy one.

Coach Rebecca Hays' team qualified as the second seed this year. The top seed went to Oak Glen,

which has posted a 17-3 record thus far.

Oak Glen owns a pair of conference net titles, but none have come since 1997, which was their second straight.

The Lady Bears will meet Martins Ferry, which had posted a 10-8 mark before the OVAC cut-off, which was last Saturday.

The aforementioned Lady Red Devils rank third all-time in number of OVAC titles with six. They've won five of the last six Class 3-A titles.

"I have a great group of highly competitive players who have worked very hard all season," said Hays.

"This Saturday is when we put everything out there and play our hearts out for the title. We're anxious for

another crack at Edison since they knocked us off during the season. We're ready to compete hard for the championship."

St. Clairsville will meet Buckeye 8 rival Edison in the semifinals. The Lady Wildcats have won four OVAC titles in their history, including last year's crown in 4-A. They knocked off St. Clairsville in four games earlier in the season.

IN CLASS 4-A, a true battle for the crown is sure to unfold as a new champion is assured since the aforementioned Edison has dropped down.

Indian Creek - which owns five titles, but none since 2001 - is the top seed. The Lady Redskins finished the pre-tourney

phase of their schedule with a 16-2 mark.

One of those losses came to second-seeded Cambridge, which finished with an identical mark. The Lady Bobcats will make the lengthy trip to Jefferson County and tangle with highly regarded East Liverpool, which has won nine conference titles in the second-third seed matchup.

Cambridge owns just one OVAC title and it came in 2000.

The fourth seed is by no means a pushover with 14-5 Beaver Local earning the final spot. The Lady Beavers have won three titles in their volleyball history.

Angie Miller once again serves as the tournament director.

Golden Bears Topple Red Devils in 2 Sets

Schedule change gave Oak Glen the chance

By MIKE MATHISON
For the News-Register

STEUBENVILLE - Oak Glen volleyball coach Ethel Riser maneuvered her schedule this season for a reason - and that was specifically to win an Ohio Valley Athletic Conference volleyball title.

Done.
The Golden Bears defeated St. Clairsville 25-21, 25-19 on Saturday at the Crimson Center at Steubenville High School to complete the goal.

"We rearranged our schedule so we could be here this year," Riser said. "This is what we wanted the outcome to be. I didn't want to give up all those tournaments for nothing."

"To come down here and not win or not make the finals obviously is

not what we wanted. They worked hard for it."

Rainelle Dunlevy led the offensive attack with 12 kills, three blocks and five points. Emily Frederick added five blocks, four kills and two points.

Emily McElhaney finished with 10 points, three kills and two blocks, Lacey Porter three points and two kills and Mackenzie Bailey 14 assists and six points.

"We still have our tournaments that we go to, but I made sure we had at least 10 (OVAC) games in of the first 20," Riser said.

Alex Pokas delivered 12 digs and two kills for St. Clairsville. Taylor Mick added nine digs, three aces and two kills, Erica Costine 10 assists and three digs, Sarah Slenski five digs, three kills, two blocks and an ace, Monica Wakim five kills and three digs, Lexie King six kills and two digs and Sammie Withey four digs.

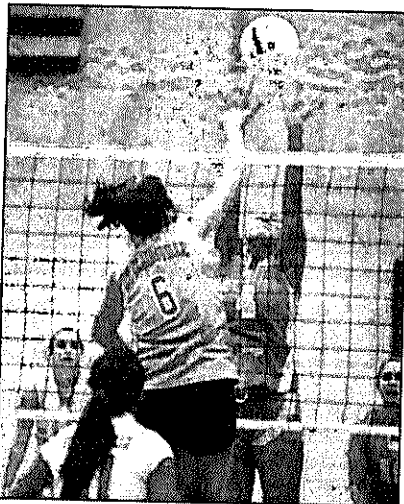


Photo by Mike Mathison
St. Clairsville's Lexie King (6) tries to spike the ball as Oak Glen's Rainelle Dunlevy goes for the block.

"We were involved in a difficult, three-game (semifinal) match against Edison," Red Devils coach Rebecca Hays said. "As a result, I think we came out a little flat against Oak Glen. That's something we obviously could not afford to do against a high-quality opponent like Oak Glen."

Trail Dethrones Monroe Central

By RICK DeLUCA
For the News-Register
STEUBENVILLE - It was lucky No. 13 for Buckeye Trail and the first since 2004.

One of the OVAC's most-successful volleyball programs has become even more so after the Warriors' tough 22-25, 25-10, 25-23 victory against defending champion Monroe Central in the OVAC Class AA volleyball championships at the Crimson Center.

Warriors coach coach Jeff Beros' squad entered as the top seed and also boosted their record to 20-2.

Coach Troy Baker's Seminoles dropped to 15-7 and saw their four-year run as OVAC AA champs stopped. Monroe was red-hot during the second half of the season.

"We had a lot of distractions this week," Beros said referring to Homecom-

ing that was set for last night at Buckeye Trail. "In the past, when we played during Homecoming week, we never played very well. So we knew coming here that the dance was (Saturday night) and we needed to hurry and get home."

"So you can guess where our minds were."
Trail was led by Kaitlyn Wolfe with 16 points, two aces, nine kills, nine blocks and six digs. Alexa Abrams added four points, one ace, 20 kills and seven blocks.

Monroe Central was led by Christina Paden with five points, two aces, eight kills, three blocks and four assists. Alex Kuhn had two points, five kills and 13 digs, Jennifer Hayes added 14 points, two aces and seven assists, Laken Zwick had two points and 13 digs. Chelsie Roberts closed with five points, two aces, seven kills and 16 digs.

SPORTS

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St. John wins second-ever Class 1-A title

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

Donnie Murray is a very happy man and a relieved coach this morning.

St. John Central's talented Lady Irish handed Murray his first OVAC title as they held off a good Paden City squad, winning in straight sets, 26-24 and 25-18 to capture the OVAC Class 1-A Volleyball Title at the Crimson Center at Steubenville High School Saturday morning.

With the win, Murray's club improved to 19-3 on the season while coach Fred King's Wildcats dropped to 22-6. The Lady Irish bested Bridgeport in the semi-finals and Paden City topped Morgantown Trinity.

"It's something we worked at for two years," Murray said after the win. "We started as early as last May. I didn't know a lot about the sport, but (the girls) taught me a lot. We sort of grew up together."

"I never coached a girls team before, so I had to learn a lot about coaching a girls team and they learned a lot about me," the Irish coach added.

"They girls that you see out on the floor, they are the ones that excel in the classroom as well," Murray added. "They are just quality kids with good character and they showed that today. I really wanted this for the girls. They worked hard and they all deserved it."

St. John was paced by Andrea Lemasters with three points, six kills and two blocks, Ellie Lemasters with five points, four aces, five kills and two blocks. Monica Figura had two points, one ace, one kill and six assists. Andrea Timko close with six points, four aces, three blocks and

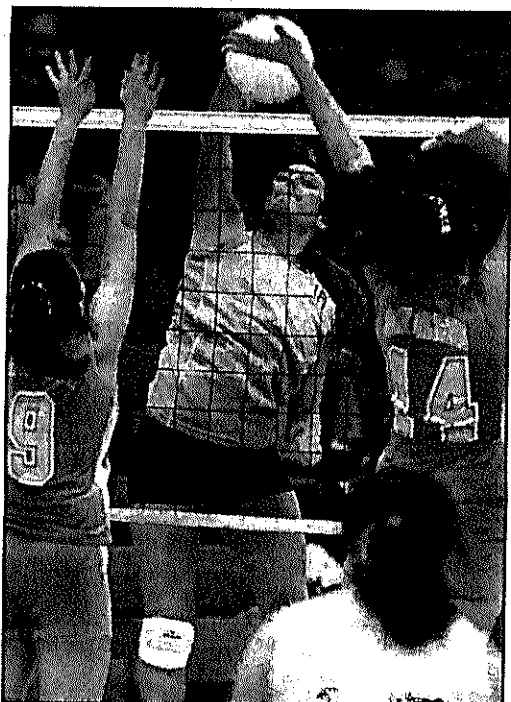
See, SJC, Page C2

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T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER
ST. JOHN Central players, from left, Andrea Timko (10), Andrea Lemasters and Monika Figura celebrate their OVAC Class A volleyball championship Saturday at Steubenville High School's Crimson Center. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com



T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Monica Wakim spikes the ball against a pair of Oak Glen defenders. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

Oak Glen knocks off St. C. in Class 3-A final

By RICH GIBSON
Times Leader Sports Writer

St. Clairsville and Martins Ferry experienced similar fates in Saturday's OVAC Volleyball Tournament at Steubenville High.

In both instances, Oak Glen's Lady Bears were victorious enroute to capturing the 3-A championship.

The New Manchester-based school prevailed in straight sets in each match, topping St. C. by 25-21, 25-19 in the finals.

Earlier Coach Ethel Riser's well-schooled spikers knocked out Ferry in a 25-20, 25-23 semifinal decision.

ST. C. outlasted Edison in a spirited three-game semifinal match. However, Coach Rebecca Hays' Hilltoppers could not complete the sweep against the top-seeded Lady Bears.

"There was a lot adrenaline flowing after our win against Edison," Hays explained. "I think we may have come out a little flat (against Oak Glen) and in a three-game format, that's something we could not afford."

Oak Glen never trailed in capturing the title match opening game. No fewer than seven lead changes highlighted the second game.

Trailing 18-13, St. C. gamely rallied, eventually netting six consecutive points for a 19-18 edge.

But the Lady Red Devils would not tally again. Oak Glen boarded the next seven markers to earn the first place trophy.

"We weren't familiar with either St. Clairsville or Ferry, so we just had to go out and play our game," the Bears' coach related.

Oak Glen received a 23-spike, 12-kill output from senior Rainelle Dunlevy. Senior Emily McElhaney posted 10 points and six spikes. Senior Mackenzie Bailey contributed 34 sets and 14 assists.

St. Clairsville's Alex Pokas tallied 14 digs. Taylor Mick delivered nine digs and three aces. Erica Costine charted 10 assists. Lexie King collected six kills. Monica Wakim totaled five kills and three digs.

See, 3-A, Page C2

Buckeye Trail snaps Monroe's streak at four in 2-A

By RICK DeLUCA
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Coach Troy Baker's Lady Seminoles dropped to 15-7 during the day and saw their four year run as OVAC 2-A champs stopped. Monroe was red-hot

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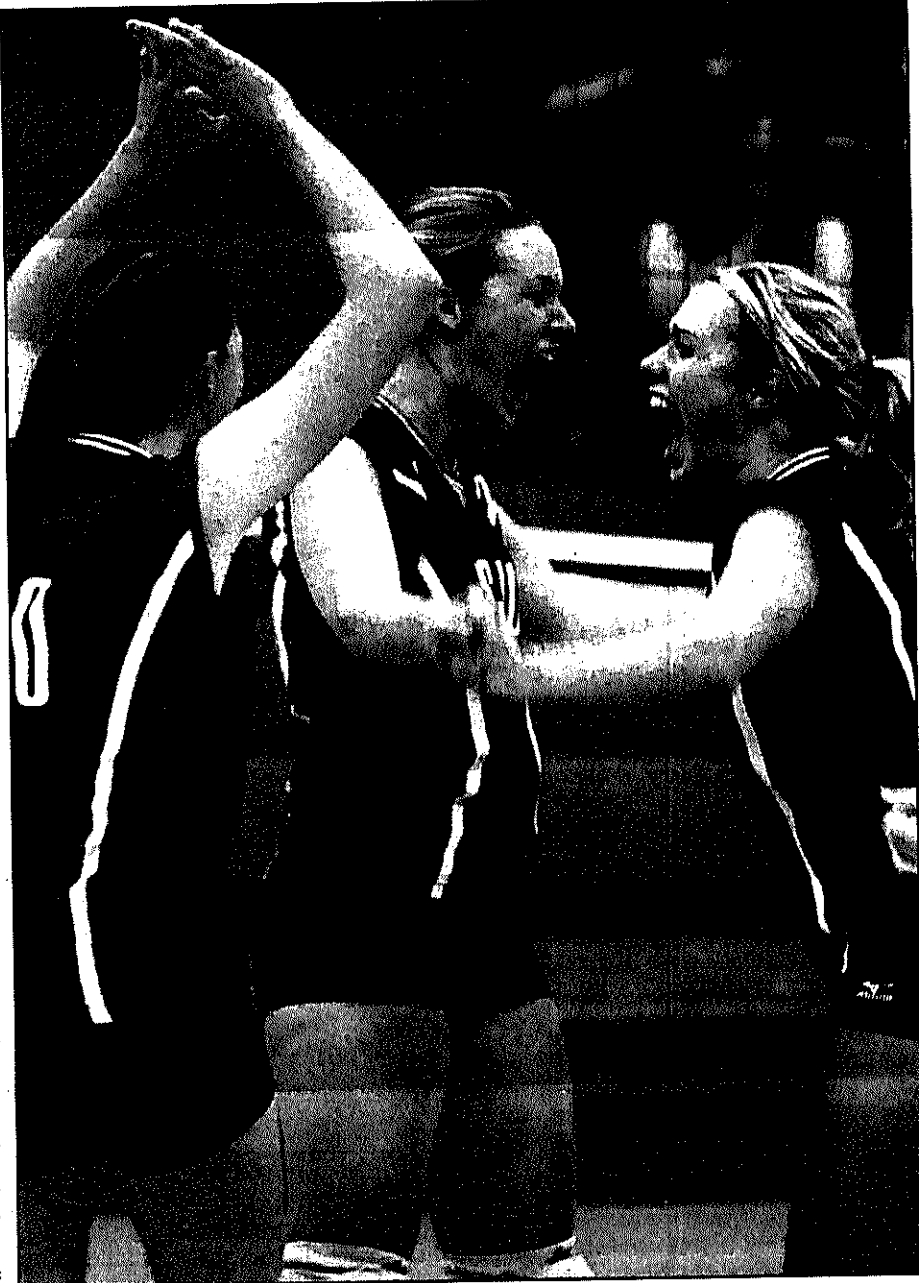
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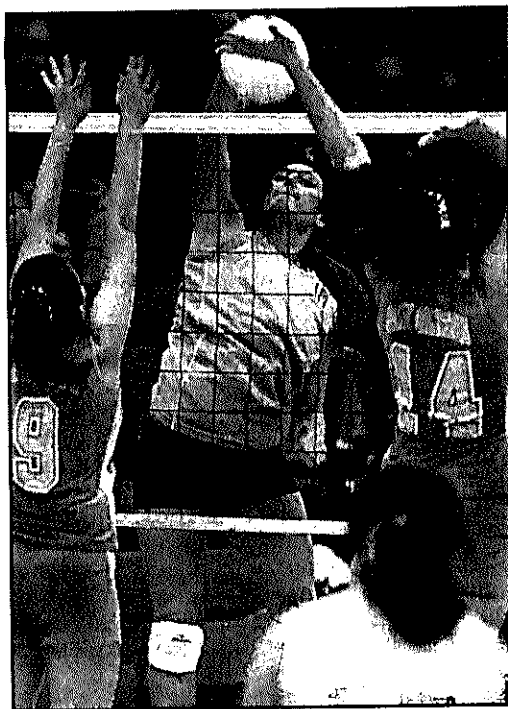
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See, SJC, Page C2



T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

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See, 3-A, Page C2

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Times Leader Sports Writer

It was lucky number 13 for Buckeye Trail and the first since 2004.

One of the OVAC most successful volleyball programs have become even more successful with the Lady Warriors tough 22-25, 25-10, 25-23 win over defending champion Monroe Central in the OVAC Class 2-A Volleyball championships at the Crimson Center in Steubenville High School Saturday afternoon.



It was the school's 13th OVAC title and the first for the school since 2004. Coach Jeff Beros squad entered as the top-seed. They also boosted their record to 20-2 on the season.

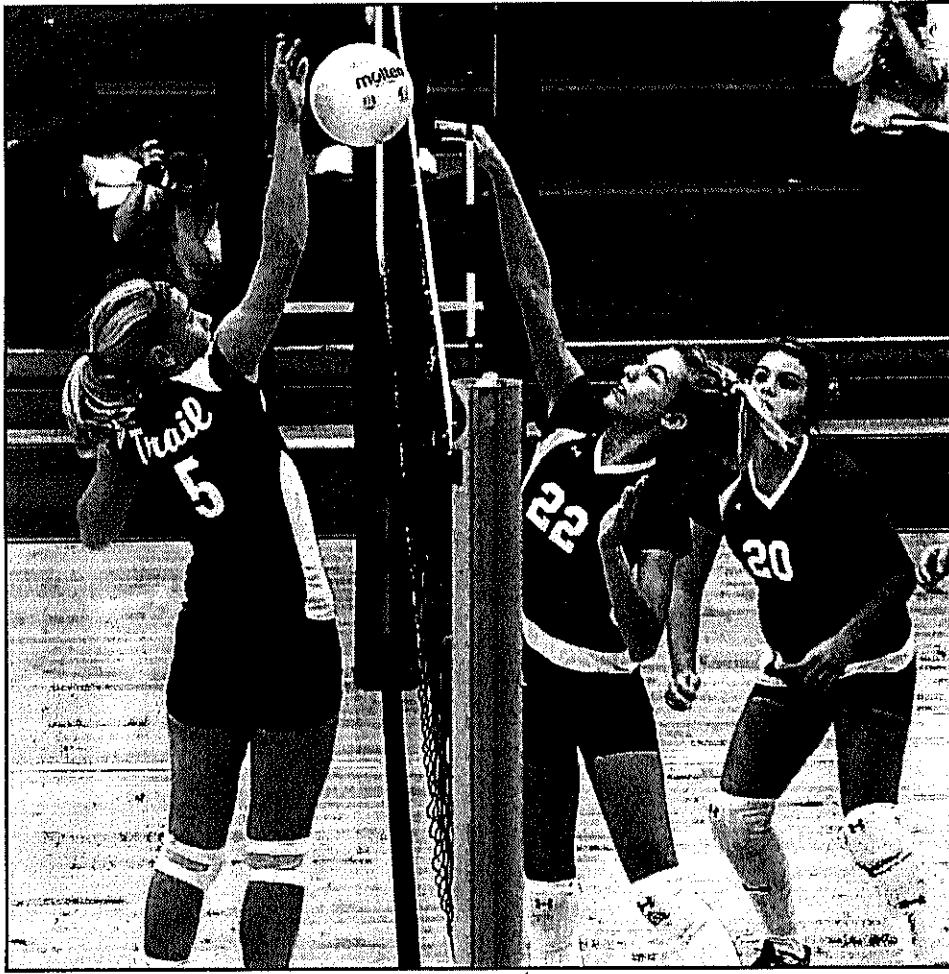
Coach Troy Baker's Lady Seminoles dropped to 15-7 during the day and saw their four year run as OVAC 2-A champs stopped. Monroe was red-hot during the second half of the season.

"We had a lot of distractions this week," Beros said after the win in referring to Homecoming that was set for last night at Buckeye Trail. "In the past, when we played during Homecoming week, we

never play very well. So we knew coming here that the dance was tonight and we needed to hurry and get home. So you can guess where our minds were."

Trail was led by Kaitlyn Wolfe with 16 points, two aces, nine kills, nine blocks and six digs. Alexa Abrams added four points, one ace, 20 kills and seven blocks. Lynsey Beros had six points, two aces and 10 assists. Jocelyn Geore had three points, two kills and seven digs. Moran Abrams had seven points, two kills and two blocks. LeeAnna Sichina had

See, 2-A, Page C2



BUCKEYE TRAIL'S Ann Sachina blocks the shot of Monroe Central's Jennifer Hayes (22) while the Seminoles Kayley Stephens (20) looks on. Additional images can be found at cu.timesleaderonline.com

T-L Photo/MIKE PALMER

● SJC

Continued from Page C1

eight assists. Kristen Russell had three points and Alexis Sharpe had five points, two kills and an ace.

"I commend St. John Central, they have a solid team. They are solid all the way around," King said after the tough loss. "And my team for hanging in. I have a very good team, but they have a very strong team. Better teams win."

St. John Central advanced into the finals with a 25-10, 27-25 win over Bridgeport in the semifinals, while Paden City moved into the title match with a 25-20, 25-19 win over Morgantown Trinity.

In their semi-final win, the Lady Irish were paced by Ellie Lemasters with three aces, nine kills and three blocks, Figura closed with two aces, four kills, 11 assists and two digs. Russell had six aces and two kills, Timko added

seven assists and one block, Andrea Lemasters finished with six kills and three blocks and Sharpe had four kills, one assist and two digs.

Rachel Benda led Bridgeport with two points, five kills, three assists and seven digs. Morissa Booth had two aces, one kill and four blocks. Jenae Vavrock had three points, one ace, one kill and three digs while Shauna Bandy had two points, one ace, two kills and three assists.

Paden City's semi-final win was paced by Amanda Sellers with 10 points, 19 assists and seven digs, Alli Bertozzi had two points, 15 kills and two blocks. Amanda Tallman closed with six points, two aces, four kills and one block.

Dominique Craft had four points, one ace and two kills. Melan Cutlip had three points and two digs.

● 2-A

Continued from Page C1

two points and four blocks and Lindsey Bardall had four points, three blocks and 15 assists.

"It's an honor to be here and we knew we had our hands full," Baker said after the match. "We thought we could be a bit of a surprise to them after the way we played them the last time. We just didn't show up at Trail."

"We played hard. It just came down to a few inches and we lost those inches," he added. "I'm pretty pleased with our effort and the way that we played. Hopefully, we can continue to play that way through the sectionals."

"We ended the season on a positive note. Today we started pretty good against Steubenville Central and it carried over to this game," Baker said. "We tried a new rotation today and the girls responded. I thought we got a little tight in the end, but we are young and you expect that."

Monroe Central was led by Christina Paden with five points, two aces, eight kills, three blocks and four assists. Alex Kuhn had two points, five kills and 13 digs, Jennifer Hayes added 14 points, two aces and seven assists, Laken Zwick had two points and 13 digs. Chelsie Roberts closed with five points, two aces, seven kills and 16 digs.

Buckeye Trail moved into the finals with a 25-13, 25-18 semi-final win over

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Barnesville while Monroe Central prevailed in the semis over Steubenville Central by 25-9, 25-15. Barnesville closed out at 14-7 while the Lady Crusaders finished at 15-6.

Paige Gibbons led the Lady Shamrocks with four points, three kills, seven assists and seven digs. Monroe's win was led by Kuhn with 11 points, 4 aces, 3 kills and 15 digs.

Paden with 10 points and six kills, Laken Zwick with four points and nine digs, Kaley Stephens with four points, five kills and two blocks. Chelsie Roberts had one ace and five kills.

SCC was led by Rebecca Antonelli with six kills, Megan Blackburn and Toni Jo Teramana with two kills each.

● 3-A

Continued from Page C1

St. Clairsville makes its sectional tournament debut Tuesday evening on its home floor. The Lady Devils oppose Meadowbrook following a 6:00 match involving Edison and Minerva.

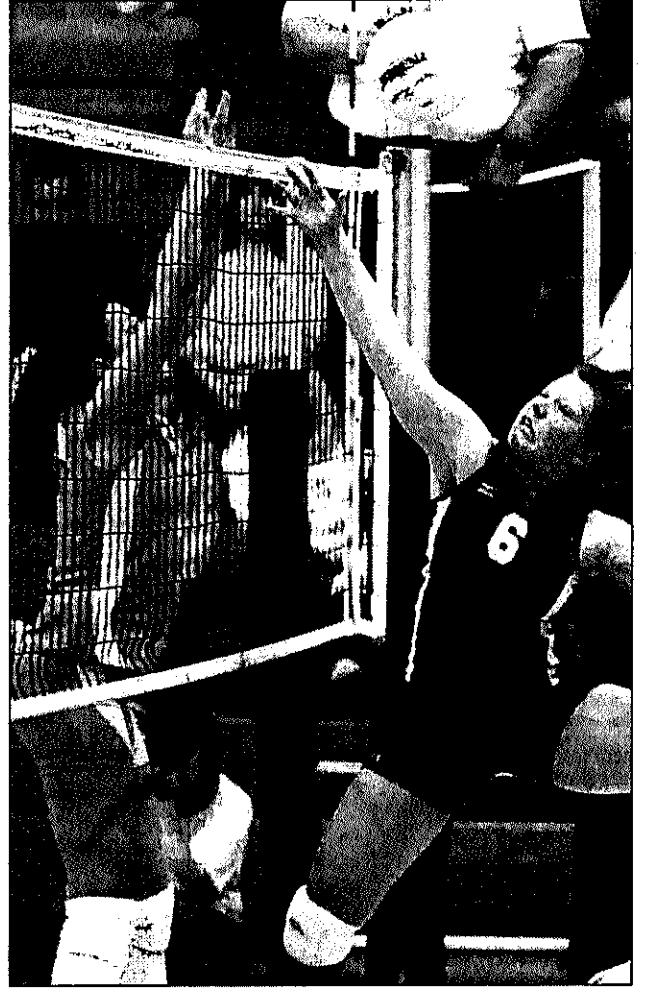
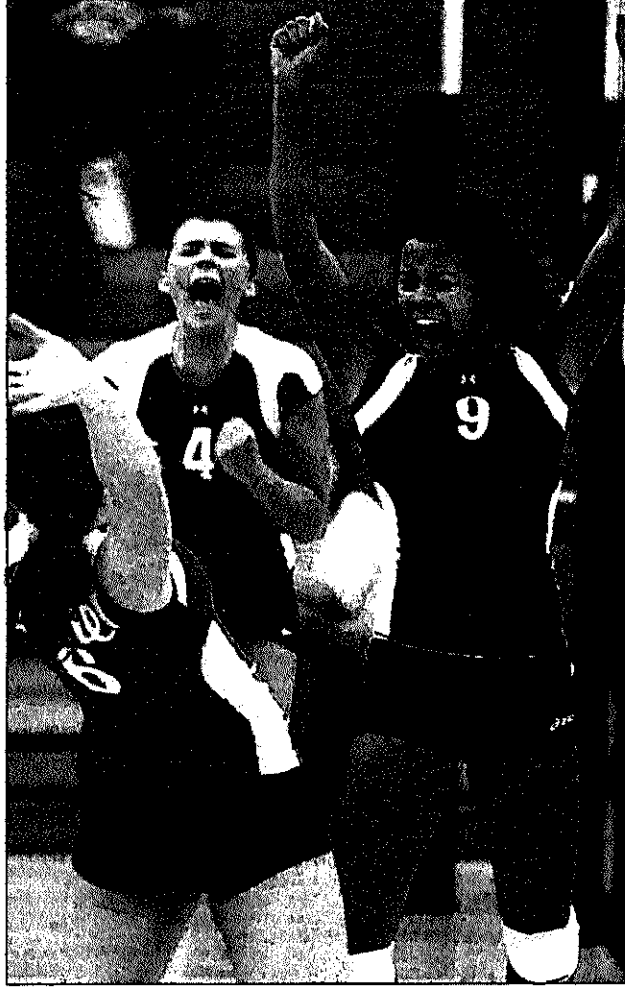
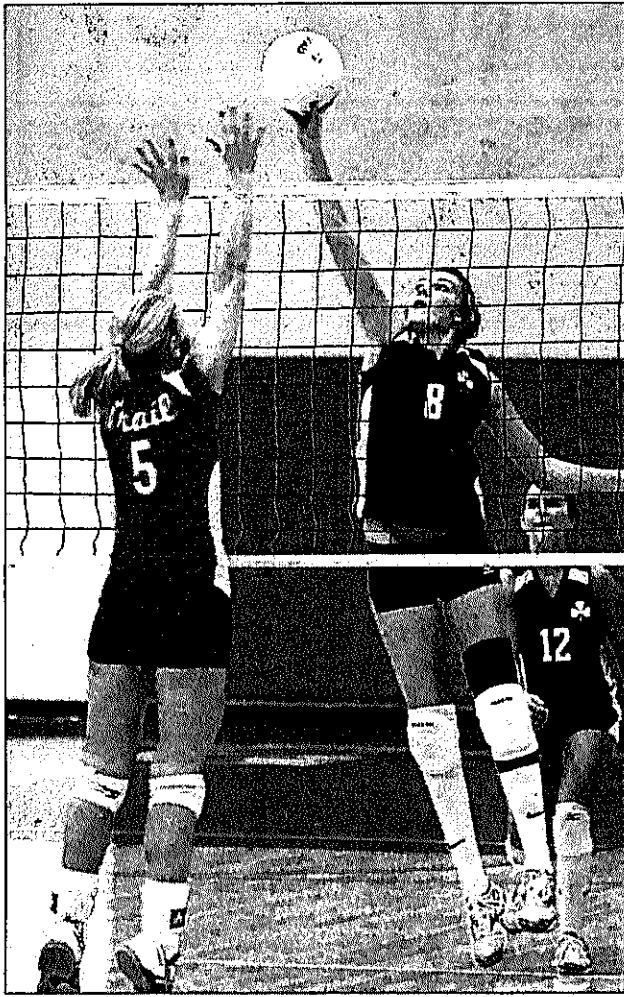
FERRY also fought Oak Glen to the wire in a pair of competitive games.

"No excuses, but our girls played four matches this week and that's asking a lot," offered Riders' coach Meagan Guesaldo. "I can tell you we left it all out there on the floor. I can't be disappointed in our effort. And give Oak Glen credit. They have a quality team."

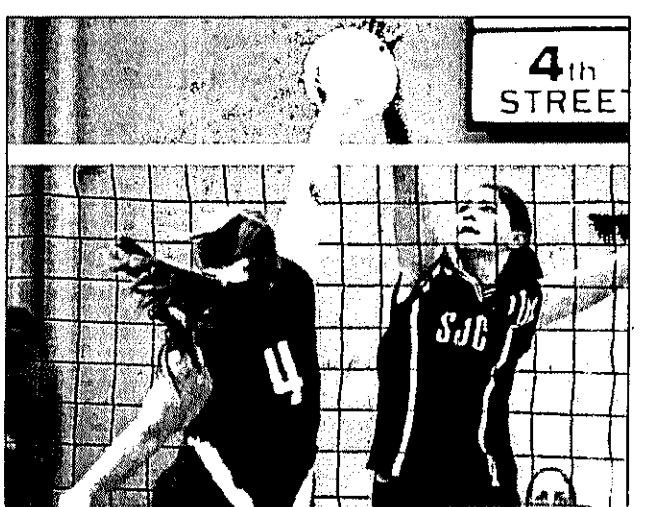
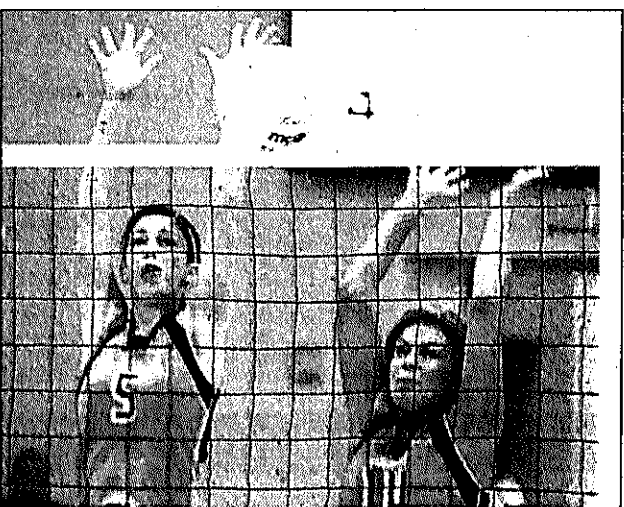
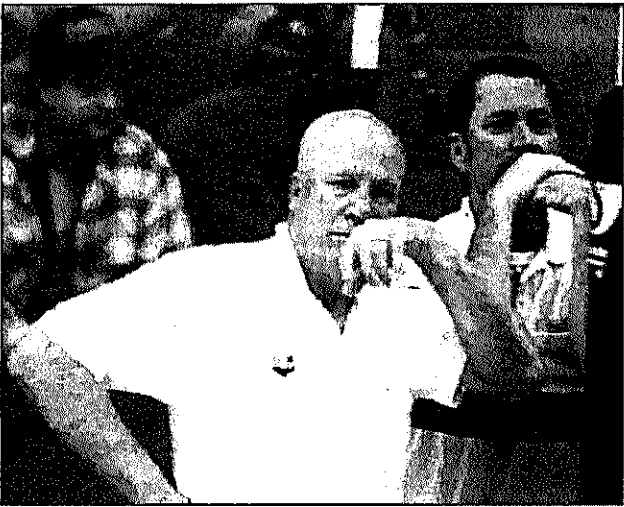
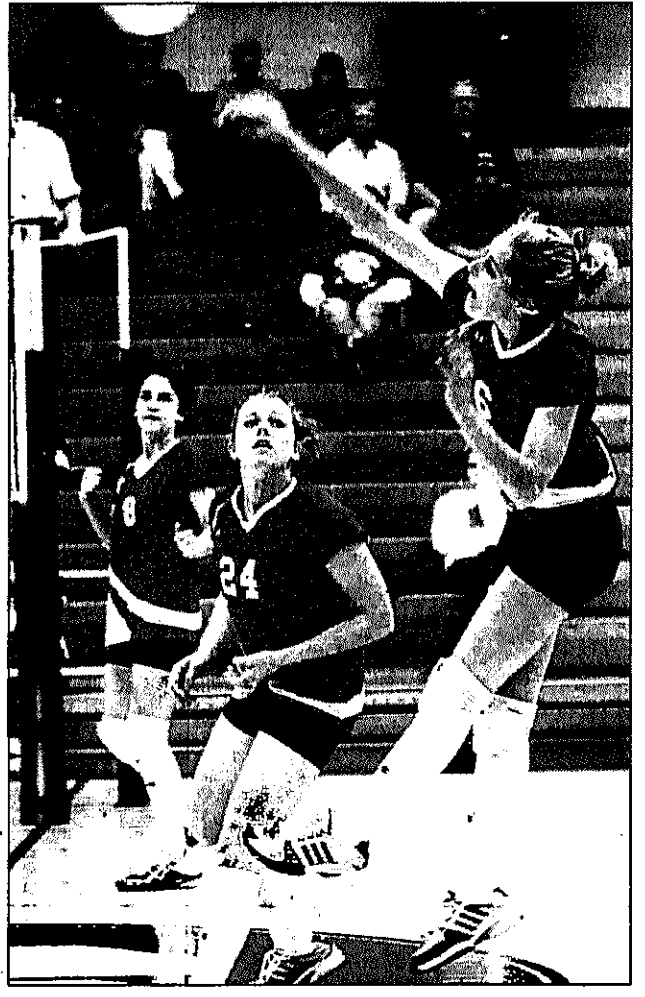
Ferry received excellent team balance, led by Mallory Pamphilis (8 kills, 9 blocks); Dortha Headley (5 points, 5 kills, 10 assists, 5 blocks); Lacy Neavin (7 points, 11 digs); Shelby Strauss (7 digs); Kyle Fitch (9 kills, 12 digs); Taylor Campbell (5 digs, 4 kills); and Taylor Kuminkoski (20 digs).

Ferry, now 12-9, travels to Tuscarawas County Tuesday for a sectional tournament matchup against Harrison Central.

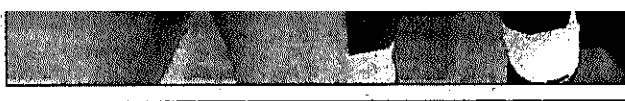
Gibson may be reached at rgibson@timesleader-online.com



TOP LEFT: Barnesville's Heidi Hines tips the ball over the net to Buckeye Trail's LeAnn Sachina as Jennifer Clouse watches.
TOP CENTER: Warriors' Morgan Abrams, Lindsey Bardall and Kaitlyn Wolfe celebrate their AA title.
TOP RIGHT: Martins Ferry Kyle Fitch strains to get to a block back over the net.
ABOVE LEFT: St. Clairsville's Alex Holub and Lexie King reach to block an Oak Glen spike.
ABOVE RIGHT: Monore Central's Alex Kuhn spikes a ball across the net as Christina Parden and Kate Fickell look on.
LOWER LEFT: Officials Wayne Ogilbee and Jim Little chill during a side change.
UPPER CENTER: Rocks fan Casey Carpenter, age 2, points to the scoreboard for Macy McEndree.
LOWER RIGHT: Lady Irish scorekeeper Shaun Stevens keeps the books.
BOTTOM LEFT: Lady Bulldog Mosissa Booth blocks a spike as Jenae Vavrock prepares for impact.
BOTTOM CENTER: OVAC Executive Secretary Treasurer Thomas Ratalczak discussing the tournament action with Volleyball Director Angie Miller.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Paden City's Amanda Tallman and St. John's Andrea Timko meet above the net as Irish teammate Alexis Sharpe watches the action.

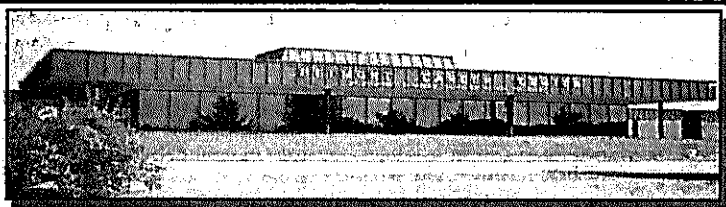
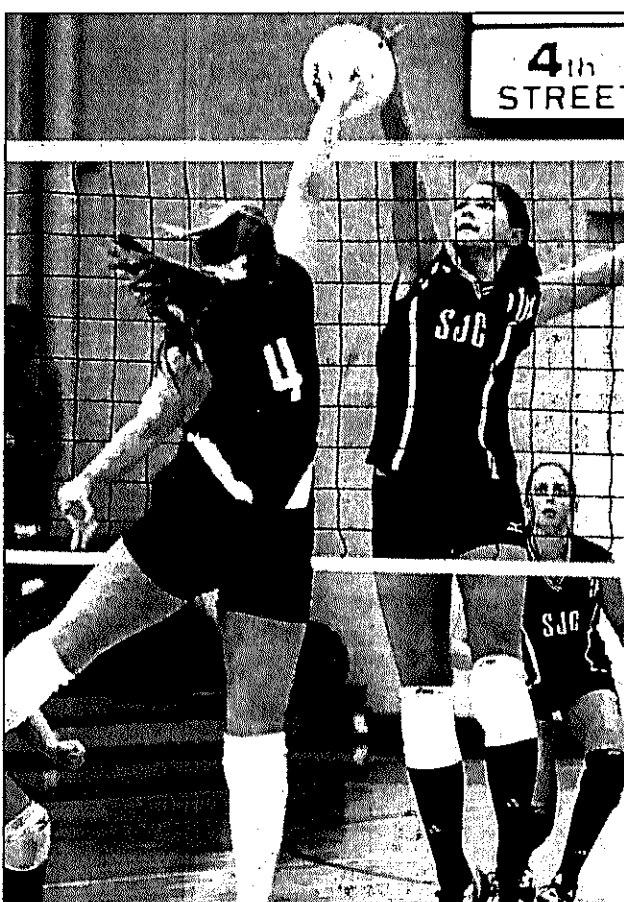
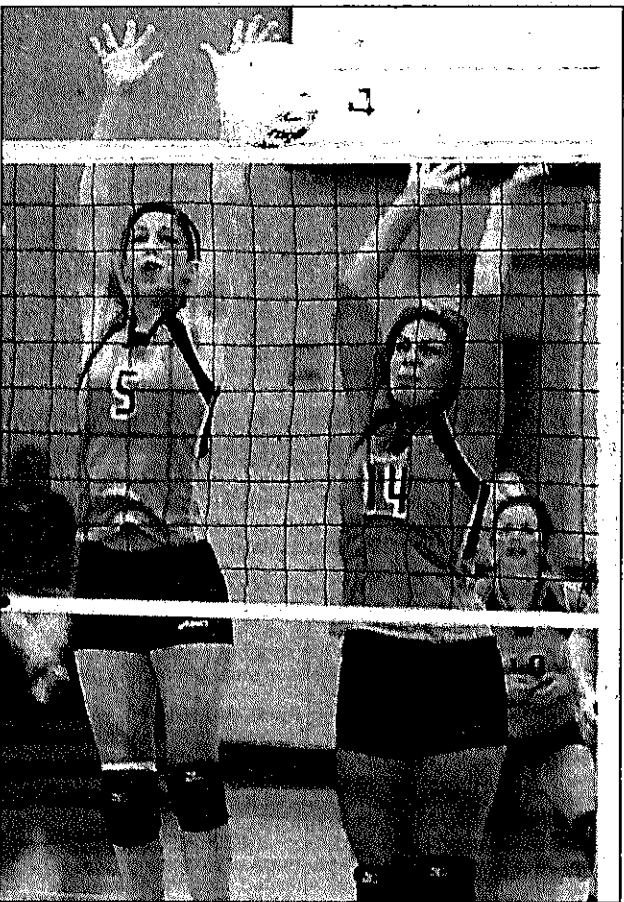
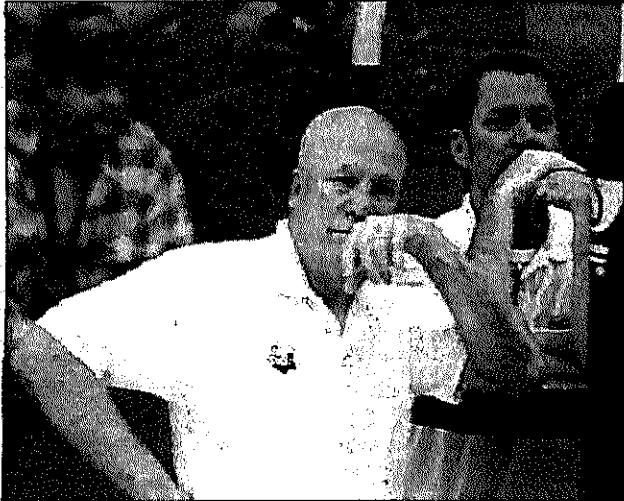
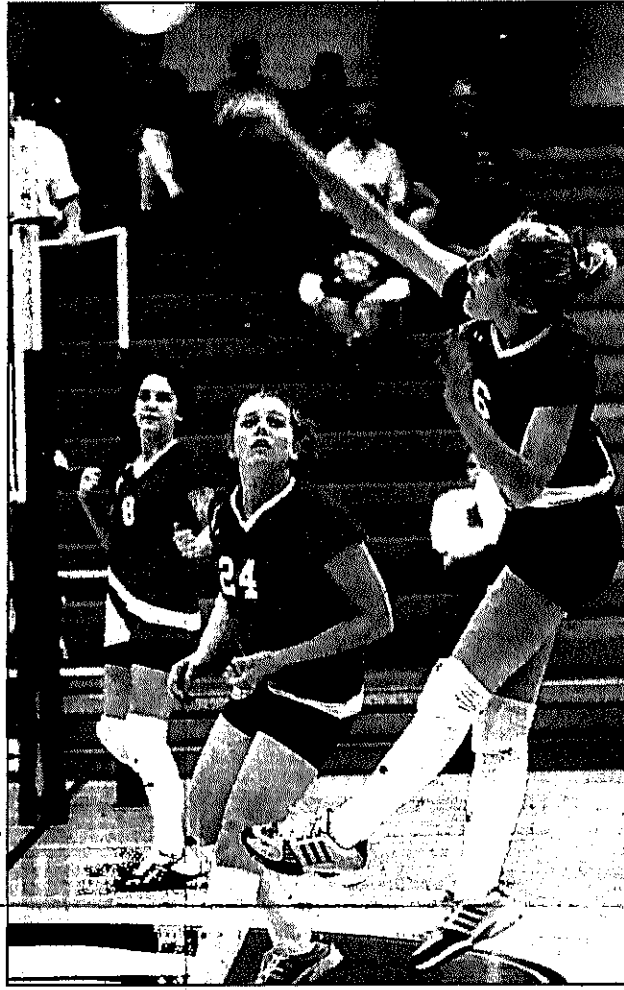


T-L Photos / Mike Palmer.



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