

Torson helps Saints 'kill' Lions

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Cedar Rapids Xavier's 3-0 home court volleyball win over Linn-Mar on Tuesday night can be summed up in two words.

“Kill, Torson.”

Saints junior jumping-jack Kayla Torson scored kills at the net, from the back line and spaces in between to lead her squad to a 25-18, 25-19, 25-18 sweep.

When she wasn't slamming spikes, the lanky all-stater was diving on the floor for digs to keep rallies alive.

“She just lays it out there on defense,” said Xavier Coach Krista Johnson, who notched her first victory as a head coach after serving the past two years as an assistant at Northern State University in South Dakota. “And she's tough from both the front row and back row.”

In all, Torson recorded 17 kills. Many came in crucial situations.

Her first put the Saints up 2-1 in the opening game, and they never trailed after that. She closed it out with two kills out of the final three points.

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After the Lions took a 9-5 lead in the second game, Torson turned the contest around with three straight unreturnable rockets. She then served Xavier into a 14-10 lead that was never relinquished. She also served the final two winning points.

For the third time of the night, Linn-Mar took a 1-0 lead in game three. Again, however, Torson smacked two more kills to put her team ahead 5-3 and another pair to put them up 14-12.

The lead held, and she finished it off with one last kill to end the match.



"We just were not able to block her," said Teresa Kehe, Linn-Mar's own first-year coach who rejoined the high school ranks following seven years at Loras College. "Our blocking was not at all strong all night."

For her part, Torson said she had a lot of help. "Britni (Scholtes) did a great job of finding the hitters," she said.

Indeed, the sparkplug senior setter picked up an astonishing 40 assists in the three games.

"We were pretty scrappy all night," said Johnson. "I'm always pleased with how we play defense. We had a few too many errors, but it was exciting to get this first one down."

Xavier, ranked ninth in Class 4A, and Linn-Mar will both play in Saturday's invitational meet at

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