

No. 9 Eagles claim regional title

Written by Metro Sports Report
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FORT DODGE - The Kirkwood Eagles got sweet revenge against Iowa Central in the championship match of the regional volleyball tournament Sunday afternoon in Fort Dodge.

The ninth-ranked Eagles clipped the seventh-ranked Tritons in five sets to claim the regional title, lifting Kirkwood to within one victory of qualifying for the national tournament.

Coach Jill Williams and the Eagles will host a two-team district tournament on Sunday, Nov. 4, with the victor advancing to the NJCAA Division II national tournament in Charleston, W.Va., from Nov. 15-17.

Iowa Central, the No. 1 seed in the regional, trimmed the Eagles in five sets when they met in a conference affair in Fort Dodge on Oct. 10, with the Tritons winning the fifth and final set 19-17 in overtime.

This time, Kirkwood took control in the fifth set with a 15-8 verdict to win the regional title.

Iowa Central won the first set Sunday, 32-30, in overtime, but the Eagles never blinked and captured the next two sets, 25-17 and 25-23, to grab a 2-1 lead. Iowa Central tied the match with a 25-22 victory in the fourth set, but Kirkwood controlled the fifth set for the win.

Alexa Aldrich-Ingram, who was named the most valuable player of the regional tournament, enjoyed a big day for the Eagles with 23 kills, 20 digs and four blocked shots. Abbi Tunis collected 14 kills and six blocks. Taylor Carey contributed 13 kills and three blocks in one of her best performances of the year.

Lauren Keane rolled up 51 assists in five sets. Chloe McNeese had three service aces and

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Aldrich-Ingram had two. Maddie Lavenz finished with 21 digs, Keane had 16 and Sami Johnson 14. Keane and Abbi Tunis were also named to the all-tournament team, along with Aldrich-Ingram.

Kirkwood, the No. 5 seed in the regional, defeated fourth-seeded DMACC on Saturday before toppling the top seed on Sunday. The Eagles will take a 31-8 record into the district tournament.