

No.9 Eagles sweep Indian Hills

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 22 October 2013 21:06 -

The Indian Hills volleyball team arrived at Johnson Hall Tuesday night with three women from Brazil, another player from Puerto Rico and four women who stood 6-foot-2.

The smaller Kirkwood Eagles never blinked.

The ninth-ranked Eagles swept the Warriors, 25-22, 25-18, 25-13, with an impressive performance on Sophomore Night at home.

"We are not going to over-size that many opponents," said Kirkwood Coach Jill Williams. "But we've kept the faith in the style of play that we have ... the speed and some good shot selection and being solid. That's just our style."

Alicen Wintermote was the only 6-footer on the floor for Kirkwood, but the Eagles countered the bigger Warriors with their teamwork and consistency.

"We know if we do our game and play Kirkwood volleyball, we'll be the better team," said Wintermote, a sophomore from Jewell (Iowa) and South Hamilton High School. "I think our passing definitely gave us the edge. That's what we revolve around, and that's what we work the most on."

Williams agreed with Wintermote.

"That was the one thing I said to them after: Great night of passing," said Williams. "It was just a good team effort."

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Indian Hills (14-17) had some hard hitters on its squad, including several girls with impressive jump serves, but the Eagles (29-6) kept the ball in play and made a series of winning shots. Meanwhile, the Warriors hurt themselves with unforced errors.

All five of Kirkwood's sophomores were honored before the match with their parents. All five of them are starters and have helped the Eagles compile a 69-15 record the past two seasons and finish ninth in the national tournament last year.

The five sophs are Wintermote, Chelsea Gryp (Victor HLV), Amber Timmins (LeMars Gehlen Catholic), Cali Beyer (Tripoli) and Erin Walker (Silvis, Ill.).

"Having all five of us starting is really amazing," said Wintermote. "It's really remarkable how we've all grown."

Kirkwood has a perfect 6-0 record at Johnson Hall this season. The Eagles were determined not to lose Tuesday.

"No," Wintermote said emphatically. "Not on Sophomore Night. Not ever."

Walker led a balanced attack with 10 kills. Heather Poula had nine, Wintermote seven, Gryp seven and Payton Hilton five.

Timmins collected collected 34 assists. Beyer had 15 digs, Gryp 11, Walker nine and Timmins eight. The Eagles went 67 for 72 on serves, with Poula getting two aces. Wintermote had two solo blocks.

Kirkwood will host two matches on Saturday, facing Iowa Lakes at 10 a.m. and meeting Kishwaukee at 2 p.m.