

No. 8 Mustangs clinch tie for Heart title

Written by Metro Sports Report
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DUBUQUE - The eighth-ranked Mount Mercy men's volleyball team clinched at least a tie for the Heart of America Conference regular-season title Tuesday night with a clutch victory in Dubuque.

The Mustangs trimmed Clarke, 3-2, in their final match of the league campaign to finish the season with a 9-1 record in the conference.

Grand View, which is ranked No. 4 in the country, is currently 8-1 in the conference and can tie Mount Mercy with a victory over Graceland Thursday night in its final match of the regular season.

Mount Mercy and Clarke traded victories in the first four sets, leaving the match tied at 2-2 heading into the final set. The Mustangs prevailed, 15-11, in the fifth set to earn a share of the conference crown.

Mount Mercy won 25-15, 20-25, 25-18, 22-25, 15-11.

The Heart of America Conference tournament will be held April 4-5-6. Mount Mercy and Clarke will receive byes in the opening round and advance directly to the semifinals.

Andrew Colantone rolled up 45 assists for the Mustangs. Nikola Stoimenov had 16 kills, Ben Steffen 14, Julian Armendano nine, Strahil Svilenski six and Colantone six in a balanced attack.

Stoimenov had four service aces and Svilenski had three. Colantone and Justin Atienza had 11 digs, with Evan Gaskill and Armendano notching nine apiece. Svilenski blocked four shots.

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Mount Mercy raised its overall record to 19-7. Clarke fell to 10-12 overall and 6-4 in the league.