

ECC VOLLEYBALL

Strong start to the season

Panthers don't drop a set at Rock Valley Tourney

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Ellsworth Community College is out to their best start in at least a decade.

In dominating fashion, the Panthers won their opening tournament Rockford, Ill. and did not give up a single set to start the 2023 season 4-0. The closest ECC has been prior was in 2014, when they were 3-1 at this point in the schedule.

The Panthers opened with a 25-9, 25-10 and 25-8 win over Black Hawk Community College. Behind the service line, ECC served up 16 aces and only allowed two by the opposing team's offense. The Panthers also tallied 26 kills, with Sofia Betteni and Ana Clara Cuartero putting down eight each.

The next win came against Bryant & Stratton 25-17, 25-9, 25-15. In that victory, ECC knocked down 43 kills including 10 each from Betteni and Manon Morillon. Adriana Ramos and Cuartero added eight.

In a 25-15, 25-18, 25-12 win over Kalamazoo Valley the Panthers had 44 spikes – 10 from Cuartero and nine from Betteni.

The closest match of the two days was the final one against Bay College. The Norse got within five in the first set and six in the third, but never could knock out ECC. The Panthers won 25-20, 25-7 and 25-



Cuartero



Bettini

Opening Weekend Tournament

Friday and Saturday at Rockford, Ill.

Ellsworth Community College: def. Black Hawk 25-9, 25-10, 25-8; def. Bryant & Stratton 25-17, 25-9, 25-15; def. Kalamazoo Valley 25-15, 25-18, 25-12; Bay College 25-20, 25-7, 25-19.

ECC Stats:

Kills: Ana Clara Cuartero 48; Sofia Betteni 37; Manon Morillon 20; Adriana Ramos 17; Natalie See 16; Ludine Charron 13; Dally Panell 4; Elitsa Peneva 2.

Assists: Panell 53; Peneva 42; Betteni 14; Cuartero 7; Charron 6; Ramos 3; See 3; Gabby Burton 2; Morillon 1.

Digs: Betteni 42; Cuartero 32; Charron 28; Morillon 21; Panell 20; Elitsa Peneva 19; Ramos 11; See 2; Burton 1.

Blocks: Betteni 2.5; Ramos 2.5; Panell 1.5; Cuartero 1; Morillon .5; See .5

Service Aces: Panell 12; Betteni 10; Charron 10; Cuartero 6; Ramos 5; Morillon 4; Peneva 2.

19. They did it with the help of 18 serve-serve errors by Bay College. ECC also smoked 24 kills and 13 service aces. Leading the way for hits was Betteni with 10. Dally Panell and Betteni both had five aces behind the service line.

Cuartero finished the four matches with 48 kills and Betteni added 37. Panell led with 53 assists while Elitsa Peneva tallied 42. Defensively, Betteni had 42 digs followed by Cuartero's 32 and Ludine Charron added 28. Betteni and Ramos both put up 2.5 blocks.

Serving really stood out with Panell tallying 12 aces. Betteni and Charron finished with 10 each.

The Panthers will host a triangular today (Wednesday), hosting Clark JV and Riverland JV starting at 3 p.m. ■

PANTHER FOOTBALL

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Two in-state players are former South Hardin athletes. Jimmy Hodges will be on the offensive line and Wyatt Hollingsworth at linebacker.

Last year, the defense averaged 83 snaps. They were leading Highland, Garden City, Independence and Dodge City at halftime but by the third and fourth quarters got beat up. Depth was a major issue, but so was buying-in and playing hard the entire game.

"Strategy-wise, we will be different," said Vaught. "We're going to control the ball more. We have to limit our snaps on defense, stay fresh and stay healthy."

Vaught hopes that the team's strength is their togetherness and their overall size.

"We will be as big if not bigger than most of the teams we're going to play, stature-wise. Height, weight, we're going to look good. Buy-in is the biggest thing, that the guys buy-in to what we're trying to do. Then, I think we're going to be a really good team," he said. "We're going to surprise some people, because nobody expects anything from us, which is perfect. If everybody underestimates us, they're not going to take us seriously and we're going to come in there and rattle their cage."

It's going to be another gauntlet of a schedule with seven teams ranked in the preseason polls. The good news for the Panthers is they get to play six home games at Cadet Field.

"We had to be road warriors last year where this year, we'll find more of a routine, more of a niche here at home. Ellsworth is not an easy place to come play," said Vaught. "It is the best league in the country. I say it a bunch, but it's true. It's very competitive." ■

Sports Briefs

Cougars and Tigers ranked in preseason

The preseason volleyball rankings for the IGHSAU have been released. AGWSR, who made it to the Class 1A State Semifinals in 2022, are ranked fourth in Class 1A. Gladbrook-Reinbeck defeated the Cougars in that game and are 13th. South Hardin finished with a 26-13 mark last fall and come into the rankings at No. 11 in Class 2A.

Other NICL squads in the rankings are in Class 1A: No. 13 Rebels; Class 2A:

No. 1 Dike-New Hartford, No. 3 Grundy Center, No. 5 Sumner-Fredericksburg, No. 10 Denver, No. 12 Wapsie Valley; Class 3A: No. 4 Union.

Women-only Learn to Hunt program registration

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a program to teach skills needed to hunt, field dress and cook waterfowl to women who have little to no waterfowl hunting experience.

The program will be held on Sept. 10, from 2-7 p.m., at the Olofson Shooting Range, near Polk City. The cost is \$35, and the course is designed

for women age 16 and older.

The workshop will feature knowledge and skills building sessions with instructors that will provide hands-on learning as well as a live-fire wingshooting that will teach the basics.

Participants will learn basic strategies for hunting waterfowl such as proper equipment, where to hunt, safe shooting practices, and how to field dress, butcher and cook them. The wingshooting session will provide lessons on shooting techniques and range time for those looking to improve their shooting skills.

Space is limited so early registration is encouraged. For more information and to begin the registration process please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/mvx95325>. ■

On Deck

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 23

VOLLEYBALL- Clark JV, Riverland at ECC 3/7 p.m.

THURSDAY, AUG. 24

CROSS COUNTRY- Iowa Falls-Alden/AGWSR, South Hardin at Invite at Maynes Grove 5:30 p.m.

FOOTBALL- College of DuPage at ECC 7 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL- Ballard at Iowa Falls-Alden 7:30 p.m. South Hardin, South Hamilton at BCLUW 5 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUG. 25

FOOTBALL- Hampton-Dumont/CAL at Iowa Falls-Alden 7:30 p.m. South Hardin at South Hamilton 7 p.m. Lake Mills at AGWSR 7 p.m.

Word of Mouth
What patients are saying about Hansen Family Hospital:

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