

665! LADY CAVS GIVE COACH RAWSON HISTORIC WIN



Above: Coach Bobby Rawson waves his appreciation to the crowd after collecting his 665th win as Crockett's volleyball leader.



Above: The group that made #665 possible, and also helped raise more than \$800 to support those fighting breast cancer, pose for a final picture.

By Ron Barry

Let's just be glad the number was 665; 666 would have been a little harder for a minister of the gospel to embrace.

But 665 will do just fine for Crockett County volleyball coach Bobby Rawson - who also pastors an Alamo church - as he became the winningest mentor in West Tennessee history when his Lady Cavaliers knocked off Obion County Central 3-0 in straight sets. The victory - Rawson's 665th in 26 years at Crockett - broke the previous mark of 664 held by long-time Jackson South Side coach Tommy Dean.

The triumph, which pushed Crockett's season record to 20-5, also came on a night when both teams cooperated for a "pinkout" to help raise money for breast cancer prevention, and more than \$800 were collected to donate to women who have connections to Lady Cav players.

Rawson, always reluctant to talk about himself, was quick to transfer any glory to God for the achievement, saying he's been blessed over the years not just with great players but with quality, character-filled kids.

"That's what has kept me going all these years," he said. "This program has had the success it's had because of the effort, the talent, and the integrity of the players. Tommy and I had some epic battles over the years. Some seasons we couldn't beat him, and some seasons he couldn't beat us, but when he retired a few years ago, I knew that carrot (664 wins) was out there, so I figured I might as well try to reach it so that someone will have something nice to say about me at my funeral."

While Rawson was quick to be kind in his praise of his players, his current group returned the favor to him.

"He never gives up on us, and he's always pushing us to be better," said senior Bailey Ann Whitby. "He works us hard, but it's always with the team's best interest in mind. We wouldn't be nearly as good as we are today if it weren't for his coaching."

Senior Brooklyn Haynes described playing for Rawson as "an experience," laughing as she said it.

"He holds us accountable. He screams at me a lot, but honestly, if he wasn't screaming at me I'd be more concerned, because that would mean he's given up on me. Nobody on our team wants him to give up on us, so we play harder. Everything he does is intended to make us better."

Against Obion, Crockett was better by a long shot most of the night. The visitors scored the first two points of the first set, but then the Lady Cavs reeled off 10 straight as Brennan Morris went off on one of her patented service runs. Crockett won Set 1 easily 25-15, and posted a similarly comfortable win in Sets 2 and 3 as well.

Dean, who's been called the "Grandfather of West Tennessee Volleyball" after posting a 664-220 record at South Side, took nine of his teams to the state tournament and was himself inducted into the Jackson-Madison County Sports Hall of Fame just last year.

Rawson has been right on his heels over the years, taking eight teams to the TSSAA State, winning four region championships, and capturing 10 district tournament titles.

This year's squad has lost just one district game thus far and will travel to Medina tonight for a match with South Gibson. Crockett returns home to play Covington Thursday night.



Left: Bailey Ann Whitby drills a serve for an ace as Crockett captures Set 2.

Right: Khaki Hail (20) keeps this ball alive off a hard serve as Lady Cavs Brennan Morris (4) and Sadie Hoover (10) retreat to keep the ball in play.





Above: Brennan Morris (4) is all sass after serving 10 straight points, including several aces, as she's teased by Lady Cavs Brooklyn Haynes (1), Lily Riley, Sarah Cherry (8), Bailey Ann Whitby, and Joy Evans (25).



Above: Lily Riley (11) rushes forward to make this dig as Brooklyn Haynes (1) shouts encouragement and Brennan Morris (4) prepares to chase it down.



Above: Whatever Deonna Cole (30) hollered in this huddle cracks up teammate Sarah Cherry (8) as Brooklyn Haynes (in black), Bailey Ann Whitby (13), Joy Evans (25), and Keeton Holyfield (23) join in the fun.



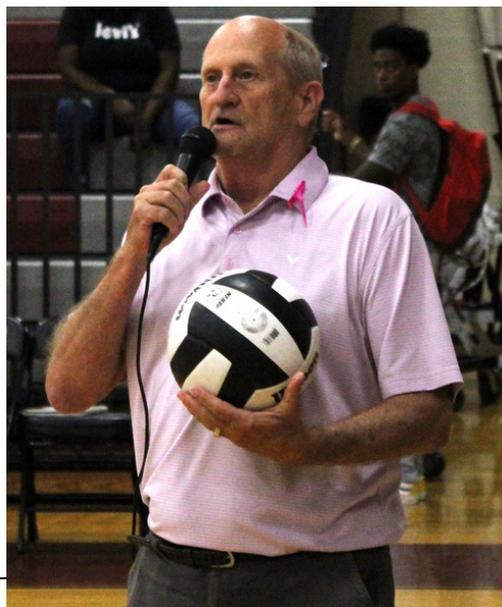
Above: Sarah Cherry (8) belts a winner as Joy Evans, Bailey Ann Whitby, and Lily Riley provide backup.



Above: Joy Evans hammers home a kill as teammates Lily Riley (far left), Brennan Morris, Sarah Cherry (8), and Bailey Ann Whitby (13) look on.



Above: Joyous Lady Cav players surround Coach Rawson after learning of the achievement.



Right: CCHS Athletic Director Bobby Mullins makes the announcement that, with this victory, Bobby Rawson has become the winningest volleyball coach in West Tennessee history.