

TUESDAY SPORTS RECAP

OCTOBER 10TH



Above: Your All-Region Tournament performers: (from left) Sarah Cherry, Bailey Ann Whitby, and Joy Evans.

By Ron Barry

Give Dyer County's volleyball team an opening, and they'll take the Grand Canyon.

Crockett County, despite leading the unbeaten Lady Choctaws by significant margins in two of the three sets, fell for the fourth time this season in the Region 7-AA Tournament championship held in Newbern Tuesday night. That run-filled match highlighted Crockett sports action for Tuesday, which also included a nearly astounding cross-country result and an end to the soccer season for the Lady Cavaliers. Here's a recap of the October 11 slate...

Volleyball: Coach Bobby Rawson's Crockett squad is now 31-8 on the season. Four of those losses have come at the hands of Dyer County, but this one may have been the most frustrating because of the opportunities presented in Sets 1 and 3. The good news is that by making the championship final, the Lady Cavs gained a berth in Thursday night's West Sectional at Covington at 7:00 needing only to defeat the homestanding Lady Chargers to earn a TSSAA State Tournament berth.

In the regional final, Crockett leaped to a quick 10-3 lead (which it also duplicated in Set 3) only to see Dyer County - led by All-Region 6-foot-2 middle hitter Rylee Key and 5-5 dynamo and tourney MVP Teagan Reed (who can actually get up higher than Key, jumping like Michael Jordan with a jetpack) - go on spectacular lengthy runs to offset the margins. Key is a sophomore and Reed is a junior, so they'll also both be back next year.

Dyer went ahead in Set 1 at the 14-13 mark, scoring 22 of the set's final 27 points to win 25-15. Then, although the Lady Cavs jumped to a 2-0 advantage in Set 2, the Lady Choctaws tallied 14 of the last 19 points to rout the visitors 25-13.



Above: Crockett's region runner-up will play for a State Tournament berth Thursday at Covington.

Rawson's resilient squad came storming back in Set 3 to actually hold a 19-11 lead and then got it to 21-17 on a kill shot by sophomore Deonna Cole, and it was looking like Dyer might lose only its second set of the entire season in 14 complete matches. But Coach Shanna O'Bright's Lady Choctaws never allowed Crockett another point, closing out the championship by scoring the final eight.

"They just kept going on these incredible runs, and we couldn't stop them," Rawson said. "It was almost like the Titanic. We could see the iceberg coming, but we couldn't get out of the way. They just got us into a bad place, both mentally and physically, and we got stuck there."

Rawson cited Dyer's ability to change its strategy - using more of an outside attack and employing more touch shots when Crockett attempted to block - to ignite the runs and keep them going. "They're definitely among the top three or four teams in the state," he said.

But his Crockett squad will still have a chance to join them there with a victory over Covington Thursday night. The Lady Cavs defeated the Lady Chargers 3-0 in straight sets back on September 25. "I just hope we can do it again," Rawson said.

Three of Crockett's seniors - Sarah Cherry, Bailey Ann Whitby, and Joy Evans - were named to the All-Region Tournament team in Newbern, joining four Dyer County players.



Above: Dyer County made its runs by forcing the Lady Cavs to make digs like this, although senior Kinleigh Lamb (on floor) miraculously managed to keep the ball alive for teammates Brennan Morris (11) and Brooklyn Haynes (1).

Cross-Country: If Obion County Central enters a meet in West Tennessee, it usually wins it. That has been true for as long as Julie Nass has been coaching the sport at Crockett County. On Tuesday, that remarkable string of success almost came to a stunning end when the Lady Cavaliers – with its five scoring racers all placing among the top 21 finishers – fell just four points shy of upsetting Obion in recording their runner-up performance in their own Crockett Invitational.

Obion, although missing its top runner Olyvia Underwood, barely edged Crockett 46-49 after the Lady Cav lineup of Claire Evans (6th), Avery Thornton (11th), Harmony Walker (18th), Casey Thornton (20th), and Leyla Silva (21st) managed to bunch itself near the top of the 60 runners in the event. Helping push opponents' point totals higher were Ashley Boone in 38th and Leah Moore in 42nd, contributing to Crockett's good fortunes.

"That may be the closest anybody's come to Obion in a West Tennessee meet since I've been here," Nass said. Crockett was missing one of its better finishers as well as senior Kristin Lewis had the soccer commitment. USJ's Addyson Kirkland was the individual race winner, followed by Obion's Klicey Campbell. Evans, only a sophomore, and Avery Thornton – just a freshman – continued to give Nass encouragement that Crockett's program is attracting young talent.

Crockett's boys finished fourth out of nine competing schools, led by Angel Garcia's 11th-place showing. Lane Foster – a sophomore, as is Garcia – was 18th, followed by freshman Jacob Wede (22nd), sophomore Aidan Klonowski (32nd), freshman Noah Mayfield (45th), and sophomore Leck Lucky (66th). There were 92 total racers in the boys event, which was dominated by Chester County. South Gibson's Jonathan Lewis was the individual winner.

Crockett will compete next Tuesday at the Westview Invitational in Martin.

Girls Soccer: Crockett's season came to a close with a 6-1 loss to perennially powerful Dyersburg in the District 13-AA Tournament held in Medina. Kristin Lewis, playing her final game, scored the Lady Cavs' only goal on an assist from freshman Rebecca Waddey. Crockett finished its initial season under Coach Stan Jamscek with a 6-6-1 record.



Above: Sophomore Angel Garcia was Crockett's top runner in the boys race, finishing 11th out of 92 racers.



Above: Freshman Avery Thornton placed 11th to help lead Crockett to a runner-up team finish.



Above: Sophomore Claire Evans (left) leads a couple of runners around the back side of the school's course during Tuesday's Crockett Invitational.



Above: Senior Kristin Lewis (9) closed her Crockett soccer career by scoring the team's lone goal in the 6-1 district tournament loss to Dyersburg.