# LAMAN SAYS MEMPHIS TOURNAMENT MADE LADY CAV VOLLEYBALL TEAM BTTER




**Above:** Freshman Addie Whitby was cited by Coach Andrew Laman as a major reason for Crockett's improved play Saturday after he gave her a more prominent role in the Lady Cav rotation. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Some people might look at a 3-3 record from an athletic tournament and assess that team as "middle of the pack" or (the dreaded worse-sounding) "mediocre."

Crockett County volleyball coach Andrew Laman looks at what his squad accomplished this weekend at the White Station Spartan Showdown in Memphis as the potential springboard to a highly successful season.

Laman's club carried a 3-0 record to the Memphis Sports & Events Center Friday night, and the young coach knew his Lady Cavaliers would be facing two of the better teams in the Memphis area on the opening-night portion of the tournament schedule.

Crockett began play against Northpoint Christian, a school located in Southaven, Mississippi that actually competes in the TSSAA (Tennessee's state association). In fact, they're the defending regional champions for their classification – and promptly showed it by upending the Lady Cavs 2-0.

Laman's crew had to follow that one up with another tough foe, Lausanne Collegiate School of Memphis, a team that won twice as many matches as it lost a year ago. Lausanne also handed the Lady Cavs a 2-0 loss.

"We played two really good teams Friday night," Laman said, "and we didn't play our best. I wasn't too happy with how we looked."
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Next up was Munford, which had beaten Millington Central on Friday night. But Crockett downed the Lady Cougars 2-0, and suddenly things were looking brighter. That victory boosted Laman's troops into the Silver Bracket semifinals for a rematch with Brighton – and Crockett prevailed again, 2-0.

Three straight wins pushed the Lady Cavs into the Silver Bracket championship matchup against Bartlett, but the Lady Panthers eked out a 2-1 triumph.

"We showed tremendous improvement between Friday and Saturday," Laman said. "We tried a few different things and moved some people around. We played so much better Saturday, and I felt a whole lot better about the weekend than I did after Friday night. We have some big matches this coming week, and I'm looking forward to seeing if we can continue playing like we did on Saturday."

One of the reasons Crockett performed better on Saturday, Laman said, was the insertion of freshman Addie Whitby into a more prominent role in the rotation. Whitby's two older sisters Bailey Ann and Audrey – now both in school at Union University – made State Tournament appearances as Lady Cavalier players.

"Addie comes from a volleyball family," Laman said, "and she's very athletic. She sure played well for us Saturday, and I think she's going to help us a lot from this point forward."
Crockett, now 6-3 overall, will host Jackson Christian School at 5:00 Monday (JV and varsity, in that order) and then will play home to a doubleheader varsity matchup with Westview (of Martin) on Tuesday beginning at 5:00. On Thursday at 5:00, the Lady Cavs travel to regional nemesis Milan, which just won a weekend tournament championship at Freed-Hardeman University.




**Left:** Coach Laman said travel ball coaches approached him Saturday noting the athleticism displayed by his "#20." Of course, that's Wesley Thornton, whose travel ball sport is softball -- although she's certainly adept on the volleyball and basketball courts as well.