

Hawks Sweep The State Tournament

By Liz Koloc

With 10 state appearances and five second place trophies under his belt, Head Coach Brett Mather was well overdue for a win.

Nov. 13 Mather and the varsity volleyball team finally captured that sought after first place trophy.

The Hawks had been ranked number one all season and wanted to live up to that ranking.

"We worked outrageously hard to maintain that label by practicing every single day for three hours. It's amazing now seeing all that hard work paid off," senior libero Mariah Kleitsch said.

Going into the first round of the state tournament against Western Dubuque, the team treated it like any other. The winning scores of 25-21, 26-24, 25-19 resulted in Mather's 700th win of his career. This advanced the team to the semi-final game against Lewis Central.

They were on a roll as the Hawks defeated Lewis Central in only three games. With no hitting errors in the second set and a hitting percentage of .560, the girls kept Lewis Central from scoring over eight points.

"I thought I hit pretty good against Lewis Central," junior hitter Haley Lyness said. "Our

middles would pull the block so I had a single blocker, which gave me a lot more room to hit. No hitting errors is a really cool accomplishment as a team. It shows how much practice can affect the way you play the game."

After defeating Lewis Central, they were one step closer to what every team wants, but it came down to which team wanted it more.

"The girls had played extremely relaxed and confident all week," Mather said. "I knew they were ready to take on Harlan."

Winning the first two sets with a great cushion put Harlan in a tough spot to come

back and win.

The Hawks were not about to repeat what had happened in 2006 when the team won the first two sets during the championship game but ended up losing the next three.

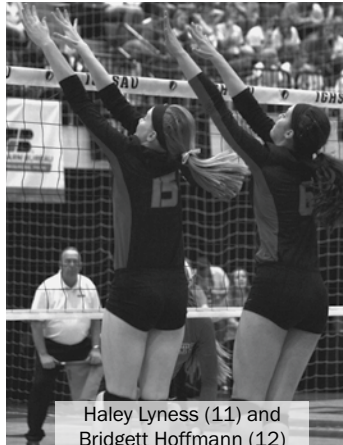
"We knew we had to act like the score was zero to zero and go out there and just play like normal," senior hitter Kristen Wegmann said.

And the Hawks did so, taking the third set and winning the Class 4A state championship.

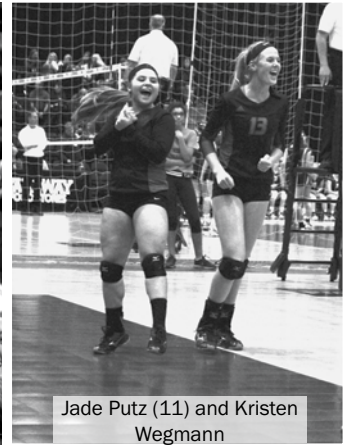
"The moment we won was an indescribable moment," said senior setter Carlee Ketchum. "I was so happy to finally win the state tournament."



Carlee Ketchum (12)



Haley Lyness (11) and
Bridgett Hoffmann (12)



Jade Putz (11) and Kristen
Wegmann



Mariah Kleitsch (12)

