

Cy Woods starts district play strong, sweeps Cy Creek

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Cypress Woods middle blocker Sarah Nielsen admitted that her team thinks about keeping its winning streak in district play alive.

The way the Wildcats played in its 17-5A opener against Cypress Creek Tuesday night shows Cy Woods has every intention to stay atop the district.

Cy Woods (13-3, 1-0 in 17-5A) swept Cy Creek (8-5, 0-1) 25-8, 25-12, 25-18 Tuesday at home, making it the 19th consecutive win in 17-5A play. The Wildcats went 18-0 in district play last season and during the 2009-2010 season when they were in 15-5A.

Nielsen led the way with 17 kills. Sydni Schulz had 10 and Marissa Guzman had nine.

Morgan Chenoweth has three kills for the Cougars.

The Wildcats jumped out to huge leads and stayed aggressive often in Tuesday's game. It's one of the formulas for success at Cy Woods.

"That's one of our goals," Nielsen said. "We just try to jump on them from the start and stay on them. Don't let up."

Head coach Ashley Ahlfinger said Nielsen and Schulz were huge offensively for the Wildcats. It was clear her players were focused in this game against what she calls a solid playoff team.

"Creek is amazing and they have an amazing coach," she said. "I told my kids we had to come out big. "... Good, good win to start off district like that."

Cy Woods was in control during the first two sets, but Cy Creek actually grabbed the lead in the third set after a fault made it 6-5. That was the first time the Cougars had taken the lead in any set. They pushed Cy Woods in the third, but the Wildcats bounced back to take the final set thanks to Nielsen and company.

Cy Creek head coach Tami Combs does find some solace in the game from the the third set. She said she was proud of the way her team fought back after being down, but there's a lot of work to do before these two teams meet again at Cy Creek on Sept. 27.

"We need to work on our defense, getting a little bit quicker, making sure that we're adjusting and being coachable," she said. "When they're shut down, they're not listening and they're not coachable. When they're on top of their game and not focused on who's on the other side, they play phenomenal."

Cy Woods prepares for the Pearland tournament next while Cy Creek is at Klein Oak at 6:30 p.m. Friday.

Coaches reunite

Another twist added to Tuesday's game was Tami Combs returning to Cy Woods to face the Wildcats.

Combs was an assistant under Ahlfinger on last year's Cy Woods team that went to the state semifinals. She took the Cy Creek job and had to face her old team to open 17-5A play.

Combs said Tuesday's game was a bit emotional. She wants to see her players from Cy Woods succeed, but she also wants her players at Cy Creek to succeed.

"It was hard. I mean, pulling in here brought tears to my eyes," she said. "This is one of my homes, but at the same time it was a good opportunity for me to get over at Cy Creek. I'm excited to be there."

Ahlfinger said seeing Combs on the opposite bench was an unusual sight, but she couldn't be more excited to see one of her close friends become a head coach.

"It's awkward and it's exciting probably more for her because she loves all my kids too and she loves those kids," she said. "But it's great competition and she's one of my best friends and always will be and she's going to do amazing things with them like she already has."

(http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/cypress/sports/cy-woods-starts-district-play-strong-sweeps-cy-creek/article_e5b3a632-ce05-11e0-bd84-001cc4c002e0.html)