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- MCC Tournament Championship vs. Indiana Wesleyan (#RV)

Volleyball Drops MCC Championship, 3-2

November 15, 2008

The No. 18 Taylor volleyball team dropped a five-set heartbreaker in the championship match of the Mid-Central College Conference Tournament to Indiana Wesleyan Saturday, losing by the final scores of 21-25, 25-15, 25-13, 16-25, 15-11.

Playing in front of an energized Odle Arena crowd, Taylor broke a 10-10 tie in the first set and erupted on a 10-2 run before eventually capturing the opener by a final margin of 25-21. Taylor recorded only ten kills in the set, but took advantage of 13 IWU hitting errors as the Trojans never gave up the lead.

The Wildcat front row put their first set hitting errors aside and came out swinging in the next set with 15 more kills and only 4 errors for a .367 attack percentage. The offensive firepower was too much for Taylor as they dropped the set, 25-15.

It was much of the same in the third set for the Trojans, as they hit at -.044 with just seven kills compared to 13 for the Wildcats. IWU led from wire-to-wire and ended with a 25-13 triumph.

Facing elimination, Taylor showed the dominant offense that has been their trademark all season long. Led by five kills in the set by senior Jenny Peterson, the Trojans pounded 14 kills for a .364 hitting percentage. With 13 tie scores and seven lead changes in the first half of the match it was a fierce battle, but that all changed with the momentum of a Kelsey Pritchard kill to give Taylor a 15-14 lead. The Trojans then scored 10 of the next 12 points to close out the set 25-16, forcing the decisive fifth set.

After falling behind early in the finale, Taylor battled back to even the score at 6-6 on a kill by Pritchard. But the hitting efficiency of IWU began to get the best of the Trojans, as the Wildcats surged to a 13-9 lead following a Rebekah Reichard kill. Taylor took advantage of two straight IWU errors to claw within two points, but back-to-back kills by the Wildcats finished off the Trojans by the final of 15-11.

Peterson, a senior from Prospect Heights, Illinois, had 11 kills for a .300 hitting percentage while Pritchard



and Jackie Geile each recorded 12 kills.

With her seventh kill of the afternoon, Pritchard became just the third freshman in Taylor's history to record 500 kills for a season. The Brownsburg, Indiana native finished the match with 505 total kills.

Senior Lindsey Bayle anchored the Taylor defense with 23 digs from her libero position while Rachel Kizer led the Trojans at the net by blocking four balls. Anita Buckner, a senior from Ravenna, Michigan, dished out 36 assists on the afternoon.

For the match Taylor had only 46 kills with a .133 attack percentage compared to IWU's .193 clip and 71 kills. The Wildcats were led by Erin Morris, who had 24 kills in the match.

Following the match Taylor was awarded their second straight regular season conference championship trophy along with having four Trojans named MCC All-Conference.

Lindsey Bayle was named second team all-conference while Betsy Brown, Kelsey Pritchard, and Jenny Peterson were all honored as first team All-MCC selections.

Brown, a freshman from Adrian, Michigan, who did not play in any of the MCC tournament matches due to injury, was named MCC Setter of the Year.

The MCC leader in hitting percentage during conference play, Pritchard was honored as the MCC Freshman of the Year.

Taylor head coach Brittany Huyser Smith was recognized as MCC Coach of the Year for the second straight season.

The win gives Indiana Wesleyan (27-14) an automatic bid to the NAIA National Championship, while Taylor (32-8) holds only a very slim chance for an at-large bid. The national championship qualifiers will be posted on www.naia.org at 1 p.m. Sunday afternoon.

[Box Score](#)

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