

TYLER SANDERSON AND ANSLEY TULLIS POWER POPE JOHN PAUL II'S 4-SET WIN AT MOUNT CARMEL

Mount Carmel was able to take a set this time from Pope John Paul II, but the end result was the same. The Jaguars overcome a sloppy second set to earn a 25-15, 19-25, 25-18, 25-21 non-district road victory Wednesday.

"The first game, we played really well," said Pope John Paul's Ansley Tullis (17 kills, 12 digs). "The second game, we let up a little bit. We're not a big team, so if Ellie (Holzman) knows where the set is going, that's bad because she's going to block it. That's why we lost the second set, but we pulled it together after that."

The teams met two weeks ago in Slidell, and the Jaguars swept the first battle between the three-time defending state champions. But this time, the Cubs didn't go down easy though the first set was all Jaguars (23-3).

Pope John Paul raced to a 12-4 lead and never looked back in the opening set. A Mount Carmel hitting error sealed a 25-15 victory, but the Cubs recovered. The second set was tied at five and then 10, but an Emily Meyer cross-court kill gave the Cubs a 12-11 lead. They didn't look back as Pope John Paul struggled with errant attacks, and the Cubs came up with shot after shot. Ellie Holzman's kill sealed a 25-19 victory.



"When we serve the ball well, we're a very, very hard team to beat," Jaguars coach Danny Tullis said. "Mount Carmel has a lot of powerful offensive attackers, so when you miss your serving zone, they're setting who they want to set, and they're a handful when they're doing that. They are hard to deal with." The critical third set was up in the air early, but the Jaguars used a 10-4 run in the middle of the set to take a 20-12 lead. The Cubs cut the lead to six points, but Rachel Hartmann's kill sealed a 25-18 win and a 2-1 advantage in the match.

Mount Carmel looked poised to force a fifth set as the Cubs raced to a 10-4 lead in the fourth set, but the Jaguars went on an 11-3 run to take the lead. The set was tight from there as the Cubs regained the lead, but a Hartmann block gave Pope John Paul the lead for good en route to a 25-21 victory.



"I think it was just important to understand that it was up to us to win the fourth set," said Pope John Paul's Tyler Sanderson (15 kills, three aces). "We had it in us. Once we stopped making unforced errors, we were able to control our serve-receive, and it was easier for us to control the match."

Hartmann had 15 kills and four blocks while Camille Dedeaux added 12 kills and two aces. Kendall Battistella dished out 54 assists and two aces. For Mount Carmel (26-6), Holzman had 22 kills and five blocks while Macie Matherne added 11 digs. Tori Frught had 42 assists. "Minus the first set where we didn't show up at all, this was a nice little battle," Mount Carmel coach April Hagadone said. "I told them that this was a positive. I think we found our lineup. I finally see a spark. Now, we just need to grow from here."