

Indian Hills 'foreigners' top Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 22 October 2014 20:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 October 2014 21:16



The talented young ladies from Serbia, Brazil and Norway were a little too tough for the talented young ladies from Ely, West Branch and Maquoketa Wednesday night.

Indian Hills and its international cast of characters topped Kirkwood, 25-19, 25-14, 18-25, 25-12, in a premier junior college volleyball match at Johnson Hall.

Indian Hills also has 12 players from Iowa, including Sarah Ryder from Cedar Rapids Kennedy, but Tamara Merseli of Belgrade, Serbia; Mirela Vasconcelos of Monte Azul Paulista, Brazil, and 6-foot-3 Nora Buvarp of Sands, Norway were too tough to handle.

"That makes it a difficult battle, but still, we've done it before," said Kirkwood Coach Jill Williams, whose team is comprised entirely of Iowans. "We can compete with that, we have the size to match that, we can play with that."

Not this night, however.

It was Sophomore Night and Dig Pink Night to Beat Cancer, and Williams thought her club may have lost focus with the pre-game ceremony and personal distractions.

"I don't think we were as ready to play as we wanted to convince ourselves that we were," she said.

Indian Hills 'foreigners' top Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 22 October 2014 20:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 October 2014 21:16

But make no mistake, Indian Hills is very good.

"First and foremost, that's what I told the girls," said Williams. "I'm not happy with the way we came out, but I'm not taking anything away from them. They really do have a nice team.

"They have size, they have hitters coming at you from every which way, and they're decisive."

Indian Hills, ranked 12th in NJCAA Division I, raised its record to 27-2. Kirkwood, ranked ninth in NJCAA Division II, dropped to 27-6.



As a Division I school, Indian Hills has more money to spend on its program in terms of recruiting budgets and scholarships. Nonetheless, Williams likes to play Division I schools as a measuring stick for her program.

Kirkwood climbed to No. 1 in the national rankings a few weeks ago, but the Eagles have lost four of their last seven matches against quality opponents, with three of those losses against ranked teams.

The Eagles did not look sharp during the first two games against Indian Hills, but they pulled together for a solid 25-18 victory in Game 3.

"We decided to talk to each other. Communication," said Williams. "With the communication, the team starts to come together - the excitement, the energy and some things open up.

Indian Hills 'foreigners' top Kirkwood

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 22 October 2014 20:42 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 October 2014 21:16

"You put pressure on your opponent and all of a sudden they step back."

Indian Hills took charge again in the fourth game and won convincingly.

Megan Allmandinger led Kirkwood with 13 kills. Heather Poula had nine kills.

Halle Lueck contributed 32 assists. Kensley Heater had 11 digs and Nicole Snyder had 10. Becca Bell blocked four shots.