

RUBBER MATCH RALLY

Wonewoc-Center responds after dropped third set to eliminate Royall

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Wonewoc-Center looked poised to send Royall home in straight sets in their regional semifinal showdown last Thursday.

Instead, the Panthers swung back strong, using a late third-set rally to push the match to a fourth and keep the pressure on a Wolves squad dealing with the expectations of a deep playoff run that come with being a top seed.

But rather than panicking, No. 1 seed Wonewoc-Center came back strong with a statement fourth set to defeat Scenic Bluffs rival and No. 4 seed Royall 25-14, 25-11, 24-26, 25-17 in their WIAA Division 4 regional semifinal Thursday, October 21 in Wonewoc.

Both squads got to the regional semifinals following the straight-set sweeps in their postseason openers. The Wolves dispatched of No. 8 seed Weston 25-13, 25-8, 25-8 while the Panthers downed No. 5 seed Kickapoo 25-15, 25-20, 25-13.

In both teams' conference opener back in late August, Royall got the better of Wonewoc-Center with a 25-23, 25-15, 24-26, 25-21 upset victory in Elroy. The Wolves would find their form later on and go on a tear to end the season, including a dominating 25-17, 25-17, 25-12 sweep of the Panthers in their mid-September rematch in Wonewoc.

Thursday's playoff rubber match looked to be headed for another convincing Wonewoc-Center sweep before Royall dug deep and put the favored Wolves on their heels. Both teams had strong fan turnout that created an electric atmosphere, with the Royall contingent coming to life thanks to that third-set comeback.

But faced with their first real adversity of this postseason, Wonewoc-Center got back to a more aggressive style of play in the fourth to close out the match.

'SEMIFINAL' cont. on pg. 15

WONEWOC-CENTER 3 ROYALL 1

Wonewoc-Center overcame a third-set setback to defeat No. 4 seed Royall 25-14, 25-11, 24-26, 25-17 in the regional semifinals. Stat leaders for the Wolves in the win included Kelsey Justman with 14 kills, Bryn Ertel with 4 blocks and Stowe with 32 assists.



Jaelyn Stowe

Royall's Madeline Gruen celebrates a point during the Panthers' match with Cashton Thursday night. HSE Photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media



WONEWOC-CENTER 3 HILLSBORO 0

The Wolves' path to their first regional title in 2011 was completed with a 25-18, 25-22, 25-13 sweep of No. 2 seed Hillsboro. Leading the way for Wonewoc-Center in the monumental win was Kelsey Justman with 17 kills, Ertel with 8 blocks and Stowe with 35 assists.

Wonewoc-Center's Ana Roehling (44), Bryn Ertel (12), Brooklynn Bolton (53) and Bridget Totzke (31) react from the bench as the Wolves surge ahead of Hillsboro in Saturday's regional final game. HSE Photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media



#1 BANGOR

#1 BANGOR

#1 BANGOR

#1 HIGHLAND

#9 SENECA

#8 GILMANTON

#4 BLAIR-TAYLOR

#1 BANGOR

#1 HIGHLAND

#8 PECATONICA

#8 PECATONICA

#5 NEW LISBON

#4 BLAIR-TAYLOR

#3 ELEVA-STRUM

#3 ELEVA-STRUM

#2 ALMA/PEPIN

#5 BARNEVELD

#5 BARNEVELD

#5 BARNEVELD

#6 ALMA/CENTER LINCOLN

#7 INDEPENDENCE

#2 ALMA/PEPIN

#2 ALMA/PEPIN

#13 CASSVILLE

#13 CASSVILLE

#4 ARGYLE

SECTIONAL CHAMPION

@ HIGHLAND

#5 BARNEVELD

#13 CASSVILLE

#4 ARGYLE

#1 WONEWOC-CENTER

#1 WONEWOC-CENTER

#8 WESTON

#1 WONEWOC-CENTER

#3 SOUTHWESTERN

#3 SOUTHWESTERN

#5 KICKAPOO

#4 ROYALL

#4 ROYALL

#1 WONEWOC-CENTER

#3 SOUTHWESTERN

#14 ITHACA

#6 DE SOTO

#6 DE SOTO

#6 LA FARGE YOUTH INITIATIVE

#7 BROOKWOOD

#2 HILLSBORO

#2 HILLSBORO

#6 NORTH CRAWFORD

#11 BLACK HAWK

#6 NORTH CRAWFORD

#7 BELMONT

#7 BELMONT

#10 SHULLSBURG

#2 POTOSI

#15 WAUZEKA-STEUBEN

#2 POTOSI