

# **Local Area Sports – Volleyball**

Compiled from:  
The Burgettstown  
Enterprise

Fort Vance Historical Society

# Berlin puts end to Fort Cherry's season

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WINDBER – The Fort Cherry girls volleyball team fell to District 5 champion Berlin in straight sets Tuesday night, 25-18, 25-14, 25-19, in the first round of PIAA Class A state playoffs at Windber High School.

Fort Cherry head coach Kelly Lacek would have liked a different outcome but was happy with the team's effort and has high expectations for next year.

"We have eight juniors coming back and we are losing two strong seniors," said Lacek. "That means, I am expecting more for next year. It feels great to be ending in the first round of states when we were never even expected to be in the playoffs."

Berlin's plan for the Rangers was to slow their middle hitters and outserve them,

and head coach Cory Will felt that happened.

"We were able to serve them off the court, and that was the key tonight," said Will. "We were trying to put the ball in spots, and that worked pretty well for us."

Berlin not only served a strong match, but also used all personnel at the net to hit the ball hard at the Rangers.

Senior middle hitter Kiera Booth had 12 kills and three blocks, and sophomore Grace Dorcan added eight kills and six aces. Grace's sister, senior setter Lexie Dorcan, contributed 20 assists, and senior middle hitter Zoe Smith had four kills and four blocks for Berlin.

"I think we stayed positive and sided-out as soon as possible, and that was key," Booth said. "It feels great to be moving onto the next round. Last year, we came up short of our goal, and this year we are not

doing that. We are here 'til the end."

Lacek said her team missed too many serves to stay in the game with Berlin, but felt that the outcome could have been different with a stronger effort.

"I told the girls it was our serves that stopped us," said Lacek. "In that second set, we missed five serves, which could mean a five-, 10-, or 15-point difference when you have a 14-25 game. The missed serves were crucial, and that affected us during the season, and again tonight."

Fort Cherry is relatively young, with only two seniors.

"If they were all in, mentally, we would have won," said Lacek. "Berlin came to win, and that's what they did. I am proud of them, and hope they make it far in states."

Tied 11-11 in the third set, Fort Cherry missed a serve

to allow Berlin to pull the momentum. That seemed to be the story for the Rangers.

The Rangers' libero, sophomore Ellie Staley, did a phenomenal job of playing Berlin's strong swings, contributing 14 digs. Senior outside hitter Abby Cooper added 9 kills and 15 digs, and junior outside hitter Katherine Nemeč pitched in seven kills and three aces.

Nemeč said she is hoping the offseason will allow for even stronger gains.

"Halfway through the season, we really took a good look at how we were playing and focused on building our trust in each other and strengthening our playing," Nemeč said. "I think that really helped us to get here. We have some girls playing club, which can give us time to focus and bring it back in the summer stronger."

**Berlin puts end to Fort Cherry's Girls Volley Season**  
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*Courtesy of Fort Vance Historical Society*

# FC back in PIAA volleyball playoffs

FOX CHAPEL – The Fort Cherry girls volleyball team qualified for the PIAA tournament for the second time in three years after a 3-0 sweep of Greensburg Central Catholic in the Class A third-place consolation match Saturday morning at Fox Chapel High School.

The game scores were 25-21, 25-17 and 25-21.

The Rangers improve to 16-4 overall while the loss drops the Centurions to 16-5.

Jadyn Hartner led Fort

Cherry with 27 assists, three aces and three kills. Abby Cooper chipped in with 14 digs and nine kills, as Allie McKean tallied eight kills and seven digs.

Ellie Staley and Haley Felton were strong on the back line for the Rangers with 34 and 11 digs, respectively.

Fort Cherry will play Berlin, the District 5 champion, in the first round of the state playoffs Tuesday at a site and time to be determined.

**Fort Cherry back in PIAA Volleyball Playoffs**  
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*Courtesy of Fort Vance Historical Society*