

Seton Reaches AAA Finals

BY JOHN FAY
The Cincinnati Enquirer

WESTERVILLE, Ohio—The rules of volleyball put Seton coach Mary Jett in a slight bind Friday night, but the Saints broke loose for a 12-15, 15-4, 15-7 victory over Rocky River in the Class AAA semifinals at Rike Center here.

Seton takes on Canton McKinley in finals at the 4:30 p.m. today.

Jett had to hand in her lineup 20 minutes before her Saints hit the first serve, which put her in a predicament because she didn't know until the warmups were complete that Judy Robben's tender right elbow was game-ready.

So the Saints started the night with Robben—the girl Jett calls her best all-around player—on the bench.

But when Seton fell behind, 5-2, in the first game, Jett decided it was time to go back to the same old things that got the team to state.

SO IN went Robben to play her front-court spot. Said Jett: "I went back to the original lineup I had used all year. I had to have the lineup in before I knew if Judy

Volleyball

could play or not. I decided to put her in the first game and see if she could play. We were down anyway. I figured it couldn't hurt."

It didn't.

With Robben and Barb Mannix pounding spikes from the side off of Tracey Thompson's soft sets, Seton began to click. The Saints came back from a 9-3 deficit to make the first game interesting. And even though her team lost, 15-12, Jett did not fret between games.

"I had a good feeling," Jett said. "I could feel us pull it together. We took the momentum in the middle of the first game. I told them no matter what happened in the first game, if we took the momentum into the second game, we'd be all right."

Actually, Seton was a lot better than all right. The Saints bolted to a 9-4 lead in the second game. Then it was Kelly Kemen's turn to serve. Kemen, a junior, served six straight points before Rocky River had a chance to adjust, giving Seton a quick, 15-4 victory.

"WE WERE clicking," Jett said. "With Judy and Barb hitting from the outside, and Tracey setting them up. That's what we've been doing all year."

Seton was never in danger in the third game. The Saints simply got stuck when the score went to 13-7. The teams exchanged the serve 15 times before Seton closed it out on spike by Robben and a dink to the middle by Thompson.

"After the first game, I felt we were really playing well," Robben said. "We played one of the best matches we played all year."

As for the elbow, she said: "It felt good. It's a little sore now. But it'll be all right for tomorrow."

Seton faces McKinley in the finals for the second straight year. McKinley won last year, 15-11, 15-4.

"It will be good to go in with a day's rest," Jett said. "Last year, we had a tough match in the morning, then had to come back and play at night."

Seton goes into the finals 27-1 and ranked No. 1 in the state. Rocky River closed out the season 25-4.