

[Volleyball: Mohawk Trail wins first ever Western Mass. title following 3-2 victory over Lee](#)

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WEST SPRINGFIELD — Coming back from deficits has been a big part of the story of the Mohawk Trail volleyball team's season.

On Saturday in the Western Mass. Class D title match against top-seeded Lee, the Warriors once again had to dig themselves out of a hole.

Second-seeded Mohawk Trail opened up a 17-1 lead in the opening set en route to taking a 1-0 advantage. The Warriors dropped the second and third sets but were able to hang on to win the fourth, forcing a fifth and final set to determine the Class D title.

Mohawk Trail didn't mess around in the fifth, building a 7-0 lead that eventually turned into an 15-8 set win, giving the Warriors the championship with a 3-2 victory at West Springfield High School.

"It feels unbelievable," Mohawk Trail coach Sherri Lannon said. "These guys worked so hard all season long. They worked their butts off. It's a pretty amazing feeling. We have such a small school and so few kids that we put together the best team we could and they did amazing."

It was the first Western Mass. title in program history for the Warriors.

"I've been playing on varsity for six years and have never made it past the first round," Mohawk Trail senior Palmer King said. "It means so much. This is an amazing team and they worked so hard. It means so much."

With Saturday's win being the school's first championship, nerves were to be expected. Conversely, Lee (12-8) was in the Class D championship match against Turners Falls last fall, but the fast start allowed the Warriors (16-1) to settle into the contest.

Teams will now turn their attention to the MIAA Divisional races on Nov. 9. The Division 3 event is slated for the Wrentham Development Center, with qualifiers advancing to the state meet on Nov. 16 at Fort Devens.

"They're an amazing team," Lannon said of the Wildcats. "It was definitely nerve-racking coming into this game. I know what they can do and have seen them in the finals the last few years. To get to play them in the finals is amazing. Their coach is a great coach and they did amazing."

King opened the match with a kill before entering the service station, where he put down three aces and a kill that helped Mohawk Trail open up a 12-0 lead.

Adrian Grant added a pair of aces that helped the Warriors build their 17-1 lead and late in the set, King put down a trio of kills and two aces that allowed Mohawk Trail to take a 1-0 lead following a 25-7 set win.

The momentum carried over into the second set, as the Warriors built a 13-5 lead. Lee didn't quit, as Karalynn Hopkins smashed a pair of kills and later in the set, Mika Diller put down a pair of kills that helped the Wildcats tie things at 21. Both teams traded points from there but with the set tied at 24, Lee scored the final two points to pick up a 26-24 set win and tie the match, 1-1.

The third set was back-and-forth throughout. Mohawk Trail took a 16-12 lead following a King kill but Lee stormed back and tied it at 17 following a Diller kill.

Tied at 20, Lexi Masten smashed a kill and Cassidy Clark followed with an ace that put the Wildcats up, 22-20. Mohawk Trail ripped off the next four points, two coming off Abby Moffatt aces, to go up 24-22. Lee answered with a pair of points before Masten and King matched kills, tying things at 25.

After both teams scored a point, Masten cracked a kill and the Wildcats followed with a point to take a 2-1 lead following a 28-26 set win.

"The kids were pretty down," Lannon said after falling behind 2-1, "but before every game we set team goals and individual goals. Everyone's individual goal was to stay up. If you can't stay up, someone else is going to pick you up. If someone started to get down, the whole team wrapped their arms around them."

It was another closely contested set in the fourth. Mohawk Trail pulled ahead 18-14 but Lee clawed back to tie things at 18. Moffatt once again put down back-to-back aces that gave the Warriors a 21-18 lead and King closed things out with a pair of kills later, sending it to the fifth with a 25-19 set win.

"Normally we go down two sets then come back and win the final three," Lannon said. "We told them leave it all out on the court just like we did at Turners [in the semifinals]. Now we have to regroup and get ready for states."

King put down a pair of aces that helped Mohawk Trail build its 7-0 lead in the fifth. Lee cut the lead to 8-5 with Claire Davis in the service station — Davis putting down one ace — and following a block from Diller, Lee cut the lead to 10-8.

It was all the Warriors from there, as they scored the final five points to take home the title.

"They believed in each other," Lannon said. "A lot of teams aren't cohesive as a team and play as individual players. My team believes in every single person they play with. They just work extra hard."

King finished with 23 kills, seven assists, 13 digs and nine aces, Moffatt tallied five aces and seven digs, Emma Canaday recorded four aces, five assists and five kills while Megan Gabree had two kills and four blocks in the victory.

Source: https://www.recorder.com/Mohawk-Trail-wins-Class-D-championship-following-3-2-victory-over-Lee-57670080?fbclid=IwY2xjawGMhBVleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHRUWKLpvgo0AoeW_hIxZRUmTIIV8HuSTcAEkkgcl5EirxHFJmdA42McJYA_aem_DJmCfrMYhYShCjttbqxNew