

Rhein Breaks Dig Record, Apps Fall at Davidson

Written by Ryan Bower

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Courtney Rhein (York, Pa./Eastern York) set a new Appalachian State University volleyball record by notching her 1,832nd career dig in a 3-1 loss at Southern Conference rival Davidson on Saturday. The Mountaineers (7-21, 3-11 SoCon) fell to

the Wildcats (10-13, 6-7) for the second-straight time despite overcoming an early 1-0 hole to tie the match at 1-1 after two sets.

Davidson began the match in dominating fashion, jumping out to an early 15-7 lead in the first set. The Apps were never able to retake the lead as the Wildcats finished things off for a 25-18 first-set win. The second set featured a back-and-forth battle as the teams traded the lead three times. The Wildcats took the early lead before App State rallied to jump out by seven points (15-8), but Davidson battled back to take a one-point advantage (21-20) late in the set.

With their backs to the wall and trailing by two points (23-21), the Mountaineers reeled off a 4-0 run to tie the match at 1-1 with a 25-23 second-set win. The third set was even more intense as the teams swapped the lead four times. Appalachian held an early three-point lead (8-5), but Davidson rallied with a 6-0 run to take an 11-5 lead and force a Mountaineer timeout.

Appalachian State responded with two-straight points out of the break and kept it within three points until the Wildcats posted four-straight points to take a 23-18 lead en route to a 25-20 third-set win. The fourth and final set, the Mountaineers seized all the momentum early on by racing out to a 7-1 lead, but Davidson used an 8-1 run to grab a 9-8 lead and never looked back as it snagged a 25-19 third-set win and a 3-1 match victory.

Jacqui Spurgeon (Waxhaw, N.C./Marvin Ridge) led all players with 17 kills on the afternoon while Dalton Tolliver (Ortonville, Mich./Notre Dame Prep) tallied 13. Rhein finished with a team-high 25 digs and Jessica Eley (Kansas City, Mo./Bishop Miege) set a career-high with 12 block assists.

Davidson was paced by Caroline Brown's 15 kills while Tindall Sewell and Taylor Pisel each notched 11. Molly Crenshaw led all players with 26 digs and Ariel Ley tallied a match-best 39 assists. The Mountaineers were held to an attack percentage of just .112 in the match while the Wildcats hit just .157. App State finished with 15 blocks to Davidson's eight.

Appalachian State returns to action against Chattanooga at 7:30 p.m. next Saturday and closes out the regular season at home against Samford at 2 p.m. the following day.

MATCH NOTES: Rhein passed Kali Rumberger to become Appalachian's career digs leader... Spurgeon finished with 10 or more kills for the 10th time this season and the fourth time in the last five matches... Tolliver tallied double-digit kills for the 18th time this season and the 10th time in the last 11 outings... the Mountaineers are still in the running for a spot in the SoCon Tournament, but a win by Chattanooga tonight would eliminate App State from the postseason.

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Photo Courtesy: Courtney Rhein, ASU Athletics