

VOLLEYBALL from B1



Left to right: Kelty records a kill against Tillamook, the Lions celebrate a point against Valley Catholic; freshman Gracie Arnold spikes the ball in Saturday's final.

attend the same team camp and played at a tournament this season where the Lions won in group play and the Valiants took the knockout round.

Valley Catholic has been a mainstay in recent state tournaments and have improved each season. In 2014 they lost in the consolation round, they took fourth in 2015, third in 2016, second place a season ago and this year captured the elusive title.

In the first set of the title match, the evenly-matched teams were back and forth throughout but midway through the set the Lions were down four and were trying to rally back. Behind a kill from freshman Gracie Arnold – who was seeing the floor for the first time at the state tournament –

Cottage Grove took a 23-22 lead that they carried to the end of the set.

“That was a switch we made to put a sub in to put her in the front row for a couple more inches, that seemed to help a little bit,” said Anderson of the six-foot Arnold who was put in the rotation to attempt to slow down Valley Catholic’s Kayla Robbins who recorded 42 kills on 92 attempts on her way to being named player of the game. Arnold finished with six blocks, three kills and three digs.

After Cottage Grove took an early 6-1 lead in the second set, it was the Valiants tying things up at eight and then going on a 9-0 that featured three kills from Robbins and another three from Madeline Klopccic. Klopccic finished with nine kills on the day

which was the second most for the Valiants.

The third set put on display how evenly-matched these teams were as the first lead that was greater than two points came when the Lions trailed 22-19. The Lions instantly answered with a 5-0 run – that saw kills from Kelty, Herbert and a block from Ladd – to lift the team to a lead.

Kelty, who was named Cottage Grove’s player of the game, finished with 21 kills and 12 digs. Herbert had 23 digs and 12 kills and Witty had 52 assists. Herbert was named to the first team all-tournament team while Kelty and Witty were named to the second team.

In the final Ladd recorded eight kills, five blocks and five digs while Hutchins had five

kills and two blocks.

“We set out a game plan and we prepared and they executed it. And we, like I said, we conditioned, we were ready to go. We were ready,” said Anderson.

With a 2-1 lead in sets going into the fourth, the Lions were in a good position to take the match but Valley Catholic’s unrelenting attack carried the game to force a fifth and final set for the title.

As soon as things got started, it was the Valiants with a 5-0 lead.

“I’m like, ‘Hey, if we play our best, that is more than enough. But that’s not our best... I feel like they can walk out knowing they played their best,” said Anderson. The Lions turned it around and tied the score at seven a piece and were helped by a

pair of aces from May.

But in the final points, it was Valley Catholic edging their way to victory and a Robbins kill sealed the game to give the Valiants a state title.

“Coaching is really hard but (this group) made it easy and

they made it enjoyable. I think that’s the hardest part to see the smile not on their face,” said Anderson. Adding, “Second is hard but I think when they get home and realize what they’ve accomplished they’ll be proud of themselves.”

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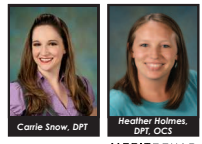
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Pac-12

WEEK 11

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10

UCLA @ Arizona State 11:00 AM

Washington State @ Colorado 12:30 PM

Oregon @ Utah 2:30 PM

Oregon State @ Stanford 6:00 PM

California @ USC 7:30 PM

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