

BC3 volleyball team repeats as Region XX champs, seeks next crown in North Carolina

Oct. 27, 2019



The Butler County Community College volleyball team on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2019, won its second National Junior College Athletic Association Division III Region XX crown in a row and 10th since 1999. Front row, from left, Madyson McAninch, Kaylee Ebbert, Abby Kopac, Makenzie McDowell and Michaela Roth. Back row, from left, assistant coach Madison Morella, assistant coach Autumn Rodgers, Morgan Malinski, McKenna Dewitt, Olivia Hunt, Chyenne Ragle, assistant coach Jordyn Wyllie and head coach Rob Snyder.

(Butler, PA) Madyson McAninch had 26 digs, Morgan Malinski 23 assists and Abby Kopac eight kills as the Butler County Community College volleyball team won its second National Junior College Athletic Association Division III Region XX crown in a row Saturday and advanced to the 2019 District G championships that begin Friday in Pinehurst, N.C.

Makenzie McDowell tied a season high with 24 digs and added seven kills as the Pioneers (18-3) recorded their 15th sweep of the season by beating the Community College of Allegheny County 25-16, 25-11 and 25-14 at BC3's Field House.

The Region XX title was BC3's fourth in five years and 10th since 1999 under head coach Rob Snyder.

"They're known for winning regionals for a very long time," CCAC setter Paige Presutti said. "They really want it. They always look like they want to be there and win."

“They are a very good team,” said Harper Ercole, a CCAC outside hitter. “They are a very strong team.”

BC3 is “five to 10 points better, per set,” said CCAC coach Scott Smithley, whose team ends 11-5. “They’re the team. Everyone knows they’re the team. They’re the ones you want to knock off.”

“And yet, we still continue to dominate,” said Kaylee Ebbert, a sophomore outside hitter from Mars who with McAninch, a freshman libero from Freeport, was named to a Region XX All-Tournament team whose MVP was Kopac, a sophomore middle hitter from Knoch.

“It’s a name, and (Snyder) coaches us to protect the name,” Kopac said of BC3’s volleyball program, which has also won 16 Western Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference titles since 1974. “It feels like you have a target on your back. Everyone wants to beat you.”

Every game, said Snyder, who in his 21 seasons as the Pioneers head coach is 394-151, “is the biggest game for the other team. And so I let my team know there aren’t going to be any down games. Everyone wants to beat us, because it’s a big deal. That’s why I talk so much about pride. You have an advantage when you walk in. (Opponents) already think we are going to be a good team.”

BC3 walked in with early leads of 11-1 in the first set, 8-2 in the second and 9-2 in the third.

“(Snyder) pushes us hard enough to be the best,” said McDowell, a sophomore outside hitter from Knoch, who with Ebbert, McAninch and Kopac was also selected to a Western Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference all-conference team announced Oct. 19 after BC3 swept CCAC in the WPCC finals.

“And we prove it on the court.”

BC3, the top seed in the Region XX tournament, earned a berth in the finals by sweeping Howard Community College (Columbia, Md.) 25-23, 25-16 and 25-19 in the semifinals. Second-seeded CCAC swept Anne Arundel Community College (Arnold, Md.) 25-18, 25-15 and 25-19 in the semifinals.

Malinski, a freshman setter from Slippery Rock, had 27 assists against Howard, McAninch had 20 digs and Kopac tied a season-high with 12 kills.



Abby Kopac, center, a sophomore outside hitter on the Butler County Community College volleyball team, was selected Saturday, Oct. 26, 2019, as the most valuable player in the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III Region XX tournament. Kaylee Ebbert, left, a sophomore outside hitter from Mars, and Madyson McAninch, a freshman libero from Slippery Rock, were named to the NJCAA Division III Region XX All-Tournament team.

Fourth-seeded Howard beat No. 5 Penn Highlands Community College (Johnstown) 25-20, 25-19 and 25-21 Friday night in the quarterfinals of the five-team Region XX championships.

The Pioneers advance to the two-day NJCAA Division III District G championships that begin Friday in Pinehurst, N.C., home of Region X champion Sandhills Community College. The tournament winner earns a berth in the NJCAA Division III championships Nov. 14-16 in Rochester, Minn.

BC3 in 2018 won a first-round NJCAA Division III District I-J game against Patrick Henry Community College (Martinsville, Va.) before dropping its next two games – including one against Owens Community College (Perrysburg, Ohio). Owens on Nov. 10 won its first NJCAA Division III national championship by dethroning Eastfield College (Mesquite, Texas) at the UCR Regional Sports Center in Rochester.