



## 1A: Union Academy storms back to take down Neuse Charter in four sets

RALEIGH, NC – Union Academy captured the program's first volleyball State Championship, coming from down a set to knock out Neuse Charter 3-1 in the 1A State Championship Game. The Cardinals' Anna Ungerer played an exceptional match, finishing with 21 kills, 3 aces, 19 digs, and earning MVP honors for the match.

The first set started out evenly, but a few errors and couple of Neuse Charter kills, particularly one from Julia Bridges on a misplayed first ball by the Cardinals at 12-7, helped the Cougars stretch out a comfortable lead in the first set, eventually getting to a seven-point advantage at 14-7.

After a diving one-armed dig on the last ball over, Bridges rose to drive a set ball down the left line and give the Cougars an 18-11 lead, staving off some momentum from Union Academy trying to mount a charge in the set. However, with set point looming, the Cardinals reeled off four straight points to close the gap to 24-21, but Bridges slammed one down the left line to close it for Neuse Charter.

Union Academy took command of the second set winning five of six consecutive points early in the set to go up 8-4 and force a Cougar timeout. Out of the timeout, Union Academy continued the pressure, adding two points on a net violation and a powerful kill by Brooklyn Calkins to go up 10-4. Harper Flowers helped stem some momentum, blocking a pair of shots down for the Cougars to trim the Cardinal lead to 11-7.

With the second set transitioning to latter stages at 15-10, Neuse Charter won a long rally on a scrambling play before Bridges pounded one off the Union Academy block and out to trim the lead to 15-11. The Cardinals took the next two points on Cougar errors, forcing a timeout at 17-11 to try and pause the momentum building for Union Academy. Despite the timeout, the Cardinals kept the pedal down, extending their lead to 21-14 before the Cougars mounted a mini-rally off of two Cardinals errors to knock the lead down to five. That was as close as Neuse Charter could come, as Union Academy tripped off two straight points and melted away the final few points for a 25-17 set win as Ryleigh Clayborn slammed a kill to the deck to end the set and even the match at a set-a-piece.

Union Academy picked up right where they left off in the third set with Clayborn powering a spike to the floor to go up 1-0 followed by a shot off the block by Gabriela Gama to make it 2-0. The Cardinals kept hammering away with Calkins and Clayborn keeping Neuse Charter off balance, stretching the lead out to 10-3 before a timeout by Neuse Charter. Out of the timeout, the Cardinals enjoyed a few points off Neuse Charter errors to go up 16-3, shifting the full momentum of the match into their favor, running off to a 25-11 set win and a two set to one lead in the match.

The fourth set started off with a Union Academy kill off the hand of junior Lauren Munday followed by a service ace from Gama. Then Clayborn powered a middle hit to the deck to go up 3-0. Neuse responded with a slam by Harper Flowers to trim the lead to 3-1 and down to one on an attacking error by the Cardinals. Neuse Charter knotted the set at 4 with a kill off the block by Bridges.

The two teams scrapped back and forth with ties at 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8-all, each team experiencing leads throughout the stretch. The Cougars surrendered a pair of points on double-hits, giving the Cardinals a 10-8 lead in the set, before Union Academy pushed the lead out to 13-9 on a 3-0 run. The Cardinals edged out to a seven-point lead with an ace by Anna Ungerer that made it 19-12 and forced a Cougar timeout as their hopes started to wane. The Cardinals finished it off with a flourish to close the set 25-18.

Neuse Charter finished their season 26-3. The Cougars wrapped up the conference season 10-0, champions of the Carolina 1A. They won the program's first regional championship, appearing in the State Championship Match for the first time in school history in any program.



Union Academy posted a 27-2 season record on the season, winning the Yadkin Valley 1A/2A Conference. The Cardinals appeared in the school's first Volleyball State Championship Match after winning the Western Regional Title for the first time in program history.

The NCHSAA is committed to promoting good sportsmanship and has partnered with the NC Farm Bureau to recognize two student-athletes from each State Championship that have demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship during the season. The 1A Volleyball NC Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Award winners were Julia Bridges from Neuse Charter and Gabriela Gama from Union Academy.

	1	2	3	4	5
Neuse Charter (26-3)	25	17	11	18	X
Union Academy (27-2)	20	25	25	25	X



## 2A: SW Randolph rolls past Camden behind Shiflet sisters and solid defense

RALEIGH, NC – Southwestern Randolph used airtight defense and 31 digs from 2A Match MVP Coley Shiflet to down previously undefeated Camden three sets to one on the way to the school's third State Volleyball Championship. The title was the Cougars first state title since a pair of back-to-back State Championships in 1991 and 1992.

The first set was highlighted by a four point run for SW Randolph including a block by Molly Strider and Josie Allred stretched lead to 14-9 and forcing a timeout. Camden stopped the momentum briefly, but the Cougars found their stride again, feeding Payton Shiflet who had two straight kills, one on a change-up tip and the other on a powerful slam to stretch the first set advantage out to 20-12. Peyton Shiflet finished the match with 12 kills on 48 attacks. After a timeout by Camden, the Cougars ran off four more straight points, arriving at set point with another pair of Shiflet kills and a 24-12 lead. After a nice block from Camden's Carlyn Tanis to give the Bruins a point, Shiflet slammed home a ball near the right line to take the set 25-13.

Camden regrouped after the first set, opening the second frame in stellar fashion with five straight points, organizing a stronger block and making Peyton Shiflet's attacks slightly more challenging. The Bruins block earned them a fourth straight point and some momentum when Tessa Forehand jammed a Cougar attack into the ground to make the score 10-5 and force a SW Randolph timeout.

With some wide attacks by SW Randolph and a big swinging kill by Tanis, the Bruins stretched their lead to 18-11 and forced another Cougar timeout. Camden's Forehand jammed a kill through the Cougar block before tipping one down to make it 20-12. Camden kept pouring the pressure on in the second set as Sam Smith's ace made it 21-12 in favor of Camden before the Bruins took the set 25-18.

Southwestern Randolph established momentum early in the third set, serving off the first five points of the set. The Cougars continued a powerful attack after the timeout, forcing the Bruins back on their heels and running out to a 13-5 advantage before the second Camden timeout of the set. Josie Allred notched a couple of kills late in the set to push the Cougar advantage out to 20-9 before a hard-fought rally by Camden drew the Bruins within three at 22-19. Southwestern managed to grind out the remainder of the third set 25-20 with freshman Riley Key slamming the final point of the set down to go up 2 sets to 1.

The Cougars charged out to a 11-4 lead to open the fourth set turning the pressure even higher on Camden with their backs against the wall. Despite big swings by McKayla Knauss, Tanis and Forehand, Camden couldn't find very many holes in the Southwestern defense early in the set. However, the Bruins managed to trim the Cougar lead to 13-10 before a Southwestern timeout. Out of the timeout, Knauss slipped a ball off the tape and down on the line for a point to drop the lead to 13-11.

That would be as close as Camden could draw because despite crushing attacks by the Bruins, Cougar libero, Coley Shiflet, continued to slide, dive, and otherwise dig balls off the ground, inspiring her teammates efforts with 31 digs in the match on her way to being named the 2A Most Valuable Player. Shiflet and the Cougars challenged Camden at the net and ran off seven of the next 8 points to take a commanding 20-12 lead before finishing the match with a 25-18 fourth set victory.

Camden concluded the season 27-1 on the year. The Bruins were 14-0 in the Northeastern Coastal 2A/3A where they won the league title. Camden won the Eastern Regional Championship advancing to the State Championship Match for the first time in program history.

Southwestern Randolph was 28-5 during the season, finishing 12-0 as champions of the Piedmont Athletic 1A/2A. The Cougars won the program's third regional championship and third state title.



The NCHSAA is committed to promoting good sportsmanship and has partnered with the NC Farm Bureau to recognize two student-athletes from each State Championship that have demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship during the season. The 2A Volleyball NC Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Award winners were Kenison Parker from Camden County and Molly Strider from Southwestern Randolph.

	1	2	3	4	5
Southwestern Randolph (27-5)	25	18	25	25	X
Camden County (27-1)	13	25	20	18	X





# 2021 VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP RECAPS



## 3A: Cedar Ridge captures first state title with four-set victory over North Iredell

RALEIGH, NC – Cedar Ridge power hitters proved to be too tough in the 3A State Championship Match, lifting the Red Wolves to a 3-1 victory over North Iredell and the school's first volleyball State Championship. The Red Wolves were led by Cameron Lloyd who slammed down 14 kills and added a block and 12 digs on her way to being name the 3A Championship MVP.

North Iredell started the match in dominating fashion as the Raiders reeled off the first five points of the match before the Red Wolves scratched out a trio of points including a pair of service aces by Julie Altieri. Graylinn Serge struck for the third ace of the set to bring Cedar Ridge within one at 9-8 before the Red Wolves set up a big swing in the middle from Addie Reid to tie things at nine. Serge's ace ignited a momentum change that saw Cedar Ridge rip off ten-straight points and take a 16-9 lead in the set. North Iredell managed to regroup and draw within two in the set after the run, but Cedar Ridge had built too large an advantage to overcome, taking the opening set 25-20.

The second set was a back-and-forth affair for the first 20 points, with the two teams knotted at 10-a-piece. Cedar Ridge reeled off three straight points, punctuated by a drive off the fist of junior Anaya Carter to take a 13-10 lead and force a Raiders timeout. The timeout successfully stemmed the tide, and North Iredell capitalized with the next three straight to tie the set at 13. The set was also tied at 15 and 17 before North Iredell was able to scrap their way to five straight points and a 23-18 lead. The Raiders knotted the match up at a set-a-piece with a 25-19 second set victory.

Cedar Ridge used a 4-0 run in the middle of the third set to surge into the lead 11-9. Reid pounded a ball down from a right-side set and lifted the Red Wolves to a two-point lead. After a timeout by the Raiders, Cedar Ridge served a ball into the net and the Raiders briefly stemmed the tide, battling back to tie things up at 13 before the two teams traded the lead back-and-forth with neither team leading by more than two for the remainder of the set.

The set was tied late at 13, 15, 18, 20 and 22 with the Cedar Ridge power hitters ultimately helping the Red Wolves prevail. Cameron Lanier slammed a ball in the middle of the Raider back line to put the Red Wolves up 23-22 before an attack error by North Iredell gave the Red Wolves a set point at 24-22. Cedar Ridge got the ball down on set point to take a 25-22 third set victory and two sets to one lead in the match.

In the fourth, Cedar Ridge rallied early, establishing a 6-2 lead as Lanier swung the Red Wolves to the lead ahead of the first timeout of the set by North Iredell. Cedar Ridge extended the lead to 13-8 on a diving dig by Grace Young that cleared the net and found the floor on the other side, sending the Cedar Ridge crowd and team into a frenzy. The Red Wolves added the next two point, stretching the lead to 15-8 and getting the Raiders to call at timeout to regroup. Out of the timeout, Cameron Lloyd knocked down the next two points on right-handed swings for Cedar Ridge to take a 17-8 lead. Lloyd tipped another shot down at 19-10 before serving to help Cedar Ridge out to a 21-10 advantage on an ace off the tape. The Red Wolves held on for a 25-16 fourth set win and state title.



North Iredell finished the season 26-2. The Raiders were 13-1 in the Western Foothills 3A where they won the league title. The Raiders won the program's fifth regional title, advancing to the state championship for the fifth time in program history.

Cedar Ridge finished the season 31-2, winning the Central 3A with a record of 12-0. The Red Wolves advanced to the State Championship for the first time in program history after the first Regional Title in volleyball.

The NCHSAA is committed to promoting good sportsmanship and has partnered with the NC Farm Bureau to recognize two student-athletes from each State Championship that have demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship during the season. The 2A Volleyball NC Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Award winners were Grace Young from Cedar Ridge and Brianna Gibson from North Iredell.



**Cedar Ridge (30-2)**  
North Iredell (26-1)

1	2	3	4	5
25	19	25	25	X
20	25	22	16	X



## 4A: Green Level wins first state title in school history with dominating sweep of Ardrey Kell

RALEIGH, NC – The Green Level Gators would not be denied, dominating Ardrey Kell in a three-set sweep to claim the school's first state championship in any athletic event. The three-year-old school sent its first senior class in school history off with a bang, as Ellie Sampson led a powerful attack for Green Level, slamming down 12 kills in the match and adding a block and 15 digs on her way to MVP honors in the match.

Green Level stormed out of the gates in the opening set, winning nine of the first 10 points, as Ardrey Kell struggled to find a rhythm and the Gators opened up a 9-1 advantage. The Gators continued the barrage until Ardrey Kell called their second timeout of the set at 16-5 to try and regroup from the powerful Gators offensive showing. Ava Toppin powered the ball into the court on a beautiful set to put Green Level up 20-8

before her turn on the service line. Morgan Downs added to the crushing power display with a right-handed blast to go up 22-9. Ellie Sampson finished the set off with a hard kill down the right line to close it out 25-9.

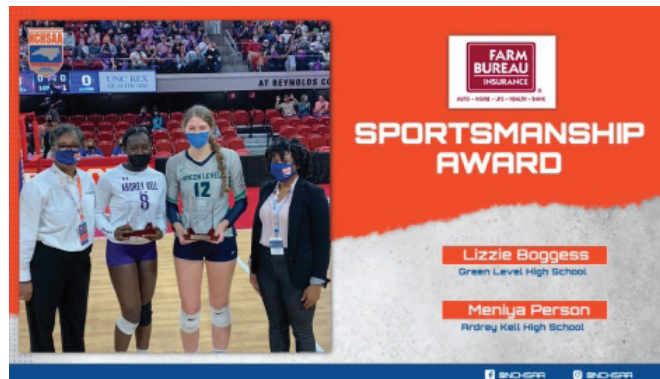
The second set started off looking good for Green Level again as Olivia Hummel's opening serve clipped the tape and fell in for an ace. Ardrey Kell responded quickly, however, rolling the next three points including a nice block at the net for a point by Alexis Shelton. The three-point swing helped Ardrey Kell to settle into the match and the two teams battled at the net with Shelton, Kailey Keough and the Knights dueling with Toppin, Sampson, and Hummel throughout the set.

At nine all in the set, Alexis Shelton rotated to the back row for the Knights and that helped open some lanes for the Gators attack, stretching a lead out to 15-11 before Shelton rotated back to an attacking position. In the latter portion of the set, three net violations on the Knights helped cement a second set victory for Green Level, 25-19, pushing Ardrey Kell to the brink of elimination.

The Gators picked up right where they left off in the third set. Green Level won four of the first five points with the fourth of those points coming on a block/kill at the net by Morgan Downs. Sampson and Downs added back-to-back kills to help the Gators pull out to a 7-2 lead ahead of Ardrey Kell's first timeout of the set. Sampson found a sweet spot on the right front side, slamming several kills down to stretch the Green Level lead to 12-5 ahead of Ardrey Kell's final timeout of the set. The momentum established by the Gator attack was simply too strong to overcome, as Green Level kept pounding hard swings at the Knights defense on their way to a 25-12 set win and match sweep.

Ardrey Kell finished the season 31-2, the Knights won the So Meck 4A Conference title and advanced to the State Title Game for the second time in three years.

Green Level finished the season 27-1. The Gators were 13-1, winning the Southwest Wake 4A Conference title. They won the school's first regional and state championships in any sport.



The NCHSAA is committed to promoting good sportsmanship and has partnered with the NC Farm Bureau to recognize two student-athletes from each State Championship that have demonstrated outstanding sportsmanship during the season. The 4A Volleyball NC Farm Bureau Sportsmanship Award winners were Lizzie Boggess from Green Level and Meniya Person from Ardrey Kell.

	1	2	3	4	5
Green Level (27-1)	25	25	25	X	X
Ardrey Kell (31-2)	9	19	12	X	X





# 2020-21 VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP RECAPS



## 1A: East Wake Academy wins school's first state title with 3-1 win over Mountain Island Charter

CARY, NC – East Wake Academy got their offense rolling early, taking a commanding 2-0 set lead with a pair of 25-15 set wins to set themselves to win the school's first state championship. The Eagles' combination of setter Kristen Seavy and Krista Brantley were a deadly force in the four-set win over Mountain Island Charter.

Seavy was selected as M.V.P. of the 1A Championship Match thanks to her 38 assists and four aces. She also contributed five digs and four blocks to a spectacularly well-rounded effort. The Eagle attack funneled through Seavy, though she frequently played through Brantley who smashed 28 kills with just 10 attacking errors in the match.

Mountain Island Charter got their attack going in the third set, sparked by ten kills from Lauren Pledger in the set. The Raptors ripped off nine straight points to go up 13-11 in the third. Then, after giving up a 6-0 run to the Eagles, the Raptors tacked on another 9-0 run to go up 22-17, eventually holding off East Wake Academy 25-21 to force a fourth set.

Early in the fourth set, Mountain Island appeared poised to send the match to a decisive fifth set, scoring six straight to take a 12-6 advantage. However, finding themselves down 21-11 in the fourth, the Eagles managed a side out that brought up Elis Thomas up to the service line. Thomas sent her heavy, diving serves pounding across the net, disrupting the Raptors rhythm and the Eagles scored 12 straight points to go up 24-21, hanging on to close out the match 25-23.

The NCHSAA is committed to recognizing good sportsmanship and has partnered with the North Carolina Farm Bureau to recognize one individual from each of the participating championship teams in volleyball with the 2020-2021 Sportsmanship Awards. The recipients for this year's 1A awards were Lauren Pledger from Mountain Island and Lexi Brantley from East Wake Academy.

**EAST WAKE ACADEMY (13-1)**  
MOUNTAIN ISLAND CHARTER (18-1)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	21	25	X
15	15	25	23	X



## 2A: Fred T. Foard picks up back-to-back titles with 3-0 sweep of McMichael

CARY, NC – The Tigers from Fred T. Foard proved too much for McMichael in the 2A State Championship Match. Foard grabbed their eighth title in program history and second in a row with a 3-0 sweep of the Phoenix. Remarkably, Foard has reached the NCHSAA State Title Match eight times and won all eight appearances.

The Tigers rallied for eight straight points to close out the first set 25-14, as Michelle Thao and Megan Dorsey each provided three kills in the frame. The Tigers kept that momentum rolling to start the second set, netting the first seven points of that set on their way to a comfortable 25-11 set win.

The third set was much more competitive as McMichael battled to keep the match alive, utilizing the heavy swings of Cassidy Tanton to try and extend the match. Tanton managed ten of her 18 kills in the third set, but Thao struck with six kills of her own, and Martina Foster added another five to push the Tigers to close the match out 25-22.

Thao was named the 2A M.V.P. of the State Championship Match for the second year in a row. She wrapped up her career at Foard with 10 kills and 17 digs.

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**FRED T. FOARD (19-0)**  
McMICHAEL (17-2)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
14	11	22	X	X



## 3A: D.H. Conley slides by Cox Mill 3-0 for program's third championship

CARY, NC – In a match that truly was closer than a 3-0 sweep, D.H. Conley scraped past a tough challenge from Cox Mill to win the Viking's third state championship in program history. The win was the Vikings' first state title since they defeated West Iredell in a thrilling five-set 3A Championship Match in 2007. After breaking a 23-23 deadlock to set up match point, Ella Philpot raised up over the net to set down her third block of the match and send Conley to the win.

The match was incredibly tight for the majority of the night, with big swings from both teams regularly flying across the net. Neither team ran off a string of five unanswered points until Conley opened the third set with a 5-0 run, the only one of the match, eventually pushing out to an 11-3 third set-lead. All three sets were tied at 23 during the match, with the Vikings winning all sets by identical 25-23 margins.

Conley featured a very balanced attack, distributing their 37 kills on the night amongst seven players. They were led by Maddie May, who was named the M.V.P. of the match, scoring 10 kills to go with eight digs and solid passing throughout the night. Both of the Viking setters were solid all night as well as Olivia Lefever led the team with 16 assists and Cassie Dail chipped in 14.

The NCHSAA is committed to recognizing good sportsmanship and has partnered with the North Carolina Farm Bureau to recognize one individual from each of the participating championship teams in volleyball with the 2020-2021 Sportsmanship Awards. The recipients for this year's 3A awards were Olivia Lefever from D.H. Conley and Olivia Todd from Cox Mill.

**D.H. CONLEY (16-1)**  
COX MILL (18-1)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
23	23	23	X	X



## 4A: Cardinal Gibbons sails past Providence 3-0 for Crusaders first crown since 2015

CARY, NC – Cardinal Gibbons cruised to their 11th volleyball state championship on Saturday, racing past Providence 3-0. The Crusaders captured the program's first title since winning the 2015 4A Championship in a convincing three-set win over Northwest Guilford.

The offense was firing on all cylinders for Gibbons all afternoon. Emily Chrysogelos regularly powered the ball into the floor, earning 22 kills and racking up six digs in the match on her way to being named the 4A Championship Match M.V.P. Much of Chrysogelos' success came off of feeds from Celia Ryan, who served up 38 assists in the match, masterfully orchestrating the Gibbons offense that killed 44 points by six different players.

The Crusaders took the opening set 25-18 behind seven kills from Chrysogelos. Providence battled in the opening frame, led by Gabby LaPata's four kills. She finished with six in the match for the Panthers. The Crusaders had a little easier time in the second set,

cruising to a 25-14 victory. Chrysogelos had nine kills in that frame, while Providence really struggled to mount any offensive momentum until a 5-0 run that trimmed the Gibbons lead to 23-13.

The final set was all Crusaders, as Chrysogelos added six more kills to her tally, and Anna Kate Young contributed four of her nine for the day. Gibbons scored eight of the last nine points in the final set to roll to a 25-13 victory, completing their unbeaten season.

The NCHSAA is committed to recognizing good sportsmanship and has partnered with the North Carolina Farm Bureau to recognize one individual from each of the participating championship teams in volleyball with the 2020-2021 Sportsmanship Awards. The recipients for this year's 4A awards were Audra Nelson from Providence and Celia Ryan from Cardinal Gibbons.

**CARDINAL GIBBONS (17-0)**  
PROVIDENCE (18-1)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
18	14	13	X	X





## 1A: Falls Lake Academy wins back-to-back titles with a sweep of East Surry

FAYETTEVILLE, NC – Macey Sammons was a dominant force in the attack for Falls Lake Academy as she led the Firebirds to their second straight NCHSAA 1A Volleyball State Championship with a clean sweep of East Surry. Sammons had 12 kills in the contest and added a solo block and block assist on her way to being named the match Most Valuable Player.

The Firebirds rolled off a 25-14 first set victory, rolling off a 12-4 run in the frame to stretch their lead out to a comfortable margin in the first. Falls Lake cruised in the second set as well on the way to a 25-16 victory. East Surry fought hard in the third set, trying to stave off elimination, clawing their way within two of the Firebirds at 20-18. But

Falls Lake ripped off five of the last seven points to close out the set and the match, 25-20.

Macey Sammons (Falls Lake) 2019 1A Volleyball MVP Austin Proctor distributed the ball well for Falls Lake, dishing out 40 assists in the match. Behind Sammons 12 kills, Falls Lake got a pair of nine kill performances from Morgan Newton and Jenelle Mason. Last year's 1A Championship MVP, Chase Teal added seven kills and a block, while Hannah Collier chipped in seven kills and a pair of aces.

Maggie Holt, Emma Brown, and Allie Bruner all led East Surry with six kills each. Ally McCraw served up 20 assists. Kylie Bruner chipped in four kills while Samarin Kipple picked up two kills.

Falls Lake Academy wrapped up the season 27-3, they were 13-1 in the North Central Athletic 1A Conference where they were league champions. The Firebirds won the Eastern Regional for the second time in program history and the second straight year. They captured the school's second all-time State Championship in any sport.

**FALLS LAKE ACADEMY (27-3)**  
EAST SURRY (29-3)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
14	16	20	X	X



## 2A: Fred T. Foard powers their way to program's seventh State Championship

FAYETTEVILLE - Fred T. Foard won the school's seventh State Championship in Volleyball, powering to a three-set sweep over Ayden-Grifton. The Tigers dominated each and every set, leaving no doubt as to whether or not they would maintain the program's spotless record in State Championship Game appearances.

Ayden-Grifton did give a bit of resistance in the first set, managing to hang in the set in the early going at 9-6. Then Foard ripped off a long run to build a cushion and win the first set in relatively easy fashion, 25-15. The second and third sets were fairly similar to the end of the first set, with the Tigers never trailing. They claimed the second set 25-12 and the decisive third set 25-11.

Michelle Thao (Foard) 2019 2A Volleyball MVP.

Michelle Thao was the Most Valuable Player of the Match. She was credited with five kills and 12 digs in the contest. Dara Schaffer led the Tigers with 13 kills and a pair of aces. Megan Dorsey also kicked in 11 kills.

Ayden-Grifton's attack was primarily funneled through two players. Emily Dykes had eight kills while Alexis Bryant had six. Ultimately, service errors proved just too much for the Chargers to overcome in the match.

Ayden-Grifton finished the season 22-6, the Chargers were 12-0 in the Eastern Carolina 2A Conference where they were the champions. The team won the Eastern Regional Championship for the first time in program history to reach the school's first State Championship Game in Volleyball.

Fred T. Foard completed the year 33-1, the Tigers were 14-0 in the Northwestern Foothills 2A Conference claiming the league title. Foard won their seventh Western Regional Championship, appearing in the State Championship Game for the seventh time. The Tigers captured the school's first Volleyball title since 2005.

**FRED T. FOARD (33-1)**  
AYDEN-GRIFTON (22-6)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
15	12	11	X	X



## 3A: Chapel Hill storms past West Henderson in four for third title

FAYETTEVILLE, NC - West Henderson ripped off a first set win, but Chapel Hill dominated the next three sets on their way to a four-set State Championship victory at Fayetteville State's Capel Arena. The Tigers and Falcons battled hard in the opening set, a back-and-forth affair that West Henderson nabbed 28-26.

Chapel Hill responded with a 25-20 set two win followed by a tightly played 25-23 third set that went to the Tigers. The Tigers blew away the Falcons in the fourth set, leaving no suspense for the final frame, hoisting the school's third Volleyball State Championship trophy with a 25-11 fourth set victory.

Kaya Merkler was dominant for Chapel Hill, scoring 20 kills in the win. She added 15 solo blocks and a pair of aces in the match. She was named the 3A Most Valuable Player for her role in the victory. Sam Breschi also had an exceptional day for the Tigers, adding 36 assists in the contest. Courtney Zwickler had eight kills for the Tigers and a trio of players: Kaya Monrose, Julia Charney, and Taylor Knott, had six each.

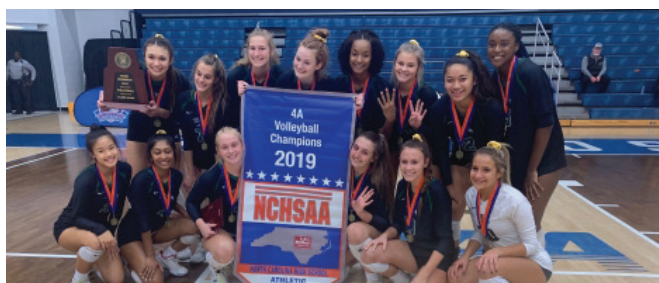
West Henderson was led by Kinsley Morgan and Malia Moore who both had 9 kills in the match. Moore also contributed 19 assists to lead the Falcons while Addison Hichman chipped in 15 helpers.

West Henderson finished the season 30-7, they were 14-2 in the Western Mountain 3A Conference, where they were the co-champions. The Falcons won the Western Regional Championship for the tenth time in program history and reached the State Championship for the first time since 2009.

Chapel Hill completed the year 28-1 with a 13-1 mark in Big 8 3A Conference play where they won the title. The Tigers won the Regional Championship for the sixth time in program history and won the school's third Volleyball State Championship. The title was the Tigers first since a 4A Championship victory in 2003.

**CHAPEL HILL (28-1)**  
WEST HENDERSON (30-7)

1	2	3	4	5
26	25	25	25	X
28	20	23	11	X



## 4A: Green Hope gets fourth straight title with Dowler earning fourth-straight MVP award in Finals

FAYETTEVILLE, NC - Green Hope had no trouble in the opening two sets against Ardrey Kell, eventually wrapping up the Falcons fourth straight State Championship in four sets thanks to stellar play from stand-out Sydney Dowler and company. Dowler won her state record fourth consecutive Most Valuable Player award in the 4A State Championship. Dowler had 43 assists, 2 kills, a pair of aces and five block assists in the award-winning performance.

Green Hope cruised in the first set, powering out to a 25-13 opening frame win. The Falcons followed that up with a 25-16 performance in the second set to put themselves on the precipice of a championship.

Just when it appeared that the Falcons were poised to roll of a straight-set victory, Ardrey Kell mustered a spirited late rally in the third set. The Knights trailed 18-15 in the third set before calling a timeout to regroup. After the breather, Ardrey Kell took seven the next 11 points to tie the score at 22 and eventually took the set 25-23, forcing a fourth set.

Ardrey Kell even led the fourth set 11-10, but in the end, the Falcon attack of Dowler and Alexis Engelbrecht proved too powerful, roaring out to a 17-13 lead before trading out points and capturing the final four points of a 25-20 fourth set.

Ardrey Kell was led by Alexis Shelton who compiled 15 kills and an ace in the match. She was aided by 31 assists from Mya Duggan and 10 kills by Sania McCoy.

Green Hope enjoyed a well-balanced attack, distributed around Dowler. Annie Elvin killed a team-high 14 points with Engelbrecht and Grace Patrick each earning 12 kills.

Ardrey Kell finished the season 25-6. The Knights were 10-2 as the second-place team in the So. Meck 7 4A Conference. The Knights won the 4A Western Regional for the third time in school history and reached the State Finals for the first time since their only title in 2012.

Green Hope wrapped up the year 27-2, a perfect 14-0 in the Triangle 8 4A Conference where they were the league champions. The Falcons won the program's fourth State Championship. The four-consecutive State Championships makes Green Hope the second school to accomplish the feat in open division or 4A in NCHSAA history. The Falcons joined Durham Jordan, who won four straight open classification or 4A titles from 1983 to 1987.

**GREEN HOPE (27-2)**  
ARDREY KELL (25-6)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	23	25	X
13	16	25	20	X





## 1-A: Falls Lake Academy wins the school's first NCHSAA Team Championship with 3-0 victory over Polk County

RALEIGH, NC – In a match that had two teams participating in their first Volleyball State Championship Match, it was Falls Lake Academy that rode some early momentum to a 3-0 victory over Polk County to win the Firebirds first NCHSAA State Championship.

Falls Lake came out swinging early winning the first four points of the match. The Firebirds rode that early confidence to build a 17-8 lead in the first set with a 9-2 run. The Wolverines tried to claw their way back into the set, as the Wolverines rolled off a 4-0 run of their own to respond. The Firebirds were unfazed as Hannah Collier would pound three kills to the floor in the final seven points of the set to help Falls Lake take the set

25-19.

The second and third set were both thrilling as the two teams tied each other during the sets on fourteen occasions, mostly late in the sets. After falling behind 20-16 in the second set, Polk County scrapped their way back to tie the set at 22. Junior Grace Lauer got into a nice rhythm, spiking balls regularly late in the set. The set was tied at 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 before Collier gave the Firebirds a 27-26 lead before a lift call against the Wolverines closed out the set 28-26.

In the third and final set, the two teams were tied seven times, as Lauer and Marilyn Castillo provided some heavy hitting to keep Polk close. The Wolverines managed to tie the set at 19, 20, 21 and 22 late before match M.V.P. and setter Chase Teal ripped a ball to the floor to give Falls Lake a 23-22 lead. The Wolverines were called for a double hit to make it 24-22, before serving a pass over the net out of bounds to close the match.

Teal was named the match M.V.P. for Falls Lake Academy. Teal had 18 assists and 15 digs to go with 10 kills and 2 blocks.

**FALLS LAKE ACADEMY (25-4)**  
POLK COUNTY (20-9)

1	2	3	4	5
25	28	25	X	X
19	26	22	X	X



## 2-A: Currituck County rolls to first State Title on 3-0 win over West Davidson

RALEIGH, NC – West Davidson came out swinging early, but it was Currituck County that found their footing and cruised to a 3-0 victory in the 2A State Championship Match. The victory brought the first Volleyball State Championship to the Currituck County program.

West Davidson came out of the gates on fire, scoring the match's first 4 points as senior middle hitter Ashley Johnson pounded the ball to the floor four times in a row. But Currituck was undaunted. The Knights stormed back to tie the set at 4, as Merritt Woodson slammed one to the deck, and the match was on. The two teams traded points back and forth until the first set was tied at 10. That is when Currituck County

went on a run to close out the set on a 15-3 run.

Kamryn Johnson had a solid first set for the Knights, but in the second set, the senior outside hitter shined. She had six kills in the second set as the Knights ripped off 11 unanswered points to go up 19-3 and coast to a 25-9 second set victory.

Johnson again lifted the Knights in the third set, coming alive with four kills in six points to extend the Knight's lead to 18-13. Currituck held on for a 25-21 third set victory and their first state title. Johnson was named the match M.V.P. piling up 37 digs and 16 kills to go with a block and an ace.

**CURRITUCK COUNTY (22-6)**  
WEST DAVIDSON (26-7)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
13	9	21	X	X



## 3-A: Marvin Ridge pounds out a 3-0 victory over Conley to win first Volleyball Championship

RALEIGH, NC – Marvin Ridge started out their bid for the school's first volleyball championship in a tightly contested first set against unbeaten Eastern Champion D.H. Conley, but the Mavericks' confidence was bolstered by the first set win, and they went on to sweep Conley 3-0 and claim their first Volleyball Title.

The first set saw 11 ties, the last coming at 16 all, before Marvin Ridge used a mini-run to stretch out the lead to 22-18. The Mavericks went on to a 25-22 first set win as Maggie Young slapped two of her 11 kills to the floor late in the set to spark the Mavericks win.

The second set was completely dominated by the Mavericks. After trading points up to 3 all, Marvin Ridge went on a 6-0 run as match M.V.P. Mac Russ spiked four of her 12 kills to the floor in the spurt. That flourish was followed eventually by an 8-0 run that pushed the Maverick lead to 17-6. Marvin Ridge went on to win the second set 25-8.

The confidence continued to expand for Marvin Ridge as the Mavericks ripped off the first five points of the third set. With a 24-16 lead in the set, and championship point, Russ blocked down a Viking attack to lift the Mavericks to a 25-16 third set win and an NCHSAA record 44th win of the season.

Russ finished the match with a team-high 12 kills and an assist. She was named the 3A Championship M.V.P. Marvin Ridge's Adriana Jordan had 34 assists to go with 3 kills and 6 digs on the day.

NOTE: 2005 was the last time that all four NCHSAA State Championships were 3-set sweeps. That year, Hendersonville swept Trask in the 1A finals, Cardinal Gibbons downed West Henderson in 2A, Fred T. Foard bounced D.H. Conley in 3A and Providence beat Person in 4A.

**D.H. CONLEY (26-1)**  
MARVIN RIDGE (44-2)

1	2	3	4	5
22	8	16	X	X
25	25	25	X	X



## 4-A: Green Hope wins third straight with a 3-0 victory over Panther Creek

RALEIGH, NC – The Green Hope Falcons secured their third straight 4A Volleyball State Championships, dominating conference rival Panther Creek 3-0 on their way to the 2018 title. The Falcons are the first 4A team to win three consecutive 4A Volleyball Championships. Sydney Dowler won the M.V.P. award for the third year in a row, helping set up numerous attacks for the Falcons as they cruised to the title.

Green Hope took the first set 25-15 behind a strong first set performance by Annie Elvin. Elvin recorded six kills in the opening set leading set in the category. Elvin finished the match with 12 kills. The Falcons and Catamounts traded points for the most part until Green Hope went on a 7-2 run to go up 15-10, comfortably keeping

the Catamounts at arm's length the rest of the set.

The Falcons second set was nearly the same script as the first. After falling behind 5-4 early, Green Hope stormed back to take 8 of the next 9 points to run out to a 12-6 lead in the set.

Panther Creek battled well in the third set, desperately trying to force a fourth set, but as the Catamounts drew within two at 20-18, Sydney Dowler powered a kill to the floor to put the Falcons up 21-18 and start the momentum rolling for Green Hope again. That momentum did not stop through the decisive point of the match as Pricilla Jones pounded the ball into the floor in the middle of the Catamount defense to send the Falcons into a joyous celebration for the third straight year.

Dowler finished the match with 34 assists, 6 kills, 14 digs, 4 blocks and a pair of aces. She became the first-ever three-time M.V.P. of the NCHSAA 4A Volleyball Championships. Only Hendersonville's Molly Pyles who won four 1A Championship M.V.P. Awards from 1997-2000 holds more. Dowler joins Cardinal Gibbons' Madison Bugg and Hendersonville's Bailey Hunter as three-time winners.

**GREEN HOPE (28-1)**  
PANTHER CREEK (18-5)

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	25	X	X
15	15	18	X	X





# 2017 VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP RECAPS



## 1-A: COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF DAVIDSON CLAIMS SECOND STRAIGHT CROWN IN STRAIGHT SET WIN OVER ROXBORO COMMUNITY

The defending 1A State Champions, Community School of Davidson, entered the school's second volleyball state championship match with only one loss on the season after graduating six seniors from last year's squad. The Spartans picked up right where they left off in the State Championship match against Roxboro Community School, sliding through the first set 25-19. The Spartans reeled off seven straight points after falling behind 2-0 to the Bulldogs to open the set. Community School of Davidson didn't look back from there.

a 25-15 set two victory as Sarah Labadorf capped it off with a service ace to put the Spartans up two sets to none. Labadorf was named the M.V.P. of the match. She finished the match with 4 kills, 32 assists, 2 aces, 8 digs and 2 blocks.

Both sides played very nice defensive volleyball, as the entire match featured many long rallies and incredible defensive saves. Community School of Davidson rolled to

The Bulldogs fell behind 3-0 early in the third set, calling timeout and battling to take their largest lead of the match at 18-15. The two teams saw-sawed back and forth, tying each other four more times as Roxboro Community fought off two championship points to even the set at 24-24. Bella DiCristopharo slammed home a beautiful set to earn a third Championship point. Liza Mitchell swung one off a back-row player after a long rally to earn a second straight for Community School of Davidson championship.

Roxboro Community School finished their season 28-3, 12-0 as the champions of the North Central 1A Conference. The Bulldogs won their first Volleyball Regional Championship.

Community School of Davidson won their second straight State Championship in as many appearances all-time. The Spartans completed the season 22-1, 12-0 as the champions of the PAC 7 1A.

**COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF DAVIDSON (22-1, 12-0)**  
**ROXBORO COMMUNITY (28-3, 12-0)**

1	2	3	4	5
25	25	26	X	X
19	15	24	X	X



## 2-A: CARRBORO BATTLES BACK TO WIN SECOND STRAIGHT STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Carrboro returned to the 2A State Championship game and came out ready to rock, with heavy hitters like Destiny Cox, last year's Championship M.V.P., and Cameryn Ekeler dominating the match early. Cox and company overpowered West Iredell in the first set, running out to an 11-point lead with 10 set points before taking the set 25-15.

West Iredell bounced back in the second set, thanks to some great service play by Amber Wooten who helped the Warriors reel off a big run to take their first lead of the day. Lucy Ann Ferguson's aggressive hitting also helped as the Warriors ripped off a 25-17 set win. The Warriors set win was only the third set dropped by the de-

fending State Champion Jaguars all season as they dropped two sets to 3A Chapel Hill in early October.

After dropping just their third set of the season, Carrboro faced their greatest adversity of the year in the third set. The Warriors and Jaguars had see-sawed back and forth to an 11-all tie. That's when a substation infraction was found, costing the Jaguars two points, giving West Iredell the lead 11-9. The Jaguars stormed back and ran off to a six-point lead, on their way to a 25-20 set-win.

The Jaguars continued to set Cox in the fourth set, and they pulled away to a 25-18 victory to claim their second straight State Championship. Carrboro finished the season unbeaten, extending their winning streak to 61-straight games without a loss. Cox was the M.V.P. for the second year in a row. She finished the match with 22 kills, 1 assist, 14 digs, and 3 service aces.

West Iredell won the Western Regional Championship for the first time in school history. The Warriors finished their season 27-3, 12-0 in the North-western Foothills 2A Conference where they were the champions.

**WEST IREDELL (27-3, 12-0)**  
**CARRBORO (31-0, 14-0)**

1	2	3	4	5
15	25	20	18	X
25	17	25	25	X



### 3-A: NORTH IREDELL STAVES OFF CHAPEL HILL TO WIN SECOND VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP IN SCHOOL HISTORY

Last year's state runners-up, Chapel Hill, jumped off to a much better start in the 2017 3A State Title game against North Iredell. The Tigers grabbed 11 of the first 12 points of the match, claiming the first set 25-11. North Iredell responded with just as much intensity in the next two sets, putting the Tigers on the ropes in the fourth set.

Ashley Hawkins powered the Raiders from her outside hitter position in the second and third set. She finished the match with 17 kills, many of them in the second and third sets where North Iredell cruised to victories. Hawkins was named the match M.V.P.

Chapel Hill and their big hitter Kaya Merkler, who sputtered during the second and third sets, came alive during the fourth, which was a back-and-forth affair. The Tigers faced five different Championship points, constantly going back to feeding Merkler, who got going to keep the match alive. They finally broke through to take a 29-27 fourth set victory and force a decisive set five.

North Iredell, saw the momentum swing back to Chapel Hill for the start of the final set. The Tigers held a 12-10 lead, 3 points away from an elusive state title, but they wouldn't register another point. North Iredell ripped off five straight points to claim their first volleyball state championship.

Chapel Hill finished the season 25-7, 14-0 in the Big 8 3A conference where they were the champions. They reached the State Championship match for the fifth time in school history.

North Iredell finished the season 28-2, 10-0 in the North Piedmont 3A where they were the champions. They claimed the school's second Volleyball State Championship.

**NORTH IREDELL (28-2, 10-0)**  
CHAPEL HILL (25-7, 14-0)

1	2	3	4	5
11	25	25	27	15
25	16	19	29	12



### 4-A: DOWLER DUO LIFTS GREEN HOPE TO SECOND STRAIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP WITH STRAIGHT SETS SWEEP OF HOUGH

Defending 4A State Champions Green Hope came out swinging in the first set, running off a 25-14 opening frame victory over Hough. The Falcons were led by the dynamic duo Sydney and Kayla Dowler who combined to set up most of the Green Hope attack on the night. Sydney Dowler, a sophomore, was the M.V.P. of last year's 4A State Championship match and she had another great performance in this year's title match, claiming the same M.V.P. honors.

Hough made a valiant effort in the second set as the Huskies were able to take a small lead, midway through the frame. Then they survived three set points to even the score at 24 a piece. Green Hope rallied and Sydney Dowler lifted the Falcons back

the lead with a twirling second-hit attack, surprising the Huskies and putting the Falcons in front 25-24. A tipped ball off a block ended the frame with Green Hope taking a 26-24 victory and two sets to none lead.

Hough stayed in it during the third set, but Green Hope steadily built a lead and had 5 championship points in hand when a passing shot by the Huskies sailed long and handed Green Hope a 25-19 third set win.

Hough finished the season 26-6 on the season, they were 14-0 in the I-Meck 4A conference where they were the champions. Hough won the 4A Western Regional title for the second time in school history.

Green Hope won their second straight championship as the Falcons capped off a 31-2 season. The Falcons finished with a perfect 10-0 record in the Triangle 6 4A conference, winning the regular season and conference championships.

**HOUGH (26-6, 14-0)**  
**GREEN HOPE (31-2, 10-0)**

1	2	3	4	5
14	24	19	X	X
25	26	25	X	X





# PAST VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP RECAPS



## 2016 Volleyball Championship Recaps



### 1-A: COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF DAVIDSON CLAIMS FIRST CROWN 3-0 OVER LOUISBURG

RALEIGH – After giving up the first five points of the match to Louisburg, the Community School of Davidson Spartans rallied back to nab the lead in the opening set 11-10. They did not look back, pushing on to take the first set 25-18 before sweeping the next two sets and claiming the school's first State Championship in volleyball.

Community School of Davidson blitzed past Louisburg 25-11 in the second set. The Warriors kept the third set close, but the Spartans eventually prevailed claiming the victory 25-18. The Spartans finished the year 28-1, dropping only 13 sets over the course of the entire year, and only three during their six-round playoff run. Junior middle hitter Grace Erskine was the match M.V.P. as she had seven kills in the match.

The Warriors of Louisburg came up only a game shy of an undefeated season at 27-1. They lost only one set in the playoffs prior to the State Championship match. They were led on the night by Summer Phillips with nine kills.



### 2-A: CARRBORO NABS FIRST TITLE WITH 3-1 WIN OVER MAIDEN

RALEIGH – Carrboro won the school's first volleyball state championship by a three-games to one count over Maiden, completing an undefeated season. The Jaguars were led by the 2A Championship M.V.P. Destiny Cox, who had 16 kills on the day in four sets and drew a lot of attention from the Maiden defense all match long.

The Jaguars fell behind early in the first set as Maiden jumped out to an 8-4 advantage before the Jags found their footing and tied the set at 12. Then Carrboro edged in front for the first time at 21-20 before closing out the set without allowing another point at 25-20.

Carrboro cruised through set two, winning the set easily 25-17. Maiden would not go down without a fight as the Blue Devils showed a lot of heart in building a 14-11 lead in the third set before ripping off a 25-18 victory, closing out the set on a tap down at the net by two-time Southern District 7 2A player of the year, Holland Laxton.

Carrboro's power proved too much in the fourth set as the Jaguars swung their heavy hitters to a 25-12 victory in the set to close out the match. The Jaguars finished the season at 30-0, earning their first appearance in the state title game. Maiden finished the season at 30-1, making the school's first appearance in a State Championship game in any Women's sport.



### 3-A: COX MILL SWEEPS THROUGH CHAPEL HILL TO WIN FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP

RALEIGH – Cox Mill dominated all three sets in their sweep of Chapel Hill to win the school's first volleyball championship at historic and newly renovated Reynolds Coliseum. The Chargers got 22 kills from the match M.V.P. Taylor Rowland.

In their first appearance in the State Championship, Cox Mill breezed through the first two sets by identical 25-15 scores using some early big hitting between the two teams in set one set the tone for a power match. The Chargers closed out the match in set three by a score of 25-18.

The Chargers wrapped up the year 34-0 on the season, only dropping 5 sets over the course of the entire season. They only lost two sets in the six rounds of the playoffs. Chapel Hill finished the year 24-6 on the season. The Tigers made their first appearance in the NCHSAA Volleyball finals since they won the championship in 2003.



### 4-A: GREEN HOPE BATTLES BACK FROM TOUGH FIRST SET TO TAKE FIRST TITLE OVER REAGAN 3-1

RALEIGH – In a hyper-competitive match between two schools making their first appearance in an NCHSAA Volleyball State Championship Match, it was the team that dropped the opening set that came out on top. The Green Hope Falcons battled back after dropping the first set to Reagan 25-18.

The Falcons trailed the Raiders by as many as nine in the opening frame before battling back to within two at 18-16. Reagan took control of the opening set after that brief Green Hope rally, but the the Falcons turned the early momentum and built some confidence in that rally. That confidence-building rally gave way to a seesaw second set that saw

numerous ties and lead changes throughout. The two teams were tied at 19, 20 and 21 in the second set before the Falcons took three straight service points and then the set 25-22.

Another nip-and-tuck set went the way of Green Hope in the third set as the Falcons stretched the lead out to 20-15 off of a Sydney Dowler spike. The Falcons managed to hang on to a five-point lead to close out the set 25-20. Green Hope then battled past the Raiders 25-17 in the fourth set, closing out the match and handing the Falcons their first State Championship in volleyball.

Green Hope freshman setter Sydney Dowler had 32 assists on the day, adding three blocks and 5 kills to go with three service aces on her way to match M.V.P. honors. Her older sister, Kayla Dowler, added 12 kills and an ace. The Falcons finished the season 28-1 despite only having three seniors on the roster. Reagan finished the year at 30-3, and advancing to the school's first state championship appearance. The Raiders were led by Hunter Beem who amassed 13 kills with just two errors. Jenna Robbins addend 11 kills and Bailey Hatchett chipped in 10 kills.