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The North Allegheny girls volleyball program continued its move up the ladder in two PIAA championship categories with its 3-1 win over Parkland in the PIAA Class 4A title match in the last of four finals played at Cumberland Valley High School on Nov. 20.

But the Tigers still trail Norwin in both categories.

It was the fifth consecutive Class 4A title for North Allegheny, which moved them into second place on the consecutive title chart. Norwin owns that record with eight consecutive titles from 1976-93.

It was also North Allegheny's eighth overall title, as the Tigers won three straight Class 3A titles from 1992-94 with Bob Miller at the helm. That ties North Allegheny with Farrell, who claimed eight titles under coach Harriett Morrison, for second place on the PIAA's all-time list of champions. Norwin is also the leader in this category, with 12 titles, but the Knights have not won a title since 1988.

"Winning a fifth time shows that it's just not one class with a lot of good players," North Allegheny coach Russ Hoburg said. "It shows the continuity we have in this program. We have a very dedicated group of girls who want to continue the winning tradition."

It was Hoburg's first title as the Tigers head coach, as he served as Heidi Miller's assistant on the previous four championship teams.

"It's always been a group effort, even when Heidi was coach," said Hoburg, when asked if this title meant more to him. "It's not just me on the bench. It's all six of us. We have one of, if not the best coaching staffs in the state. That has played a big part in our success."

But winning a fifth consecutive title was not easy for North Allegheny. In fact, Parkland gave the Tigers all they could handle.

The first set had five lead changes and was tied eight times, the last coming at 23-23. Parkland scored the final four points, including two on kills by junior middle hitter Elena Pursell, to pull out a 25-23 victory.

"We dropped the first set in five matches this year, so the girls didn't get flustered when we lost the first set," Hoburg said. "We were able to make adjustments in the second set and won all but one of those matches. We knew how to react and responded well."

North Allegheny dominated the first half of the second set with its biggest lead coming at 13-6. But Parkland did not back down. The Trojans put together their own 13-6 run to tie the set at 22-22. The two traded points until the set went into overtime at 25-25. But North Allegheny ended the threat by scoring the last two points, the last coming on a block by senior middle hitter Jaydn Perkins, and evened the match at 1-1 with a 27-25 victory.

"We felt we could play with them after the first set," Parkland coach Mike Krause said. "In the second set, just getting those two extra points, those extra couple breaks that ended up going North Allegheny's way, that was the difference."

The momentum North Allegheny picked up in the second set carried over to the third set and led to a 25-18 domination by the Tigers. The fourth set was more of the same, as the Tigers posted a 25-15 win to complete its fifth consecutive title. Perkins scored the deciding point in all three wins for North Allegheny.

"This is my fourth gold medal. It means more to me because of the work we put in during the off season," said Perkins, who turned in one the best performances of her career with 10 kills and 12 blocks. "Also, because I'm a senior."

Junior setter Mia Tuman and junior outside hitter Ella Deeter each had four blocks.

"They're a very good blocking team. We expected that; we had block coverage. We thought that we could answer their blocks, and we did," Krause said. "What really made the difference toward the end is that they served really aggressively. They were serving deep and they were getting us out of our system."

Tuman also had 39 assists and eight kills. Junior outside hitter Carissa Tresser led the Tigers with 14 kills.

"Winning another title makes us hungrier to do it again," said Tuman, who collected her third gold medal. "I'm so blessed to play with such a talented group of hard-working girls."

North Allegheny (20-1) qualified for the state tournament by winning its fourth WPIAL (District 7) title in five years. The Tigers earned a fifth consecutive title berth with wins against District 6 champion State College, 3-0 in the first round; District 3 third-place finisher Elizabethtown, 3-2 in the quarterfinals; and WPIAL runner-up Shaler, 3-1 in Tuesday's semifinals.

Parkland (25-1) qualified for the state tournament by winning the District 11 title. The Trojans advanced to the title match for the first time since three consecutive appearances from 2014-16 with wins over District 1 fourth-place finisher Downingtown West, 3-1 in the first round; District 3 runner-up Cumberland Valley, 3-0 in the semifinals; and District 1 champion Bishop Shanahan, 3-1 in the semifinals.

Parkland was making its sixth appearance in a state title match and was runner-up for the third time. The Trojans were led by: Pursell (19 kills), senior outside hitter Brynn Dreisbach (15 kills, 15 digs), and sophomore setter Maggie Smith (40 assists, 15 digs).

"We are obviously disappointed, because we know we could've won if a couple more things went our way," said Parkland senior defensive specialist Sydney Johnston. "But no Parkland team has done this since 2016, so just to be here is amazing. To not lose one match until the state finals is something I wouldn't have imagined before the season. Parkland volleyball has taught me so much, especially how to work with a team."