

No. 4 SAN TAN OVERCOMES 2-0 DEFICIT TO BEAT NO. 5 SPRING RIDGE IN 5
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By Preston English

San Tan Media Relations Director – 480-222-0811/penglish@santanacs.com

PHOENIX, Ariz. – You couldn't fault the San Tan Charter School volleyball team if memories of a 3-0 quarterfinal upset in last year's CAA playoffs started to creep into their minds after falling behind 2-0 at the hands of Spring Ridge Academy in the same round this year. But the Roadrunners didn't waiver, made adjustments and rode the hot hand of senior outside hitter **Alissa Roberts** to come back and beat the Porcupines 3-2 (16-25, 23-25, 25-20, 25-20, 15-9) at Bourgade Catholic High School.

"That team (Spring Ridge) is pretty darn good," said Roadrunners head coach **Nikki Revling**. "The adrenaline got the best of us in the first couple of games. They haven't seen harder hitters than what they saw today."

In sets one and two the Roadrunners were plagued by seven service errors and an inability to deal with the Porcupines two middle blockers who both stand a 6-1. San Tan fell behind 7-0 in game one and never fully recovered losing the first stanza 25-16. The Roadrunners only had five kills and also had five errors on 20 attacks. The second set was a much closer affair and despite having 10 kills to only two errors, the 'runners fell 25-23.

Despite the second set loss, you could almost feel the Roadrunners players gaining confidence despite the deficit.

"We were down a little bit in the first two games," said Roberts. "But we pulled it together and realized what really mattered and that's this point right now and this game. It helped us to pull through."

In addition, some defensive adjustments helped to turn the tide.

"Against a longer player who could hit that hard we needed to move forward rather than backward," said Revling. "We were too deep defensively. Our blockers can get up and slow the ball down, but we had to move up to put us in position to get the deflections."

Those adjustments worked, not only were the Roadrunners getting to more balls, they had three solo blocks in the set. Two by sophomore middle blocker **Sydney Sneed** and one by Roberts. This flustered the Spring Ridge hitters and a few more errors crept into their attacks. San Tan won game three 25-20 and you could feel the tide turning.

Set four might go down as the best individual performance in a crucial set by a Roadrunner player in its short history. Roberts put away nine kills on 12 attacks with no errors. Whenever the 'runners needed a key point, everyone knew who was going to get the ball, but the Porcupines were helpless to stop it. Dinks, power crosscourt shots, back row attacks, you name it, Roberts put a ball away in that fashion in set four. Along with three aces and nine assists from junior setter **Kylie Rosero** San Tan won set four by the same 25-20 margin.

In the penultimate set, the Roadrunner service game which has been a huge part of their success all year rose to the occasion. Six aces with no service errors in a set to 15 is so very important when points are at a premium. Along with four kills, and five errors on the part of the Porcupines gave the San Tan a 15-9 win and its first ever trip to the semifinals in just their second year as a varsity program.

Roberts had a career high 27 kills which is also the most in a match in program history. She hit .396 for the contest with five aces, six digs and a solo block. Rosero dished out 27 assists with nine digs and she led the team in aces with seven.

Junior hitter **Emilee Golonka** added seven kills, four aces and 10 digs to the Roadrunners cause, while Sneed had two kills, two solo and one assisted block.

Next up for the Roadrunners is a Tuesday evening semifinal matchup with No. 9 Holy Family who upset previously undefeated Madison Highland 3-2. Holy Family is battle tested, having faced 7 teams (11 games) with winning records and posted a 6-5 record in those matches (including today's win).

"No matter who we play it will be a tough match," said Revling. "It's the state semifinals, if you reach that point, you're going to face a really good team."

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