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# Inter-Lakes girls volleyball team wins second straight state title

By Dan Doyon Special to the Union Leader  
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The Inter-Lakes girls volleyball team celebrates after winning the Division III championship on Saturday.  
Dan Doyon

DERRY — Defending champion Inter-Lakes High School faced a test after it dropped a marathon second set to Concord Christian during Saturday’s Division III girls volleyball championship match.



The Lakers had all the answers as they rebounded to cap off their undefeated season.

Inter-Lakes won the finals two sets to wrap up their second straight championship with a 3-1 victory inside Pinkerton Academy's Hackler Gymnasium. The set scores were 25-12, 28-30, 25-21 and 25-17.

Junior Kiera Monahan had 10 kills, 14 service points and two solo blocks for Inter-Lakes (19-0), which has compiled a 37-1 record in winning the past two championships. The Lakers defeated Somersworth last year.

"There were moments in this game where we were kind of struggling with our flow and the way that we responded was a result of the fast-paced drills we do in our gym that are game-like," Inter-Lakes coach Randy Mattson said. "That was a huge part to continue the momentum and flow we had."

Concord Christian coach Doug Oxford was pleased with how his team gutted out the victory in the second set after the Kingsmen (16-3) were dominated in the opening set.

Inter-Lakes held a 21-18 lead before Concord Christian rallied to take a 23-22 lead on a kill from Sadie Thompson. The teams slugged it out until Abby Heizer's kill gave Concord Christian the 30-28 win.

"I thought we played well for most of the match, but we didn't quite have all the answers we needed today," Oxford said. "I thought we outplayed them in the second set but we needed to keep that going."

Concord Christian threatened to take the advantage in the match after a block by Abby Owens gave the Kingsmen a 20-19 lead in the third set, but a kill by Moynihan sparked a 5-0 run to end the set and gave Inter-Lakes a 2-1 lead in the match.

"We hadn't been in a set like the second set all year so it was tough," Mattson said. "The mindset was to regroup and move onto the next set and not think about the end result of that set. We focused (on the third set) and I thought we played pretty well."

Inter-Lakes broke an 11-11 tie in the fourth set and extended the lead to 18-14. The Lakers finished with a 5-1 run to seal the championship, which included kills from Lillian Lybrand and Alyss Snow.

The Lakers came into this year as the favorite to win it again after they returned four starters and six overall players from last year.

“Our experience was a big reason why we won today,” Mattson said. “I’m just so proud of the way they played all season long.”

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