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Not even a strained MCL could keep Freeport setter Cassidy Dell from playing in the PIAA Class 2A title match, held Nov. 19 at Cumberland Valley High School.

"Cassidy suffered a strained MCL in our semifinal match with Philipsburg-Osceola," Freeport coach Tom Phillips said. "She didn't practice Thursday or Friday. The doctor told Cassidy she could play as long as she could endure the pain. I didn't know until Friday night that she was going to try and play."

Dell did more than just play. With a brace to support her injured knee, Dell played the entire match and recorded nine kills and was successful on 11 of 11 serving attempts, as the Yellow Jackets swept York Catholic to win the Class 2A title.

"She was a little timid early in the first set," Phillips said. "After that she was magnificent. It's amazing that she was able to play at such a high level while battling pain. She really toughed it out for the team."

Freeport (23-2), the WPIAL champion, was making its second appearance in the finals, with the first coming in 2017, and claimed its second championship trophy. York Catholic (23-2) was making its first appearance in the finals.

"We had a total team effort today," Freeport coach Tom Phillips said. "Everybody took turns making big plays all day long. We had a strong balanced offense and played great defense. You can't ask for much more than that in a state championship match."

York Catholic (24-3), the District 3 champion, built an 18-12 lead in the first set with junior Ashley Patterson and senior Adeline Phillips recording three kills each from the outside.

After a timeout chat with coach Tom Phillips, Freeport returned to the court and scored 11 of the next 12 points en route to a 25-21 victory. Sophomore Alaina Whitlinger recorded six kills for the Yellow Jackets.

"We were a little helter skelter in the first set," Phillips said. "That's because we practiced a 5-1 offense, not knowing whether Cassidy would play, but then switched back to a 6-2. I just told the girls to calm down and play the way they are capable of playing."

Freeport jumped out to a 12-4 lead in the second set, but York Catholic rallied to tie the set at 12. The Yellow Jackets took charge from that point on and rolled to a 25-15 victory. Junior Josie Russo led the way with four kills and three blocks for a point.

York Catholic had a glimmer of hope when it built a 16-14 lead in the third set. Freeport dashed those hopes by scoring 11 of the next 13 points to complete a 25-18 victory, thus completing the sweep.

"My emotions are through the roof," said Freeport junior Sydney Selker, who had six kills. "In that third set, we really had to buckle down. Even though they were coming back, we knew we were up two sets, and we wanted to finish that one because we didn't want to go to a fourth set and give them any momentum."

Whitlinger led Freeport with 14 kills. Russo had six kills and four blocks. The Yellow Jackets were almost flawless on serving with only three misses on the day.

York Catholic was led by Patterson (7 kills, 7 digs), Phillips (11 kills), and Beiris Boyreau-Millar (11 assists, 4 digs, 1 ace).

"We had a couple of opportunities, but Freeport did just what it needed to get back into the match," Fighting Irish coach Phillip Autry said. "I credit that to a good coach who has been around for a long time and knows what to do in those situations. They were the better team and deserved to win."

Freeport earned its PIAA berth by winning its second straight WPIAL title. The Yellow Jackets advanced to the title match with wins over Corry, 3-0 in the first round; Quaker Valley, 3-0 in the quarterfinals; and Philipsburg-Osceola, 3-0 in the semifinals.

York Catholic qualified for the state tournament by winning the District 3 title. The Fighting Irish advanced to the title match with wins over Parkway Center, 3-0 in the first round; Tyrone, 3-0 in the quarterfinals; and Notre Dame Green Pond, 3-1 in the semifinals.

Freeport used nine players in the title match. Four are seniors, including Dell and libero Ava Soilis. Whitlinger, Russo, and Selker are among the returnees for the Yellow Jackets.

York Catholic used 11 players and six were seniors. The top returnees are Patterson, and Boyreau-Millar.

"I am so proud of my team," Fighting Irish coach Phillip Autrey said. "They worked hard and battled all season. We accomplished more than any other team in school history. We have a lot to be proud of."