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NCAA Division III National Championship

Commemorative Edition

UW Oshkosh vs. La Verne

Dec. 6, Shirk Center, Bloomington, Illinois



HAIL TITANS!

UWO volleyball sweeps NCAA Tournament to win program's first national championship



Evan Berger / Advance-Titan

The UW Oshkosh women's volleyball team celebrates after winning the program's first national championship courtesy of a 3-0 sweep over the University of La Verne (California) Dec. 6 at the Shirk Center in Bloomington, Illinois.

By Nolan Andler
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The UW Oshkosh women's volleyball team finally earned the only win that had eluded the program since its inception in 1971 – a national championship.

The No. 2-seeded Titans won its first ever NCAA Division III National Championship with a sweep over the University of La Verne (California), completing a perfect run in the tournament by not relinquishing a single set throughout the UWO's six matches played.

"I felt like I was in a dream," senior Jaclyn Dutkiewicz said. "I don't think I have ever experienced anything like this in my life."

UWO head coach Jon Ellmann said

it was a collective effort to be sitting at the postgame press conference with the golden trophy.

After the last kill from Grace Juergens to clinch the national championship, Hannah Moe said they knew that what they accomplished was great.

"Obviously the national championship is the goal, but to actually be able to do it is so rare," Moe said. "We are so grateful for the environment we've built where everyone is so supportive and you truly are playing for the person next to you."

Samantha Perlberg led the team in the win with 16 kills and 13 digs with one ace. Juergens led in the ace department with two on the night. Lauren Grier re-

corded the team high in blocks with four and Izzy Coon's 17 assists were the team high.

In the first set, UWO opened it up right away with a 9-1 run to turn a 2-2 tie into an 11-3 lead. The Leopards responded immediately to lower the 11-3 Titans lead to 12-9. That was the closest that La Verne got as UWO opened its lead back to 20-12 behind four kills from Perlberg in an 8-3 run. From there the Titans were able to win comfortably in a 25-17 set one win. Riley Borrowman closed out the set with a kill to get the final point.

The second set was where the punches were traded between both teams. For the

entire set, neither La Verne nor Oshkosh had a lead that was larger than three points.

The lead also switched six times throughout the whole set. UWO was able to take advantage and pull away late in the second set.

Down 20-19, UWO finished the set on a 6-2 run behind two kills from Juergens and Grier to win the second set 25-22 and get a 2-0 lead in the match.

Unlike the Sept 12. matchup when the Titans failed to close out the Leopards while holding a 2-0 lead, UWO was able to put a stamp on La Verne this time around.

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Nolan Andler / Advance-Titan

UWO coach Jon Ellmann speaks to the team during a timeout in Oshkosh’s game against UW-Stevens Point on Sept. 26 at the Kolf Sports Center.

Ellmann proud to be national champ at UWO

By Zach Bellin
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After consecutive seasons that finished in the NCAA Division III Championship’s Elite Eight, head coach Jon Ellmann was able to lead his team over the hump and win the program’s first title in school history.

“I’m on cloud nine you know,” Jon Ellmann said. “You think about all the seasons, where you don’t end with the victory at the end, and it just validates a whole lot of things. So we’re (the team) processing a lot.”

Before coming to UW Oshkosh as an assistant coach for the program in 2016, he was already familiar with the campus being an alumni of the school.

In 1999, Ellmann began his coaching career at Gibraltar High School, where he’d coach the girls freshman and junior varsity teams before getting

a job as the assistant varsity coach at Lourdes Academy in 2004.

After one year he’d be promoted to the head volleyball coach at Lourdes and would go on to coach there until 2015.

That’s when he’d make his return to the Oshkosh campus, this time as the women’s volleyball team’s top assistant coach.

Similar to his tenure at Lourdes, Ellmann would find himself as the interim head coach in 2017.

The team won seven of their last eight matches that season and fell in the semi-final round of the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) championship.

Now in eight seasons as the Titans head coach, he’s accrued a 208-69 record with a NCAA D-III championship, a WIAC championship, the 2023 American Volleyball Coaches Association’s NCAA D-III Coach

of the Year award, and the first coach in WIAC history to earn four consecutive Coach of the Year honors.

“The culture piece is the biggest thing for us, it’s how we operate,” he said. “This whole national championship run validated that doing the right things for the right reasons can result in a national championship.”

Ellmann says goal-setting, building a fulfilling operation, and finding the right people to join the UWO volleyball family was the driving force for the success of the team under his reign.

“It was like, how do you want to operate in a way that’s sustainable and really rewarding,” he said. “... it’s support first, and it’s whole human first, volleyball is this thing that our kids do, but it’s surely not all of their life, right? And so, if volleyball is bad one day, do they have enough other things going on in

their life, and do they feel the support that they can still have a really fulfilling experience for that week, that month.”

Next year’s goal will obviously be to defend their national championship in the 2026 season, but he wants his team to stay level headed as the storm cools down from their big win.

“When people come on a recruiting visit, we don’t talk about wins, we talk about what the experience is like, and what you’re going to feel and how you can be the most productive in the process,” Ellmann said. “I think this (winning the championship) reinforces that we will double down on that approach. We’re not going to talk a lot about winning national championships. It’ll be a known goal, but everything will go back to what it takes to be really good humans and supportive and do really hard things, consistently.”

UWO volleyball: 2025 national champions

From Page 1

The Leopards built a 16-12 lead in set three but from there it was all UWO. A 6-0 run by the Titans reclaimed UWO the lead at 18-16 and Oshkosh never relinquished it for the rest of the game. Oshkosh was able to extend the lead at 24-19, and despite two kills from La Verne’s Mya Ray to keep the game alive for just a couple more points, Juergens was able to put the stamp on a long sequence of rallies by both teams with a kill to win the set 25-21, the match 3-0 and handed the Titans their first national championship.

In the match, UWO held Mya Ray, the Division III national player of the year, to 16 kills on 39 total attacks and a .282 hitting percentage.

Ellmann said he knew that it would be tough to face her but

credits the team for being able to not make her as big of a factor.

“You’re not going to shut (Ray) down,” Ellmann said. “(Perlberg) and the rest of the team outperformed (La Verne).”

Despite getting reverse swept by the Leopards on Sept. 12, Ellmann said that revenge wasn’t fueled by them but did admit it was cool to get the chance to play La Verne again.

UWO completed a 34-3 regular season with a 7-0 conference record and won every championship available. The Titans won the WIAC regular season championship, WIAC Tournament and the NCAA Tournament. The Titans also won the national title by becoming the third team in D-III history to not lose a single set in the NCAA tournament.



Jacob Link / Advance-Titan

Student assistant coach Mackenna Barone holds up the national championship trophy Dec. 7 as the team unloads at Kolf Sports Center.

Juergens’ kill seals national title

By Isaac Fischer
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Grace Juergens, a transfer outside hitter for UW Oshkosh, delivered the final kill to secure the program’s first NCAA Division III Volleyball National Championship.

In the championship match against the University of La Verne (California) Leopards, the victory came down to a final point. The Titans survived two kills by the Leopards’ star outside hitter Mya Ray before Juergens closed it out with a kill of her own.

“Getting that final kill was incredibly exciting, but all the credit goes to my teammates for making that point possible,” Juergens said. “All season, we’ve trained for these kinds of high-pressure moments in practice, so when they happen, we see them as opportunities to trust our preparation and enjoy the challenge.”

The Titans’ 34-3 regular season record was impressive, but it was overcoming a tough conference final that truly prepared them for the national stage.

UW-Eau Claire pushed UWO to the brink in the WIAC Championship match, winning the first two sets before the Titans came back by a rare reverse sweep, the first for the WIAC Tournament Championship since 1998.

According to Juergens, who herself had nine kills in the match, the goal at that game was to extend the season and keep playing.

“We talked about giving it our all and playing for each other,” she said.

This shift in mindset translated directly to the NCAA Tournament, where the Titans did



Pin hitter Grace Juergens attempts a kill against the WashU Bears in the Regional Final match at Kolf Sports Center. Juergen’s kill secured the 2025 National Title over University of La Verne (California) on Dec. 6.

not drop a single set.

Juergens’ contributions were consistent throughout the Titans’ flawless six-match, 18-set sweep of the national tournament - helping UWO become the first team to do so since Juniata in 2004. Her total line for the championship run illustrates her value as a reliable, all-around player on both offense and defense, including 63 kills, and 48 digs, in addition to seven aces.

This included a dominant 15-

kill performance in the Oshkosh Regional Final against Washington University in St. Louis (Missouri) and two double-doubles in the final three matches.

“It’s that shared ‘buy in’ and our ability to overcome tough moments together that truly defines our team culture and makes it so special,” Juergens said.

Juergens said she credits the team’s special culture to its cohesion.

“Being surrounded every day

by this group of girls who are not just teammates, but best friends has been the greatest honor,” she said. “The energy and spark that (her teammates provide), both in practice and in matches, is contagious and constantly pushes everyone to raise their level.”

Transferring to Oshkosh from the University of New Haven (Connecticut) provided Juergens with a clearer understanding of what she needed in a program and what kind of player

she was still developing into.

“This season was full of meaningful ‘firsts’: my first year as a Titan, the first time I was able to experience the Elite Eight and winning a first national championship that also marked the first NCAA Division III Volleyball National Championship in program history,” Juergens said. “To experience all of that in my first season here, and to do it with this group and staff, is something that I will always remember.”

Freshman shines on national stage

By Dylan Przybylski
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Most freshmen spend their first season figuring things out, but for UW Oshkosh’s libero Callie Panasuk, that wasn’t the case.

Panasuk said that she was never seen as just a freshman on the team.

“They trusted me on the court and helped me grow so much as a person and player,” she said. “I got pushed, but they also supported me through everything, which gave me a lot of confidence early on.”

Panasuk was given a huge opportunity to play one of the most impactful positions on the court early on and is now a Division III women’s volleyball national champion.

Panasuk said the moment still doesn’t feel like reality.

“You dream about moments like this growing up, but experiencing it with this group of people that I love so much makes it even more special,” she said. “There is just so much pride knowing all the hard work we

put in together paid off. From the beginning of this season we knew we wanted it, so we put in the work every day at practice to reach this goal.”

Head coach Jon Ellmann said the moment was never too big for Panasuk.

“She had one receiving error I think in the entire three matches potentially, which is crazy— unheard of — so she was dialed in.”

Panasuk said Ellmann has worked hard at creating a culture centered around growth, competitive spirit and teamwork.

“Everything we do connects back to being great teammates and pushing each other to get better,” she said. “He’s created an environment that feels like a family, people support each other, but they also hold each other accountable. He wants us to grow not only as volleyball players, but as people as well.”

Panasuk said even though the national championship was 276 miles away at Illinois Wesleyan University, the Oshkosh faithful made it feel like home.

“The support we’ve gotten

all season has been unreal,” she said. “People show up, they cheer loud, they’re proud of us and we really feel that love. Especially this championship week, parents and family chose to miss work to come and support us so that is really special to us. I’m so so grateful to be a part of a community that cares this much about our program.”

Panasuk said winning the national championship with current teammates and former Wisconsin Juniors Volleyball Club teammates Malia Winchel and Emmy Wizceb was one of the coolest parts of the weekend.

“Malia and Emmy are both older than me so I obviously looked up to them so much when I would see them at practices, and now we got to share a moment like this on such a huge stage with our WJV family cheering us on,” said Panasuk. It is a full circle moment and something we’ll never forget.”

Panasuk said it’s important to continue to improve on and off the court as she approaches her sophomore season.

“Winning a title this early



Callie Panasuk prepares to serve against the Washington University in St. Louis (Missouri) Bears in the Regional Championship Game at the Kolf Sports Center. Panasuk finished her freshmen season by winning the national championship.

definitely motivates me to not be satisfied, now the goal is to help us stay at that championship level and hopefully win more together,” she said.

Panasuk said she was grateful to be named to the all-tournament team, but that the award reflects how the team played.

“My teammates put me in really good positions, and I just

wanted to do my job for them,” she said. “So, it’s really a team award in my mind.”

Panasuk said the entire journey for the team is bigger than just the national championship.

“The best part is that it never feels like just volleyball,” she said. “It feels like we’re a part of something bigger, like a true UWO volleyball family.”



The ‘Gold Standard’

A look back on the UWO volleyball team’s biggest moments from the 2025 season



Nolan Andler / Advance-Titan
UWO’s Jaclyn Dutkiewicz serves the ball against UW-Stevens Point in Oshkosh’s 3-0 sweep over the Pointers in front of 1,595 fans for Community Night on Sept. 26 at the Kolf Sports Center.



Nolan Andler / Advance-Titan
UWO celebrates after winning the regular season WIAC title for the third straight year following a 3-1 victory over UW-Eau Claire at the Kolf Sports Center Nov. 7. The win also marked the 200th in head coach Jon Ellman’s career and was the first time since 1986 that a WIAC team won three conference championships in a row.



Nolan Andler / Advance-Titan
UWO lifts its first WIAC Tournament Championship trophy since 2008 Nov. 15 at the Kolf Sports Center. Just eight days after the Titans won the regular season crown, Oshkosh faced off against UW-Eau Claire once again and trailed 2-0 early before pulling off the reverse sweep against the Blugolds.



Katie Lechton / Advance-Titan
UWO pin hitter Samantha Perlberg attempts a kill in the Oshkosh Regional Nov. 22 at the Kolf Sports Center.



Katie Lechton / Advance-Titan
UWO celebrates after winning the Oshkosh Regional over WashU Nov. 22.

Turn to Page 6 and Page 7 to relive the team’s biggest wins this year

Titans take home third straight WIAC title

By Nolan Andler
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The UW Oshkosh women’s volleyball team won its third straight Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference regular season title Nov. 8.

The No. 5-ranked Titans got the WIAC championship by beating the No. 3 UW-Eau Claire Blugolds 3-1 in the regular season finale at Kolf Sports Center. Going into the game, the Titans and Blugolds were tied atop the WIAC standings with both teams then holding a 6-0 record in conference play. So it was the regular season championship game for both UWO and UWEC. Friday’s win is the cap of a 26-3 regular season for the Titans.

With all the stakes that were on the line in the game against the Blugolds, UWO’s Izzy Coon said the team made sure not to let all of that affect them.

“We really focused on playing for each other and remembering our ‘why,’” Coon said. “We do our normal scouting on Eau Claire, but it wasn’t about who was on the other side of the net; it was about what we were going to do, our love for the sport and the family we built. That grounded us in that game and reminded us we are playing for something bigger.”

Samantha Perlberg led the team with 18 kills, 19 digs and two aces on the night. Coon and Jaclyn Dutkiewicz led in assists with 21 and 20, respectively. Lauren Grier and Grace Juergens had contributions in the kill department with 10 and 9, respectively. Callie Panasuk also contributed in digs with 15.

Set one was a preview of how the night was going to go for UWO, behind two kills from Perlberg and four Blugold attack errors. UWO jumped out to an 8-2 lead and was able to use the gap to cruise to a 25-12 set one win. The second set was close to start out, as after UWO responded to a Blugold 3-0 start to make it 4-4. It was

back and forth for the next couple of scores as both teams kept trading punches. That was until, with the set tied at 13, behind two kills from Grier, UWO went on a 5-0 run to make it 18-13. The Titans used that gap to finish the set with a 25-18 set two win.

Eau Claire was able to keep the game alive with a 25-18 set three win. UWO made sure not to let UWEC send the game into set five as the Titans closed out the match and the WIAC championship with a 25-18 set four win.

Coon said she credited the coaches for getting the team back in the right state of mind between sets three and four.

“Riley Dahlquist looked at us and said, ‘What’s it going to take to win a conference championship,’” Coon said. “We wanted to play the whole game free, have fun, but this comment got us in the right headspace. The coaching staff also does a great job reminding us that even though it’s a big game, it’s still a normal volleyball game. Focusing on our side of the net was the biggest key.”

Going into this season, UWO lost six seniors after last season. But with what those players and the ones before last year’s class instilled into this team, head coach Jon Ellmann said he knows that anyone who has been a part of this team had an effect on this year’s team. But he also knows that this year’s team is taking credit for its own actions.

“One of the amazing things about legacy is that it leaves little ripples,” Ellmann said. “Anyone that has ever put on an Oshkosh volleyball jersey has in some way or another impacted our current team. With that said, this team takes credit and responsibility for its own actions. This team doesn’t see challenges as tests to pass or fail. We see them as opportunities for problem solving.”

After Friday’s win, Ellmann earned his 200th career win as the



Nolan Andler / Advance-Titan

The UWO volleyball team rushes Grace Juergens after she secured the final kill to clinch the WIAC regular season championship on Nov. 8 at the Kolf Sports Center.

head coach of the UWO women’s volleyball team. While the number of wins doesn’t mean much to Ellmann, the benchmarks along the way do.

“If you coach long enough, you win matches, so the number 200 doesn’t mean all that much to me, but these benchmarks do create an opportunity to pause and reflect,” Ellmann said.

What Ellmann said he is grateful for is everything that was accomplished along the way, with the relationships and lessons that were taught.

“You hold on to the lessons that your fellow coaches and former players taught you,” Ellman said. “I am so unbelievably grateful for the opportunity to do this with so many amazing humans. Someone way smarter than me once said that if you want to be successful, surround yourself with great people. I feel like that’s what we’ve done here at UW Oshkosh.”

This season, UWO was able to win its third straight WIAC championship behind a run from Sept. 26 – Oct. 22, where in every game in that time frame, UWO not only went undefeated but won all 27 sets in all nine games played. Four of those wins in that nine-game stretch were against WIAC teams in UW-Stevens Point, UW-River Falls, UW-La Crosse and UW-Platteville. The game on Oct. 29 was also key in the Titans’ championship as UWO survived a five-set battle at UW-Whitewater. The win over the Warhawks for UWO clinched the Titans a first-round bye in the WIAC tournament.

Last season, UWO fell in the WIAC tournament championship game to UWW for the second straight year. But unlike 2023 where the Titans were swept 3-0, UWO held an 11-8 lead in set five but wasn’t able to score the final four points first before the War-

hawks did. While that is a reminder to the team, they are focused on this year’s tournament just one day at a time.

“Last years’ experience fuels us, but we know we have to focus on what we can do now,” Coon said. “Every rep in practice this week is important, focusing on what we can control and sharpening the tools we already have. We will keep high energy and push each other with purpose. When we play for each other, that’s when we play best, no matter who is across the net.”

“We surely don’t want to live in the past, but we are aware of it, and it’s motivating,” Ellmann said. “We respect every team in our conference and whomever we play Thursday will get 100% of our attention and effort. Preparation will be no different than it has been all season. We have planned out our entire week, but all of our energy is focused on preparing for Thursday.”

Titans win first WIAC tournament title since 2008

By Katie Lechton and Nolan Andler
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For the first time since 2008 and fifth time in program history, the UW Oshkosh women’s volleyball team won the WIAC Volleyball Tournament and secured the automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

UWO was the No. 1 seed in this year’s tournament and had a bye into the semifinals, where they faced No. 4-seed UW-Whitewater on Nov. 13. UWO had a 5 point run early in the first set off of three kills and two Warhawk errors. UWW attempted to crawl their way back into the set, but the Titans took the set 26-24.

UWW took a commanding lead in set two, scoring eight of the first 10 points overall. That didn’t stop the Titans, however, as they responded with a four point run to keep the set within two. UWO kept the set within 5 points, until a late error by the Warhawks gave UWO the serve. Junior pin hitter Samantha Perlberg hit four straight

kills for the Titans as they won set two 25-23.

The third set opened up with both teams trading points until the Titans broke away from the Warhawks on a 4-point run. UWO would be in the driver’s seat for the remainder of the set, having as much as a 7 point lead, as they completed the sweep over UWW with a 25-19 set three win. Perlberg led the team with 12 kills, and 13 digs, while Junior Grace Juergens had 11 kills and 11 digs. Senior Izzy Coon totaled 17 assists and 15 digs, while freshman libero Callie Panasuk completed 14 digs and four assists.

With the win, the Titans moved to championship Saturday on Nov. 15, when they faced No. 2-seed UW-Eau Claire. The first two sets were dominated by the Blugolds, as they kept UWO from overtaking the lead. UWEC ended the first set on a 4-point run, solidifying a 25-18 set victory, and shut down a late Titan rally to get the 25-21 set two win.

In the third set, the Blugolds continued where they left off, claiming 6 of the 8 points overall. The Titans

responded however with a 4-point run of their own, tying the set and keeping pace with the Blugolds for most of the match, matching the gameplay on the other side of the net. UWO made its move late in set three by going on a 4-point run off of three kills and a Blugold error, winning the set 25-21 to stay alive in the match.

The Titans won the first point of set four and didn’t look back as they held off all but one attempt made by UWEC to overtake them. Although both teams tied 11 times during the set, UWO was able to hang on in extras and win the set, 26-24, to force a fifth set.

The first 6 points of the fifth set were a back-and-forth fight between the two programs, until UWO went on a 3-point run, taking the lead. Although the Blugolds would tie the Titans once more, UWO would go on to defeat UW-Eau Claire in the fifth set 15-13 and get the reverse sweep 3-2 to win its first WIAC Tournament title since 2008. Perlberg had 21 kills, and 17 digs, while Juergens completed 18 kills, and 18 digs. Freshman Maren Motz had 10 kills, and eight digs for the Ti-

tans, while Coon had 31 assists. Panasuk ended the night with five assists and 27 digs. Senior Jaclyn Dutkiewicz also had a big night, totalling 30 assists and 12 digs.

The Titans mark the first team to win both the regular season and tournament titles since UWW in 2022.

The Titans won the WIAC Tournament for the first time in coach Jon Ellmann’s tenure, which he said was something special.

“It’s such a fun, historic moment, and it means a lot to us to be able to grab both and do things that are historical,” Ellmann said. “After last year, people thought that this was going to be a completely different team and the expectations would be lower from an outcome standpoint. From every junction of the season from Summer Camps to weekend one, there has just been this comradery where our freshmen have acclimated so quickly and have become an integral part to our program and our upperclassmen have led with grace.”

On NCAA selection day on Monday (Nov. 17), even though

the team knew that they were going to be called anyway with clinching the WIAC spot. Ellmann and the team still knew that there is nothing like hearing their name be selected. “Hearing your name get called will never get old, we knew we were in due to NPI but it was not too long ago that we were sitting here and waiting on a committee to decide whether or not we would get to play in the Tournament,” Ellmann said. “Regardless of how the season goes, it is always such an honor to know that you’re in it.”

While hearing their name called, the Titans also learned that they were one of the eight teams that will be hosting a region in the 2025 NCAA Tournament. It is the second time in the past three years that UWO will be hosting a regional at Kolf Sports Center (2023).

The six other remaining teams coming to Oshkosh are Edgewood College (25-6), Gustavus Adolphus (Minnesota)(23-7), WashU (St. Louis)(22-8) College of Saint Benedict (Minnesota)(21-6), University of Dubuque (Iowa)(25-4), and Cornell College (Iowa)(19-10).

UWO makes third straight Elite Eight

By Nolan Andler
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The UW Oshkosh women’s volleyball team made its third straight NCAA Elite Eight appearance by winning the Oshkosh Regional at Kolf Sports Center over the weekend of Nov. 20-22 for the NCAA Division III Tournament.

The No. 3-ranked Titans did it by sweeping its three opponents in Greenville University (Illinois), No. 25 Gustavus Adolphus College (Minnesota) and No. 21 Washington University in St. Louis (Missouri).

“We have goals and checked boxes that we strive to reach every year,” junior Samantha Perlberg said about reaching a third straight Elite Eight. “(Three Elite Eight appearances) in a row feels awesome, but we always want to go further.”

In their opening round match against Greenville, similar to when the Titans opened the 2023 tournament over the Panthers, UWO swept Greenville 3-0 in the first round on Thursday, Nov. 20. Despite having a lead as large as 12-7 in the first set, the Titans had to survive a fight from the Panthers, winning set one 25-23 after Grace Juergens punctuated the set with a kill. After the first set, things were calmer for the Titans. A 10-3 start to set two behind two aces from Riley Borrowman allowed the Titans to cruise to a 25-17 set two win. Set three was close until a 7-3 run by UWO turned a 12-12 tie into a 19-15 UWO lead. From there, the Titans were able to get the set three win 25-18 and advance to the second round with a date versus the Gustavus Adolphus Gusties. Perlberg led the way in the win over the Panthers with 12 kills and 13 aces. Borrowman

recorded four aces on the night. Izzy Coon led with 22 kills and Callie Panasuk led the team in digs with 16.

In the game versus the Gusties, UWO once again completed another sweep. Similar to the game against Greenville, the first set was the closest set of the night. Despite never fully relinquishing the lead, UWO never had a lead larger than four points. That was until a 3-0 run behind two kills from Juergens ended the set with a 25-20 win.

A 9-3 lead in set two, behind five Gustie attack errors and three kills from Perlberg, allowed the Titans to cruise to the set two win 25-17 as UWO never had a lead lower than four. The third and final set of the night was close until a 7-2 lead by the Titans turned a 10-10 tie into a 17-12 UWO lead.

UWO used that lead to get another 25-17 set win to sweep the Gusties. Perlberg once again led with a high of 12 kills and one ace. Coon and Jaclyn Dutkiewicz each had the team high in assists with 15 respective kills, and Panasuk once again had the lead with 21 digs. A big part of this game, however, was the front duo of Lauren Grier and Maren Motz. Grier recorded seven blocks with four kills, and Motz recorded five blocks with four kills. UWO also held down the top defense and top scoring offense in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in Gustavus.

“Our game plan is to just do us and do what we need to do,” Juergens said when talking about the game plan against the Gusties.

The last step that the Titans had between themselves and their third straight Elite Eight appearance was the Wash U Bears in the Sweet 16. Unlike the first match on Sept. 5, where the Titans escaped the Bears 3-1 with a pair of 26-24 set wins,



Katie Lechton / Advance-Titan
The UW Oshkosh volleyball team celebrates after advancing to its third straight Elite Eight in the NCAA tournament at the Kolf Sports Center on Nov. 22.

UWO swept Wash U in the rematch between the two teams with set scores of 25-18, 25-17 and 25-20. Set three, which was the closest set of the day, went down to the wire as UWO held only a 19-18 lead late in the set. The Titans were able to put away the Bears and win the 2025 NCAA D-III Oshkosh Regional with a 6-2 run behind three kills from Juergens.

A 15-kill performance from Juergens got her the team high on the night. Borrowman led with three aces, and Grier and Hannah Moe each tied for the team lead in blocks with four, respectively. Coon led the team on the night with 20 assists and Panasuk once again led with 18 digs.

Head coach Jon Ellmann said he credits the team’s ability to stick together for how they were able to

improve and get better throughout the regional.

“We are this diverse group of 25 women and our coaching staff, there are so many mini microstories that help us find success,” Ellmann said. “Ultimately, everyone getting into the best phase to be as productive and positive to compete at the highest level possible is the goal.”

The Sweet 16 win was another check to a season where UWO swept both the WIAC regular season and tournament championships.

Ellmann said he realizes that this time in the Elite Eight, there is more to be accomplished this time.

“(In 2023) when we ended the season with a regional trophy and a conference regular season championship trophy, we realized as a staff the next year that what we did

is hard to do,” Ellmann said. “To have the same two trophies sitting in our locker room, there is an awareness that we did this special thing twice in a row, but there is a severe hunger to do more.”

UWO will play No. 19 Calvin University (Michigan) in the Elite Eight round. The Knights are not only the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association Tournament Champions, but Calvin is also the winner of the Bloomington, Illinois, Regional, which is where the Elite Eight and National Championship rounds will be played. The Knights beat UW-Whitewater and host of the regional in Illinois Wesleyan University to win their regional.

The Titans’ Elite Eight match against Calvin took place Dec. 3. The score of the contest can be found at uwoshkoshtitans.com/.

Oshkosh advances to national title match

By Nolan Andler
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The No. 2 Seeded UW Oshkosh women’s volleyball team swept Trinity University (Texas) in the National Semifinal round of the NCAA Tournament on Thursday (Dec. 4) at the Shirk Center in Bloomington, Illinois. The Titans advanced to their first national championship game appearance since 1994 when UWO fell to Washington University in St. Louis.

Samantha Perlberg and Grace Juergens led the team in kills with 19 and 12, respectively, in the win. Callie Panasuk led the team with three aces and 24 digs. Izzy Coon had the team high in assists with 26 and Lauren Grier had the most blocks with four.

Set one was all UWO from the beginning. With the Titans holding a 6-4 lead, UWO went on an 8-0 run behind three aces from Panasuk to extend the lead to 14-4. The Tigers were able to close the Titans lead to 18-11, but immediately after UWO finished the set on a 7-1 run behind four kills from Perlberg to win the first set at 25-12.

Set two was anything but smooth for the Titans. With the score tied at 7-7, Trinity pulled off an 8-1 run to claim a 15-8 lead and forced Oshkosh head coach Jon Ellmann to use

both of his timeouts. Immediately after, the Titans, behind five kills from Perlberg, rattled off another 7-1 run in the game to lower the deficit to 16-15 and got themselves back in the set. From there, UWO gradually was able to tie it up at 23-23. Despite the Tigers having attempted set points at 24-23 and 25-24, UWO was able to respond to keep the game both times and the second time, the Titans took the lead and the set at 27-25 behind kills from Perlberg and Grier.

Set three was tight to start with both teams tying the set at 7-7. A 6-0 run by the Titans however allowed the Titans to claim a 13-7 lead. From there, UWO played from the lead the rest of the set. Trinity gave the Titans a couple scares in the set with at one point after the Tigers cut the Titans lead down to 16-15. But with UWO holding a 19-17 lead, the Titans closed out the set with a 6-1 run behind four combined kills from Juergens and Borrowman to clinch the 25-18 set win and the fifth straight Titan sweep in the NCAA tournament.

The Titans will now shift their attention to the national championship game on Saturday, Dec. 6, where UWO will play the University of La Verne (California). The Titans faced at home on La Verne on Sep. 12 where the Leopards reverse swept the Titans 3-2.



Katie Lechton / Advance-Titan
UWO’s Lauren Grier (14) and Maren Motz (18) attempt to block the kill coming their way against Washington University in St. Louis in the Oshkosh Regional of the NCAA D-III Tournament at the Kolf Sports Center Nov. 22.

Women's Volleyball



2025
NATIONAL
CHAMPIONS

Pokryfke

1

Borrowman

2

Winchel

3

Friessen

4

Perlberg

5

Krueger

6

Juergens

7

Panasuk

8

Pedretti

9

Hopp

11

Moe

12

Lamb

13

Grier

14

Dutkiewicz

16

Motz

18

McEniry

19

Stamm

21

Coon

22

Tortorice

24

Camp

25

Wizceb

26

Head Coach: Jon Ellmann

Assistant Coaches: Braeden Melton, Katelyn Vara-Halfmann
Delaney Rutherford, Makenna Barone. Riley Dahlquist

Athletic Trainer: Megan Butke