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The New Hampshire

## Volleyball sweeps weekend, win streak hits four



JACK BOUCHARD/TNH PHOTOGRAPHER

The UNH volleyball team had a dominant weekend: The 'Cats won every set, giving up only one ace and outscoring their opponents 150-117.

**By Sam Eggert**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Get the brooms out, as the UNH volleyball team swept both Hartford (11-10, 3-2) and defending America East Champion Stony Brook (7-13, 2-3) this past weekend, extending UNH's winning streak to four.



The 'Cats are finally hitting their stride after a questionable start to the in-conference portion

of the season. Led by senior outside hitter Kennedy Smith and sophomore middle blocker Abby Sullivan, the Wildcats look to continue dominating the America East Conference.

Hartford was on the receiving end of the first UNH beatdown, as the 'Cats pushed their lifetime record against Hartford to 46-3. UNH has won 13 consecutive matches against Hartford dating back to 2012.

The first set went to the Wildcats 25-19, with UNH closing out the set with a succession of kills. First year outside hitter Katie Jablonski recorded kills for UNH's 21st and 22nd points, then Sullivan and senior right-side hitter Hannah Petke combined for a block to push UNH to their 23rd point. Smith got a kill for the 24th point, then Petke closed out the set with a kill of her own.

Hartford came out firing in the second set, advancing to an 11-6 lead before UNH clawed back to tie the set at 14 thanks to back-to-back kills from Petke. Later in the set, UNH went on a five-point run which included two kills from Jablonski as they finished the second set with a 25-20.

The third set saw the two teams go back and forth at first, although UNH eventually pulled

away to take a 19-13 lead. That lead did not last, as the Hawks tightened the gap to one point before UNH ended the match with a 5-1 run.

Smith led the way for UNH with 10 kills, then both Petke and Jablonski had eight kills apiece.

As for Sunday's bid, UNH wiped the floor with the defending America East Champions. The 'Cats won the first set 25-15, led by first-year right side hitter Erin Hedrick. Hedrick was not powerful hitting the ball, but she recorded kills by finding open spots on the court along with leading UNH with three blocks. Hedrick was also effective covering under the block, and UNH head coach Chris Feliciano commented post-game on Hedrick's progression.

"(Hedrick) is coming into her own. She's starting to catch up with the pace of the game. Erin is consistently battling with engagement. We want her to be engaged, and when she is, she's a very good volleyball player," Feliciano said.

As the game progressed, it became apparent that Sullivan was the best player on the floor. UNH's middle blocker had a game high 15 kills, multiple of which hitting the 10-foot line. Sullivan also had a hand on two

blocks.

The UNH block proved dominant throughout the match, with the Wildcats recording seven blocks to Stony Brook's three. UNH's block went passed the stat sheet, as the 'Cats were altering the course of most Stony Brook attacks. "When you block well, you make teams have to change their attacking approach and do things they are uncomfortable with. We did just that today," Feliciano added.

UNH ended up winning the second set 25-22, with Jablonski earning the set-winning kill.

The 'Cats began the third set on a positive note, with senior defensive specialist Logan Welti acing Stony Brook. Petke proceeded to record three kills early, giving UNH a 6-3 advantage. Stony Brook closed the gap as the set went on, but the Wildcats were able to close out the match with a kill from Smith.

On the awards front, Smith was awarded America East Player of the Week for the first time this year and the sixth time in her career. Senior libero Emily Tanski was awarded America East

Defensive specialist of the week for the fourth time this year and the 10th time in her career. First-year setter Wren Macaulay took home America East rookie of the Week for the second time this season.

UNH continues play as they travel north on I-89 for a match against Dartmouth on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 5 p.m.

