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UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. - Lower Dauphin joined an exclusive club when it became the school in PIAA boys volleyball history to win three or more consecutive titles.

Here's the list.

- * Westinghouse won the first four PIAA titles from 1936-39.
- * Peabody won three straight titles on two occasions - 1944-46 and 1950-52.
- * Haverford holds the PIAA record with six straight titles from 1966-71.
- * Landisville Hempfield won four titles from 2001-04.
- * Northeastern owns the Class 2A record with five titles from 2013-17.
- * North Allegheny won four titles from 2018-22, excluding the 2020 season cancelled by the pandemic.
- * Lower Dauphin became No. 7 with its 3-0 sweep of Cochranon in the first of two title matches held June 17 at Penn State University's Recreation Hall.

"It's absolutely amazing to win three straight titles," Machamer said. "It's also our school's first three-time champion in any sport. Our boys leave a legacy in that scenario. The seniors on this team won three division titles, three district titles, and three state titles. You can't do any better than that."

Lower Dauphin claimed its first title in 2021, added a second in 2022, and a third this year.

"Two years ago, we lost two matches. Last year, we lost one match," Machamer said. "This year, the boys decided that they were not going to lose a match. It speaks volumes to what these boys have worked at, how they get along, and how they work for each other."

Lower Dauphin claimed its third title, despite losing all but two starters to graduation from last year's team.

"These kids finished the year 23-0 and lost only three sets," Lower Dauphin coach David Machamer said. "To do it in the fashion they did it is absolutely amazing. Coach (Doug) Baker and I have coached teams over the past 27 years and we haven't seen a team as together as this one. We've had some close-knit teams, but these guys are absolutely phenomenal. They stick together. They don't panic in any situation. These boys are amazing to me."

Lower Dauphin and Cochranon traded points until the first set was tied at 15-15. The Falcons outscored the Cardinals, 10-6 the rest of the way to post a 25-21 victory. Cochranon's Chase Miller registered eight kills in the set, while Lower Dauphin middle hitters Arun Gopinath and Henry Smullen countering with six and four kills respectively.

"They were definitely effective in the middle," Cochranon coach Rob Cierniakoski said. "Their setter (Will Sierer) did a great job getting it to them in any situation. We just weren't able to get the stop when we needed it."

Cochranon jumped out to a 12-10 lead in the second set, which was quickly prompted by a 5-0 run from Lower Dauphin (with three of those points coming on Cochranon errors), marking the first time either team led by more than two points. The Falcons never trailed again. Smullen and middle hitter Toby Waters each had five kills.

"You can't beat experience," Cierniakoski said. "Lower Dauphin showed that today. Our current seniors were sophomores and got to the quarters, got to the semis last year, so being able to go through that definitely helps."

Cochranon got down 5-0 in the third set, but respond with an 11-4 run to take a two-point lead. Miller led the rally with two of his team-high 17 kills. Lower Dauphin responded with three straight points to regain the lead at 12-11. They never trailed again as the Falcons rolled to a 25-19 victory.

"When you're Cochranon, a small school, you're going to be the underdog no matter what even though we've had a really good volleyball program," Cierniakoski said. "We definitely embraced it, but we weren't scared of them and we went out and fought."

Lower Dauphin's two returning starters are: Sierer, a senior setter, and Waters, a senior middle hitter. Sierer recorded 40 assists, 7 digs, and 3 blocks. Waters had 15 kills with only one error and a .500 hitting average.

"Will is the best setter in the state. There is no doubt in my mind," Machamer said. "The kid is unbelievable. Juniata is getting him as an absolute steal. They are going to love him for the next four or five years. He does everything on the volleyball court and he takes control of everybody else."

Gopinath finished with 11 kills for the Falcons, while Smullen ended with 10 kills and four blocks.

Lower Dauphin qualified for the Class 2A tournament by winning the District 3 title. The Falcons earned their third consecutive trip to the finals with wins against Masterman, 3-0 in the first round; Blue Ridge, 3-0 in the quarterfinals; and Exeter, 3-1 in the semifinals.

Cochranton qualified for the state tournament by placing second in District 10. The Cardinals earned their first title match berth with wins against: North Catholic, 3-0 in the first round; West Shamokin, 3-1 in the quarterfinals; and Mercyhurst Prep, 3-1 in the semifinals.

Cochranton senior setter, Andrew Custead, recorded 32 assists. Senior outside hitter Landon Homa had 11 kills.

While they came up short of the state title, Cochranton left Happy Valley with a tremendous amount of pride, representing such a competitive volleyball district.

"District 10 has a history of success, especially in Crawford County," Cierniakoski said. "It's been a hotbed for decades. This year I felt we could have won it, Mercyhurst could have won it, Meadville could have won it, and Saegertown could have won it. Even in 3A McDowell could have made a big run. To have all those teams in one district is pretty impressive."