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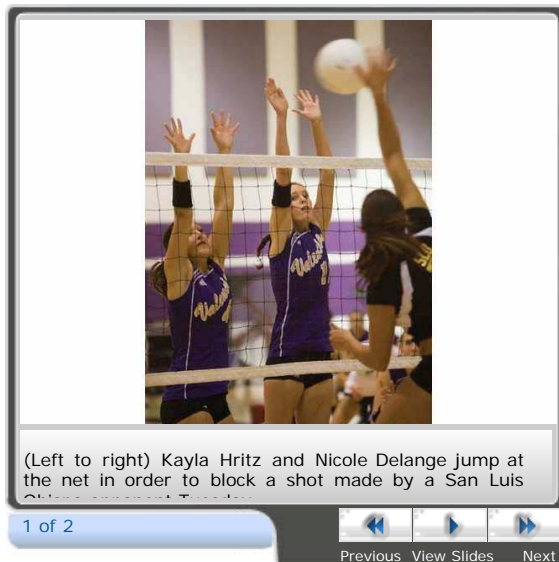
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## Valencia brings hammer down

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### Vikings volleyball moves on to round two of playoffs



(Left to right) Kayla Hritz and Nicole Delange jump at the net in order to block a shot made by a San Luis Obispo player.

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There's a new Hammerin' Hank in town.

Katie Hank blasted her way to 13 kills Tuesday, helping Valencia vanquish San Luis Obispo in three sets at home in the first round of the CIF-Southern Section Division I-A Girls Volleyball Playoffs.

The Vikings advanced by winning 25-13, 25-15, 27-25.

Hank hammered four kills in the first game and six in the second as the Vikings (20-9) won their fourth match in a row.

"We could've shut them down sooner, instead of letting them back into the match," Hank said. "We kind of let down a little, but we came out with the win."

Valencia will play against the winner between Baseline League champion Upland and Hesperia, the at-large team from the Mojave River League, at 7 p.m. on Thursday.

"We did a lot of good things today," said Valencia head coach Ray Sanchez. "Things like taking care of the ball and getting good passes."

After being out-hit and out-executed the first two games, the scrappy Tigers (11-6-1) did not go away quietly.

Beth Hoyt smashed a ball in Valencia's back row that set up game point at 24-23 for the Pac-7 No. 3 team.

Valencia's Shelby LeDuff countered with a vicious left-handed kill - one of nine - to prevent the Tigers from winning.

Hoyt gave the Tigers another game point, 25-24, with her seventh kill.

But San Luis Obispo's next serve landed long.

LeDuff landed another booming kill, which set up match point for Valencia.

A Tiger front-row player hit the net, and the match was over.

"We had a little bit of a breakdown down the stretch," Sanchez said. "But that was more of a mental lapse."

The Vikings did not trail the entire way until midway through the third game.

The Tigers took a 15-14 lead on a block by Alex Butier on LeDuff. Butier added a kill soon

afterward, then Mattie Bliss's kill gave her team its biggest lead at 18-15.

Valencia reclaimed the lead at 20-19 on a kill by Kayla Hritz. That was right before five ties and six lead changes.

Valencia stretched a 4-3 lead in the first game to as much as 19-9. San Luis Obispo did not help its cause, hitting several balls out of bounds.

LeDuff reached out with her right hand, tipping a ball that found the floor for a 21-13 advantage. With LeDuff serving, Hank clobbered a kill. LeDuff served an ace to set up game point, then she added a kill to end it.

The Tigers came out more aggressively in the second game, especially on defense. More digs were made, blocks were put up and the Vikings found hits tougher to execute.

San Luis Obispo got as close as 13-7, with Valencia hits sailing long.

At times, Bliss was a one-girl team, the only serious weapon for the Tigers.

Nicole DeLange and Hritz both had four kills. Christina Worth, Hank and DeLange each had two blocks.

San Luis Obispo setter Kristin Urias finished with six kills. Hoyt had seven.

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