

***By Jan Schultz***

***The Imperial Republican***

Third place was the best any of the area high school volleyball teams could muster at last week's Nebraska state tournament.

That includes North Platte St. Pat's, top-seeded in the Class C2 tournament who went to Grand Island with a 29-1 record but finished fourth.

After winning their opener over Hershey, a fellow SPVA Conference team, St. Pat's was upset in the semi-finals by No. 2 seed Lutheran High Northeast (LHNE) from Norfolk. St. Pat's ended up with the fourth place plaque, losing the consolation game Saturday to Hastings St. Cecilia.

Sutherland, another SPVA Conference school seeded No. 2 in Class D1, was the highest placing area team with a third place finish. After a first round win over Alma, Sutherland fell to the eventual state champions, No. 6 Exeter-Milligan. The Lady Sailors then took third in the consolation game.

Ogallala, which advanced to state from the same sub-district in which Chase County competed, came home with a fourth place finish in Class C1. The No. 6 Lady Indians defeated Chadron in the opener, fell to Columbus Scotus in the semis and lost in the consolation game to Lincoln Christian.

No. 3 seed Sidney in Class B also finished fourth. They opened with a win over Norris, then lost to Gretna and Waverly for fourth.

Brady, another area team, lost its opener to Mead. Brady was the No. 8 seed in Class D2.

The state champions this year, from Class A to D2, included Papillion LaVista South, Grand Island Northwest, Kearney Catholic, Hartington Cedar Catholic, Exeter-Milligan and Humphrey.

Kearney Catholic was the only undefeated team in the state this year, finishing as the Class C1 champion with a 36-0 record.