

FSU scares No. 1 UCLA

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Special to The Democrat

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Usually, a volleyball match that goes to three games takes about an hour to complete.

Due to some "outside" forces, it took UCLA four hours to defeat Florida State. Before it was over, FSU had taken a game off the No.1-ranked Bruins. It was the final match of round-robin play at the 10th Annual AIAW National Volleyball Tournament here.

Florida State was the obvious underdog. Thus far in the tournament, it had won a game against Southwest Missouri State, a game against the University of Arizona and a game against eighth-seed Pepperdine. However, FSU had lost the matches to all three of those teams and had lost a fourth in two games to Texas A&M.

Top-ranked UCLA had defeated the same four schools. It had won all its matches except the one against Pepperdine in two straight games.

The FSU-UCLA match began on schedule at 3 p.m. The first game progressed much the way most folks expected it to. It was 3:20 when FSU lost, 15-2.

By 3:30, the second game was well underway. Florida State came alive and jumped out to a 5-0 lead. Its defense was impregnable and its offense began to take

advantage of UCLA's holes. Seats in the west end of the gym began to fill. UCLA was losing.

At 4 p.m., FSU was ahead 13-11. Florida State had the serve. Suddenly every official in the gym was blowing his or her whistle. Play ceased and the crowd grew quiet.

A tournament official moved to the center of the gym and made the following announcement: "We have a tornado warning. Please exit slowly and calmly to the doors. Someone will escort you to a better shelter."

And so, for the next two hours, players, coaches and fans sat crowded in a hallway of a campus classroom building. The sky outside turned jet black, trees swayed furiously, lightening crackled and the downpour came, but there was no tornado.

At 6:30, the players resumed their positions on the court and Florida State served. By 6:45, FSU had beaten top-seeded UCLA, 15-12. Four hours and 15 minutes after the match began, UCLA finally took the match by winning the last game, 15-7.

"If we had won that match, it would have been the upset of the century," FSU Coach Cecil Reynaud said. "No one in our region has ever beaten two California teams before us. We didn't win the matches, but at least people know who Florida State is."