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FSU serves UCF its first loss of the season

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## Jale Hervey powers UCF to win in volleyball opener

Tim Briggs Aug 26, 2016



Christopher Bobo

The UCF Volleyball team swept Stony Brook in three sets (25-17, 25-19, 25-19) at the Venue on Friday.

Led by the aerial excellence of Jale Hervey, UCF Volleyball's 2016 campaign began in winning fashion with a straight-sets (25-17, 25-19, 25-19) victory over Stony Brook at the Venue on Friday.

"A coach always worries about the first match of the year because there's always going to be unforced errors out there, but I think we did a really nice job with the unforced errors," head coach Todd Dagenais said. "To come out and hit .370 as a team is pretty high octane offense for the first match."

Hervey, a unanimous preseason All-Conference selection, was excellent all afternoon for the Knights as she tallied 15 kills on 28 attempts (.464) with three aces, five digs and a block. Fellow All-Conference member Kia Bright also shined with eight kills of her own to go along with nine digs.

UCF stormed out of the gate strongly with a strategy to exploit Hervey's matchups with her opposing outside hitters. With the victory and standout performance, the senior Huntsville, Ala. native is proving that she has the ability to be the best player on the court at any time.

"I just want to thank God because nothing would happen without him," Hervey said. "Preparation off the court is a big deal for us. Keeping the small details and what we have to do off the court translates into the game and I think that's one of our strengths."

UCF has an RPI ranking of 123 and are projected to finish fourth in the American Conference standings, according to the Preseason American Conference Coaches' Poll. However, UCF head volleyball coach Todd Dagenais has never been shy about expectations for his squad.

Dagenais emphasized that the team's identity is a work in progress, but ideally he wants his outside hitters to have a good statistical balance, with contributions coming by way of a six-pronged attack, rather than relying almost solely on Hervey's explosive offense.

Hervey collected 15 of the team's 45 kills in the match.

Defensively, libero Jordan Pingel led the line with 12 digs and coach Dagenais notes that that kind of defensive consistency will be more sustainable, and maybe even more valuable too.

"You never really know what you have in that first match until you go on the floor," Dagenais said. "Jale had a really good matchup and she just kept terminating, but this is something that's hard to sustain all year."

A busy start to the season continues later on Friday with a 7:30 p.m. match against Kent State followed by matches with Stetson and Florida State tomorrow as part of the Holiday Inn Express/UCF Invitational.