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Volleyball Falls In Horizon League Championship Final

Flames' historic tournament run ends after loss to UW-Milwaukee.

Nov. 19, 2006

[Box Score](#)

Dayton, Ohio- The UIC volleyball team's historic run through the 2006 Horizon League Tournament fell just short as the Flames were defeated by UW-Milwaukee, 30-24, 30-23, 30-22, in the league championship final at Wright State's C.J. McLin Gymnasium on Sunday afternoon.

[Ambria Springer](#) led the UIC attack with 14 kills in her final collegiate match. Fellow senior [Katie Kozak](#) posted 29 assists, while [Katarina Nedeljkovic](#) turned in a team-high 10 digs.

UIC (17-17), making its first-ever appearance in the Horizon League title tilt, started out hot in the first game, roaring out to a 6-3 advantage. The Panthers (24-5) answered by rattling off seven unanswered points to take the lead.

The Flames would rally to regain the lead the lead twice in the middle of the game, but UW-Milwaukee took control late to claim the opening contest.

The second battle was no different, as the two squads battled tooth-and-nail for most of the game until the Panthers built up a late eight-point lead that eventually held up.

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Senior Katie Kozak had 29 assists in the Horizon League Tournament finale.

UIC put up a valiant effort in the third frame, but UW-Milwaukee's early lead in the final game was never relinquished.

"We had a strong showing all tournament," said UIC head coach [Nancy Mueller](#). "Unfortunately the results aren't what we wanted. We had a great tournament, made a great run, and we're very, very proud of what we were able to accomplish."

Mueller also talked about the season as a whole.

"We went through some highs and lows and played well in the tournament when we needed to," said Mueller. "We had some good senior leadership and that carried us through the tournament.



"A second place finish, one of the highest finishes we've ever had in the league. I'm very, very proud of what we were able to accomplish."

Both Kozak and Springer were named to the Horizon League All-Tournament Team following Sunday's final.

"We had a very fortunate weekend," said Kozak following her final collegiate contest. "We practiced hard this entire year to focus on this weekend. Everyone came out strong and we all had the same focus in mind and that was to do well and go far in this tournament."

"Everyone played hard," said Springer. "The underclassmen just have to remember this feeling, this taste and not let it happen again next year."

The two seniors also talked about the growth of the program, which has gone from a seventh-place conference finisher in the year prior to Mueller's arrival to an unprecedented runner-up showing in the Horizon League this season.

"The program has grown so much," said Springer. "I've been here four years and it's a great feeling to be a part of it."

Kozak, who spent five years with the program after redshirting as a freshman, has been through it all during her tenure and knows that this year's success is only the beginning of something special.

"I've seen the ups and downs of the program, and I think this season is just a glimpse of what's to come for the UIC program," said Kozak.

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