

Women's volleyball firsts better Beckett

UYVC women's firsts enjoyed only their second victory of the season against a resilient Leeds Beckett team



By [Matt Kirkum](#), Sports Editor (2014/15)
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University of York women's firsts **3 - 2** Leeds Beckett Carnegie women's firsts

Northern 2B



Image: James Hostford

In what was a topsy-turvy game, the University of York women's first team battled to a 3-2 victory during a scintillating encounter with Leeds Beckett University Carnegie women's firsts. Having recovered from being a set down, York responded by taking a 2-1 lead. However Beckett fought back to take the match into a final set in which York nabbed the victory in dramatic style.

Beckett were the first on the scoreboard with York failing to return. However, ill-discipline on Beckett's part saw the home team assert their authority early on. Certainly, Silvia Albion was in fine form: first producing a points winning spike before following up with an ace which landed deep in the oppositions territory before they had time to react. With both teams matching each other, York called for a time-out with the scores tied at 16-16. However, Beckett came out much the rejuvenated side and snatched the first set 26-24.

The second set saw a tactical change for York with captain Rita Manso and Julia Damsel replacing Eleanor Bett and Izabele Cyncite. It proved to be a crucial flashpoint in the match with Manso setting an example

from the offset with a clever tip over the net. Albino and Britta Keuhne soon became the focal point of York's attack with their spikes ensuring the scoreboard continuously ticked over. York took what turned out to be the most one sided set of the five, finishing 25-17 with the momentum now clearly in their favour.

This was demonstrated through their taking of the first point in the third set before Albino scored two consecutive aces to increase York's lead. However, Beckett soon rediscovered their first set form and led 22-17 when York's Manso called for a timeout. With both teams trading points, it was all for the taking but York reigned in their opponents to seal a 28-26 victory in the set.

The Black and Gold were firmly in the ascendancy come the beginning of the fourth as they sought to wind up the game in this set. It began according to plan for York as they raced into an early lead with Keuhne exhibiting her defensive qualities with numerous blocks at the net. Meanwhile, Damsel's acute awareness was impressive as she frequently set the ball for her teammates to attack in a range of areas of the court. However, Beckett were not to be dismissed so easily and put up a defiant resistance which soon saw them take the lead. York were unable to respond and disappointingly lost the set 25-21, forcing the match into a final deciding set.

The match was delicately poised at this stage, with both teams desperate to claim the victory. York responded well to the disappointment of the previous set as they were the first chalk points on the scoreboard. Their blocking had markedly improved while Maria Agapiou roused spirits as each point was celebrated in jubilant fashion. Despite this, York resisted the temptation to get ahead of themselves. This was down to the nature of the previous sets which only emphasised how finely balanced the game had been throughout. However, for all York's efforts, they trailed Beckett 13-8 at the first timeout call. What happened next was quite remarkable as they drew the scores level at 13-13 in what was a dominant final showing. In the end, a serve by Keuhne ensured all three points were awarded to York after what had been a thrilling set that finished 16-14.

Following such an impressive victory, York captain Rita Manso spoke to *Nouse* saying, "The game was really hard as the opposition were very pushy psychologically. They challenged every point but we fought through it and stayed as a team especially in the last set when we losing. Its just great to win."

York: Manso (C), Sechel, Agapiou, Dassell, Cyncite, Albino, Bett, Keuhne

Player of the Match: Silvia Albino



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