

NUVOC stepped back into the top division in Scotland this Saturday against sides who put them to the sword last season.

NUVOC Men faced off against their Scottish Cup Finals conquerors Glasgow Mets in the first match of the day at Forrester's High School.

A tight affair was going to take place and the set scores proves how close it was.

In an error strewn match, the play was sometimes exceptional followed by some low level of control which kept the match tight throughout the first set. A couple of big plays by Glissov and Patterson gave NUVOC a 16-10 lead at the TTO but Mets found a way to fightback into the match at 22-19 before a service error allowed NUVOC to move ahead again. At 23-20 Paterson came up with a strong kill to give NUVOC set point but again the resiliency of Mets and errors from NUVOC brought the match all square at 24-24. Glissov came up with a big kill to give set point followed by a great pick up by Patterson which caused confusion in Mets defence with an error costing them the first set 26-24.

Glasgow Mets started the 2nd set strongly with an 8-2 lead at the first TTO with some fantastic blocking. NUVOC started to bite into the lead a little but 2 errors before the next TTO meant they were 16-12 down. Some good offence by Patterson and Szynda brought the team within 2 points only to hand a 3 point lead back from a service error. Good tactical serving from Patterson allowed NUVOC to come back and tie the set a 21-21 and then push forward with some good defence by Johnstone allowing Glissov to score a big point in transition to take the lead 24-22. Mets rallied back to take the set to 24-24 before they made 2 hitting mistakes to lose the set 26-24 and put NUVOC 2-0 up.

The 3rd set started off in a ferocious way with both teams scoring freely in offence but it was Mets who took a lead 8-7 at the TTO. Substitute server Kuzminski came on and had a run of 5 serves to turn the set round in NUVOC's favour. NUVOC took a lead of 16-14 at the TTO due to a communication error in the Mets ranks. Good blocking from NUVOC allowed them to stretch their lead to 23-21 before more errors on NUVOC's side brought Mets back into it but a tactical blocking switch at match point allowed Szynda and Bah to put down the Mets outside spiker and win the match 3-0.



Next up, NUVOC Women, dressed in their new kits, took to the court to take on Aberdonia in a match which many believe would decide the outcome of the relegation fight. The commitment the NUVOC team have shown since being promoted in April has been outstanding. From the middle of March, the team have been training on the beach to ensure physical conditioning was not lost over the summer, but also started their indoor training programme in July because they knew the step up from last year was massive.

The performance in the first set against Aberdonia proved this was all worthwhile. Fantastic block/defence from the team frustrated their opponents into making many errors but was also backed up with the pressure the NUVOC side put their opponents under. Set 1 finished 25-15 to NUVOC.



Set 2 was a polar opposite. Errors crept into the NUVOC side with a combination of 4 service errors in a row allowing Aberdonia to take a comfortable lead in the set at 22-17. Jessica went back to the service line and stabilised the block/defence part of the game with some excellent blocking in the front row from Aga, Sylwia and Agata allowing NUVOC to creep back into it. A big swing at 22-23 brought NUVOC back into it, followed by 2 errors by Aberdonia made the comeback complete and take the set 25-23.

The 3rd set started the same as the 2nd set, errors dictated the scores in the game but NUVOC managed to suppress theirs and took a lead of 8-5 to the first TTO. NUVOC pushed hard in the next phase of the set to increase their lead 16-6 at the 2nd TTO but a string of errors and good defence by Aberdonia brought them back into the match at 19-16 before 2 big kills allowed NUVOC to increase their lead but not before Aberdonia managed to get the score to 21-24 which followed a good block from Aberdonia captain Smy. NUVOC regrouped at the TO knowing they needed one side out to win the game and up stepped player of the match Aga with a deft tip to ensure the Aberdonia libero couldn't get to it giving NUVOC their first victory in the Premier Division with a great 3-0 score line.

A fantastic start to the season for NUVOC but the teams will not be resting on their laurels and will have a tough time in 2 weeks against QTS Troon and South Ayrshire in Prestwick. Travelling support is more than welcome.