

South came from behind once more to keep their early season title defence firmly on track at Prestwick Academy last weekend. The hosts won in four gruelling sets against Edinburgh outfit NUVOC.

The first set could not be closer and despite seven clean winners from Stuart Edgar, South lost out in the opener. It was nip-and-tuck all the way through. Edgar managed to get a vital block and a quick adjustment to finish off the point with a deadly spike. That made the score-line 5-5, and Euan Duncan powerful hit down the line and big block at the net helped South stay level at 7-7.



With nothing between the sides, it was no surprise to see the score remain even at 16-16. A Scott Wilson hit down-the-line and more powerful strikes from Duncan and Edgar inched South 23-19 ahead.

There was a vicious sting in the tail as NUVOC mounted a late siege to nick the set. They quickly grabbed four points in a row to level at 23-23. The capital side then managed to hold their nerve and win a few monumental physical rallies to edge the first set 26-24.

South, who dropped a point in their previous fixture against Glasgow stepped up their play in the second set. Setter Micallef-Eynaud started to open up his middle attack with both Ross McKelvie and Shaun Sutherland scoring regularly during the set. NUVOC struggled to cope with this extra dimension to the South attack and were unable to keep the set close as South took the 2<sup>nd</sup> 25-14.

At 1-1 the match was finely poised with both sides looking to take the third set to set up the chance of a 3-1 victory. This set proved to be tighter than the second. NUVOC posed South problems with 6ft 9 inch off setter Paul Glissov doing damage with excellent power attacks. South though were able to weather the storm with consistent passing from libero Liam Fleming allowing Micallef-Eynaud to run a varied offense that kept NUVOC guessing. This gave the South attack a clear advantage with both Duncan and Wilson capitalising and leading South to the 3<sup>rd</sup> set 25-19.



South, now with a 2-1 lead, were clearly keen to use their momentum and close out the match 3-1 and claim the maximum 3 points from the fixture. NUVOC though were keen to level the match and worked hard at the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> to stay close to South. Through the middle NUVOC were particularly effective and caused South a number of problems.

The set remained tight until the mid point when South took control through some tough serving from Scott Wilson. NUVOC struggled to cope with his demon float serve and at times were only able to get the ball back across the net. This allowed South to set up their own attacks with veterans Kevin Lawrie and Stuart Edgar being particularly effective at the net. South controlled the remainder of the set taking it by 25-16 and winning the match 3 sets to 1.

After the match the South coach Iain Parker was delighted with his sides performance saying “the boys showed real guts and determination to come back after losing the first. We are playing some good volleyball just now and I think we will only get better as the season progresses.”