IRON RIVER—The West Iron volleyball team's battle for consistency continued in its final regular season match here Oct. 23 as the Wykons battled Houghton.

The Gremlins swept the Wykons 3-0. In the first set, the Wykons just weren't there mentally and got crushed 25-8. __PUBLIC__

After that, West Iron raised its game and gave Houghton a much tougher battle, finally losing 25-21 and 25-16.

So which ones were the true Wykons?

Rough start: The less said about that first set, the better. It lasted barely one rotation, and the Wykons could only manage two point when serving. No such problem for the Gremlins, who cruised.

Natalie Datto had a seven-point spell that left West Iron staring up at a 16-4 mountain. WIC hits went wide or long or buried themselves in the net. Twice they set up the third hit—but nobody actually hit it.

West Iron played much better in the second set. The Wykons earned service points and tied the match six different times. A Houghton attack into the net gave West Iron a brief 15-14 lead, but the Gremlins' Emma Huhta came back for three and an 18-15 lead.

Rough end: Emilie Christensen's spike earned West Iron the side-out, down 18-16, and Alexis Golfis served two winners, including a ace, to tie it at 18-all. But Houghton's next three servers each earned a point, while West Iron had three straight service errors.

A disappointing way to end a set they had—until then—played well. "We killed ourselves with the errors on the serves," Coach Brenda Grubbs said.

"What that tells us is, we can hang with them. We can do it. But we have to finish it off."

Two times six: Houghton took command of the third set with six-point hauls from Blaire Zenner and Annika Wheeler. The Wykons had three-point spells by both Abbie Grubbs (two aces) and Christensen, but WIC couldn't chase down the Gremlins.

No stats were available, but Christensen, Grubbs and Cassilyn Pellizzer were WIC's strongest players at the net, with Amy Richardson doing the setting.

"Emmy's hits were very powerful tonight," said the coach. "She was very good."

Grubbs said the Wykons had defeated L'Anse and Baraga the week before and lost three matches at Menominee's Invitational the previous weekend.