

Lady Cats get season started strong with win over Paola



Louisburg senior Liz Jacobs goes up for a kill in between two Paola blockers Tuesday during the Lady Cats' season opener at Paola High School.

PAOLA – The Louisburg volleyball team is ranked toward the top in the state again in Class 4A this season, and on Tuesday, Paola found out exactly why.

The Lady Cats got off to a hot start and never let up in a 3-0 dual win over the Panthers in their season opener at Paola High School. It was exactly the start Louisburg was looking for as it begins its quest to get back to the state title game for the third straight season.

“For the first time out, I think they did well,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We knew coming in that Paola is always tough, and it is a good rivalry, and the girls were ready for that. We obviously have some ideas of some things that we can work on, and how we can keep building from here.”

Louisburg opened with a 25-14 victory in the first set after jumping out to a big lead and then followed it up with a 25-13

win in the second. Paola made things interesting in the third set, and the match was tied at 23-all late, before Louisburg scored the final two points to complete the sweep.

“They had high energy in those first two sets and some in the third,” Compliment said of her team. “That resilience in that third set was good to see, instead of just throwing in their hat and saying we will win the next one. To finish the match out like that was important.”



Senior libero Reilly Ratliff-Becher digs up a ball Tuesday in Paola.

The Lady Cats had balance all over the floor as several girls chipped in and made impacts.

At the net, seniors Liz Jacobs and Erin Lemke each finished with a team-high six kills, while senior Riley Kallevig and junior Carleigh Pritchard each added five in the win.

Sophomore setters Rinny McMullen and Davis Guetterman ran the offense well as they recorded 11 and nine assists, respectively. Sophomore Chase Kallevig had a big game from behind the service line as she tallied a team-high four aces and senior Haley Cain added three.

Defensively, the Lady Cats were strong as well. Senior libero Reilly Ratliff-Becher had a team-best nine digs. Chase and Riley Kallevig were right behind her as they had eight each.

Cain and Pritchard also had strong games in the middle for Louisburg as they each had three blocks to lead the team.

"I think Reilly did a really good job getting to balls, and on the front row, I thought Haley had some big plays at the net and so did Carleigh," Compliment said. "They both had some good blocks and were key up there. I thought Rinny did a good job with her serves and moving things around offensively. Davis did a great job as well from the setter spot.

"To be honest, we are just a well-balanced team and I thought each of the girls did something well out there. We are just

more spread out offensively and it could make us more of a threat down the road.”



Sophomore setter Davis Guetterman sets up teammate Carleigh Pritchard for a kill Tuesday in Paola.

As well as they played at times on Tuesday, the Lady Cats know it will get tougher as the season goes along. That begins today when they travel to De Soto High School for a triangular with Olathe West. Those matches begin at 5 p.m.

“We hit aggressive and we blocked aggressively,” Compliment said of her team’s performance on Tuesday. “The thing I really like about this group is that they just have so much fun, as has been the case with the team’s past. They just enjoy playing

together.”