

Wildcats sweep Wamego, Olathe North to end regular season



Louisburg sophomore Delaney Nelsen goes up for the kill attempt Thursday during the Wildcats' home match against Olathe North.

In its final contest before the postseason, the Louisburg volleyball team had a chance to exact a little revenge.

The Wildcats happily took advantage of the opportunity on their home floor.

On Thursday, Louisburg rallied to defeat Olathe North, 19-25, 25-16 and 25-22 and avenged a loss from earlier this season. Prior to that, the Wildcats defeated Wamego 25-14 and 25-10 to end the regular season with a pair of victories.

"Any time we are able to get a 'revenge rematch,' we love having the opportunity to show our growth and push to get the win the second time around," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "I think it means a little bit more, knowing that we have something to prove. Olathe North is a solid team who came to battle that night, and I am proud of our team for pushing through the three sets after dropping the first. We rallied

together as a team for the comeback, and that's always fun to watch."

After splitting the first two sets, Olathe North had a 22-19 lead in the deciding third set and had the momentum on its side. Louisburg, however, was quickly able to take it back.

The Wildcats ended the match on a 6-0 run that included two kills from Hailey Sword and a block from Delaney Nelsen. Megan Quinn served the final six points, including an ace.

Sword had a big night all-around for Louisburg as she notched a team-high 10 kills in the match and also had two aces and 10 digs.

Madie Williams also made her presence known all over the floor for the Wildcats. She tallied a team-high 14 digs and three aces to go along with seven kills.



Louisburg senior Izzy Moreland goes up for a block Thursday against Olathe North.

Freshman Adelyn Moore and Quinn set up their hitters well as they had a combined 26 assists, including 17 from Moore.

“Finishing our regular season with two wins last week was a great way to cap off the season and head into the postseason with confidence,” Willer said. “Playing on a day with no school is always a challenge, but we came in ready to go and the girls were fired up. We are working hard this week to ensure that we are playing our best volleyball come Saturday, keeping that energy alive.”

Against Wamego, Louisburg got out to a fast start in an easy 2-0 win to begin the triangular. Sword led the way with five kills and Williams finished with four.

Quinn and Moore had 10 and seven assists, respectively, while

Williams had a team-high eight digs. Quinn and Nelsen each had two aces as the Wildcats had seven in the match.

Louisburg (22-14) now prepares for the Class 4A sub-state tournament. The Wildcats are the No. 7 seed and will square off with No. 10 Paola at 3 p.m. Saturday at Independence High School.

The championship match is scheduled for 4 p.m. as the Wildcats try to head back to the state tournament after their fourth place finish a season ago.

“We are very excited for the postseason,” Willer said. “We have a ton of fun traditions leading up to sub-state, but the main focus of the week is preparing ourselves to play our best volleyball yet this weekend. All of the time and energy we’ve put in throughout the season has led us to this one week where what really matters are the people next to you – giving it your all for your teammates is what this is all about. We are looking forward to the opportunity to earn ourselves a spot back at the state tournament in Hutchinson.”

**Wildcat volleyball finishes
runner-up at Atchison
Invitational**



The Louisburg volleyball team finished with a 4-1 record Saturday at the Atchison Invitational and brought home a second place plaque.

ATCHISON – In its final regular season tournament of the year, the Louisburg volleyball team put together a strong showing as it inches closer to the postseason.

The Wildcats traveled to the Atchison Invitational and left with a runner-up plaque Saturday as they finished the tournament with a 4-1 record.

“This was a fun new tournament for us to join with a lot of teams we don’t see very often,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “Overall, I think we played well and showed up ready to show everyone what Louisburg volleyball is all about. It was a long day, and we faced our fair share of moments where we had to push through a tough moment, but we rallied together and played hard each match. It’s always nice to come home with some hardware.”

Louisburg went 3-0 in pool play and it started with a 25-17 and 25-10 win over Junction City. The Wildcats followed that up with a 25-5 and 25-17 victory over Atchison and a 25-18 and 25-10 win over Atchison County Community.

Those wins pushed the Wildcats into the semifinals where they

squared off with Paola. The Panthers pushed Louisburg to three sets, but the Wildcats came through with a 25-22, 23-25 and 25-16 win and they advanced to the championship against Perry-Lecompton.

The Wildcats battled a talented Perry-Lecompton squad, but came up short in a 25-23, 23-25 and 25-18 loss.

“Perry-Lecompton is a strong 3A team who has a couple of stud players,” Willer said. “They came out with a lot of energy, they played some relentless defense, and they have some strong offensive weapons that can put the ball away. The game was fun to play because they were a great match for us – it was very even all throughout. Unfortunately, we did not come out on top in the end, but we fought hard and left it all out there on the floor. I’m proud of how hard they played.”

Throughout the tournament, the Wildcats featured a balanced attack on offense and it started with seniors Madie Williams and Hailey Sword. Williams finished with 36 kills over the five matches and Sword added 33.

Sophomore Caileigh Kilgore tallied 22 kills, while sophomore Delaney Nelsen and senior Izzy Moreland had 16 and 13, respectively.

Senior Megan Quinn and freshman Adelyn Moore set up the hitters well. Quinn had a team-high 62 assists and Moore added 45.

Nelsen was strong from behind the service line as she had 14 aces in the tournament, while Williams and Quinn each added eight.

Defensively, Moreland, Kilgore and Nelsen each had five blocks to lead Louisburg. Sword had a team-high 46 digs, Williams had 32 and Nelsen finished with 29.

“We played well together as a team throughout the day and

leaned on different players during different games,” Willer said. “Our setters did a good job of running the offense and implementing what we’ve been working on in practice. We were able to serve tough and get a lot of the other teams out of system throughout the day, all of which helped get us to the championship and playing better each game.”

The Wildcats will hit the court one final time in the regular season this Thursday when they host Olathe North and Wamego in a triangular. Matches begin at 5 p.m.

Week 6 Athlete of the Week: Madie Williams



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week six of the fall sports season, sponsored by Landmark National Bank.

MADIE WILLIAMS, SENIOR, VOLLEYBALL

Louisburg senior Madie Williams helped lead the Wildcat volleyball team to a big week that included a second place finish at the Atchison Invitational on Saturday. Louisburg had a successful stretch that included a revenge win over Tonganoxie and then five straight wins at Atchison.

Williams was a big part of that success and she had a team-high 48 kills during those six matches as she played all six rotations. Williams was also second on the team with 50 digs and was strong from behind the service line with eight aces. On the season, Williams leads the team with 35 aces is second on the team in kills (237) and digs (234).

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the fall season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners:

Week 1: Declan Battle

Week 2: Megan Quinn

Week 3: Maddy Rhamy

Week 4: Emmett White

Week 5: Ashton Moore



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Wildcats get revenge win over Tonganoxie on Senior Night



Louisburg celebrates a big point from Hailey Sword during the Wildcats' 3-1 victory Tuesday over Tonganoxie on Senior Night.

On a night where Louisburg volleyball had a chance to honor its six seniors, the Wildcats also got the opportunity to exact a little revenge.

Coming off a tough tournament performance Saturday, Louisburg had a chance to avenge one of its losses from that day on Tuesday when it hosted Tonganoxie.

The Wildcats played like a different team as they downed the Chieftains, 3-1, and improved their record to 16-13 on the season.

“This was a big win for us,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “Our girls came in very determined to beat them. We lost to them over the weekend, but didn’t play our best. We knew that we had it in us to win, and everyone wanted to win for the seniors on senior night as well.”

Louisburg honored seniors Ashlyn Berck, Katie Elpers, Izzy Moreland, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword and Madie Williams and their parents prior to the match. All of those seniors made an impact in some way in the 25-20, 25-22, 12-25 and 26-24 victory.



(From left): Louisburg seniors Madie Williams, Izzy Moreland, Hailey Sword, Ashlyn Berck, Megan Quinn and Katie Elpers were all honored Tuesday on Senior Night.

“These seniors have dedicated so much time and energy to our program,” Willer said. “They have each played different roles throughout the years and have been willing to take on whatever role best helps the team to be successful. Many of them have worked really hard to form relationships with our underclassmen and serve as mentors and leaders for the whole team.

“I think the impact they have had on this program was evidenced by the tears shed by all of our underclassmen on senior night who will be so sad to see them go. As none of them are planning to go on and play volleyball at the next level, it means a lot that they have each given so much to a sport that they love to play with each other.”

It was a balanced effort for Louisburg as it jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the match thanks to different players stepping up at the net and on defense.



Louisburg senior Madie Williams goes up for a kill Tuesday against Tonganoxie.

Williams led the Louisburg attack with 12 kills on the night from her all-around spot, while Sword and sophomore Delaney Nelsen each had eight. Morland and Elpers added seven and six kills, respectively, and sophomore Caileigh Kilgore added five.

Quinn and freshman Adelyn Moore ran the offense well. Quinn led the way with 24 assists on the night and Moore finished with 15.

"I think we were able to really implement the balanced attack idea that we've been talking about all season," Willer said. "Our setters did a great job of finding each hitter and putting them in a position to be successful. Everyone contributed, which helps make it easier to find a single

blocker and holes in the defense on the other side.”

Defensively, several Wildcats made big plays throughout the night.



Senior libero Ashlyn Berck dives on the floor to dig up a ball Tuesday at home.

Along with leading the team in kills, Williams also had a team-best 18 digs and Sword was right behind her with 17. Quinn and Nelsen each had 14 and Moore contributed nine.

Berck also had a big night from behind the service line as she tallied a team-high five aces.

“Our defense stepped up throughout the night, and we made the conscious decision to be nothing but relentless in our pursuit,” Willer said. “After the third set, our captains talked to the team about how defense was going to win this game and that we just really needed to leave it all out on the floor. Their leadership in those efforts were definitely

noticed, and their challenge to the team had everyone rising to the occasion.”

The Wildcats got out to a pair of relatively easy wins in the first two sets, but the Chieftains controlled the third to keep the match alive.

Louisburg got right back on track as the Wildcats jumped out to a 7-3 lead in the fourth. However, the Chieftains made a run of their own to grab a 16-13 advantage.



Senior Izzy Moreland goes up for a kill Tuesday against Tonganoxie.

Moreland responded with back-to-back kills and then a Tonganoxie net violation tied the match. The Chieftains went back up 18-16, but again the Wildcats rallied with a kill from Sword and Williams.

Berck then added an ace to put Louisburg up 19-18. The lead would change hands a couple different times, but the Wildcats took a 24-22 advantage on a pair of Nelsen kills.

Tonganoxie tied the match again at 24-all, but Moreland notched a kill on a set from Quinn and then the Chieftains were called for under the net to give the Wildcats the win.

“Overall, I think we played well and toughed it out on defense to pull out the win,” Willer said. “We showed a lot of heart, and I am proud of the way that we were able to bounce back from mistakes or big plays that they made to answer with big plays of our own.”

Louisburg is back in action this Saturday when the Wildcats travel to the Atchison Invitational.

Wildcats go 1-4 at Ottawa

Louisburg competed at the Ottawa Invitational last Saturday and got out to a great start, which included a revenge win over Ottawa to start the day.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, it was the only victory they could garner on the day as they fell to Basehor-Linwood, Maize South, Bishop Miege and Tonganoxie.

The Wildcats fought hard for much of the day, including taking a set from the defending state champion – Bishop Miege.

“The Ottawa tournament is always filled with tough competition, and this year was no different,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “We started the morning off by beating Ottawa after losing to them a couple of weeks ago, so it’s always nice to get that ‘revenge’ win. The biggest positives on the day were that we competed hard with each team and battled through some tough sets.

“We took a set from Bishop Miege, and in all of our matches we

fought hard to stay in the game, we just didn't quite have the power to pull off the wins in the end. We are looking forward to cleaning up some aspects of the game in practice this week and putting some more tallies in the win column."

Louisburg sweeps Paola, falls to Spring Hill in league duals



Louisburg senior Hailey Sword rises up for a kill last Tuesday during the Wildcats' home match against Paola.

The Louisburg volleyball team ventured back into Frontier League action last week and finished with a split of Paola and Spring Hill.

The one victory was a big one as the Wildcats swept rival Paola, 25-17, 25-14 and 25-18, last Tuesday at home to get their 14th win on the season.

It was also the Wildcats' Pink-Out Night as they raised money to support a local family battling cancer. Louisburg coach Leanna Willer couldn't have asked for a better outcome for her team.

"Beating Paola is always a good feeling with the natural rivalry between our two schools," Willer said. "I thought the girls came out with some fire and energy that carried us through the night. It was awesome to see how confident we played as girls were going up to swing with no fear and really terminating quite well throughout the match."

The Wildcats were down two starters due to injury, but several players picked up the slack, including Hailey Sword. The Louisburg senior registered a team-high 13 kills was second on the team with 13 digs. She also added a pair of aces.

"Hailey had a great night," Willer said. "Her court awareness keeps improving, and she's a very smart hitter that can find the open spot on the other side. She's also very skilled in knowing when to just get up and swing hard, which was evident in many of her kills on Tuesday. She's an all-around player that can really energize this team when she gets going, so we are excited to see what we get from her down the stretch."



Setter Megan Quinn sets up a teammate at the net Tuesday against Paola.

Sophomore Delaney Nelson played all-six rotations for Louisburg and was especially strong on the defensive end with a team-high 17 digs. She also had a team-high four aces and eight kills.

Sophomores Caileigh Kilgore and McKenna Lohse had eight and seven kills, respectively. Senior Megan Quinn tallied a team-best 22 assists and freshman Adelyn Moore had 16.

Moore also finished with nine digs on the night and senior libero Ashlyn Berck added seven.

"One of the biggest positives of the night was just our overall team confidence and chemistry," Willer said. "Everyone on the court and on the bench were locked into the game and cheering for each other's successes, which is exactly what we

need to succeed as a team. We stayed in a great headspace where everyone felt confident in playing their game.”

Wildcats drop league match to Spring Hill

Louisburg’s schedule got quite a bit tougher Thursday when they Wildcats went on the road to face off with Spring Hill.

The Broncos showed why they are one of the best teams in the Frontier League as they handed Louisburg a 25-16, 25-12 and 25-12 loss.

Sophomores Caileigh Kilgore and Delaney Nelsen led the Wildcats at the net with six kills each. Setter Megan Quinn had 10 assists.

Senior Hailey Sword finished with a team-best seven digs on defense, while senior Ashlyn Berck and freshman Adelyn Moore had six and five, respectively.

Wildcats finish runner-up at home invitational



Louisburg senior Hailey Sword goes up for a kill Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational. The Wildcats finished second at their home tournament with a 3-2 record.

For the second straight season, the Louisburg volleyball team ended its home tournament with a souvenir of sorts – a team plaque.

After a day that featured five matches against bigger programs, Louisburg persevered through some injuries and lineup changes and it resulted in a runner-up finish Saturday in the Louisburg Invitational.

Louisburg ended the day with a 3-2 record that included wins over Shawnee Mission South, Shawnee Mission West and Basehor-Linwood. The Wildcats also lost a tough three-set match to Olathe North and fell in two to Shawnee Mission East.

“Finishing second on the day was great, especially with the level of competition that we bring in for our home tournament,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “None of those games are ever a guaranteed win, and the girls have to battle all day long to maintain playing at a high level.

“Overall, I feel that we played well and rose to the occasion. Every now and then we see glimpses of our inconsistency, but I thought we did a good job of remaining calm and collected

throughout the day and playing as a team.”

The Wildcats came out strong to start the day as they opened with a 26-24, 25-20 victory over Shawnee Mission South.

Senior Madie Williams led the attack at the net with 10 kills and senior Hailey Sword followed with seven. Setters Megan Quinn and Adelyn Moore each finished with double-digit assists with 11 and 10, respectively.

Defensively, sophomore Delaney Nelsen and Quinn each led the way with six digs. Junior Evyn Richardson tallied two blocks.



Senior Megan Quinn sets up a teammate at the net Saturday at home.

Against Shawnee Mission West, the Wildcats won going away with a 25-19 and 25-18 victory. Williams and sophomore Caileigh Kilgore were big at the net with six kills each.

Quinn finished with 11 assists to lead the Louisburg attack, while Sword was strong from behind the service line with four aces. Williams finished with a team-high six digs defensively, while senior Ashlyn Berck, Sword and Quinn each had four.

The Wildcats suffered their first setback of the day when they squared off with Olathe North in a 19-25, 25-20 and 25-17 loss to the Eagles.

Williams once again led the Louisburg offense with 10 kills and Sword finished with seven. Nelsen and Kilgore each added six in the loss.

Richardson led the Louisburg defense with four blocks, while sophomore McKenna Lohse – who is filling in for an injured Izzy Moreland – added three blocks along with Kilgore.



Senior libero Ashlyn Berck gets on the floor for a dig

Saturday.

Moore led Louisburg with 16 assists in the match and Quinn tallied 12, while Berck and Williams led the Wildcat back row with nine digs each.

Louisburg got back on the right track in its next match as it downed Basehor-Linwood, 25-18 and 25-22.

Sword and Williams paced the Louisburg offense with eight kills each and Lohse finished with five from her middle blocker spot. Quinn and Moore ran the offense well with 14 and 10 assists, respectively.

Defensively, Berck and Sword each led the way with six digs and senior Katie Elpers had a team-high two blocks.

Due to previous injuries, and ones sustained in the tournament, Willer had to rearrange her lineup at different times and was pleased to see her team still play well despite the different faces.

"Switching the lineup around is always an added challenge, but the girls have done a really great job of being willing to fill whatever role is needed to help the team," Willer said. "We've moved some girls around to try to balance out our crew both offensively and defensively, and they've adjusted really nicely. Both Megan and Adelyn have worked hard to form connections with all of our hitters, so it's great to be able to shift people into different positions and still get solid offensive results."

In the final game of the round-robin tournament, the Wildcats squared off with Shawnee Mission East in what ended up being the championship match. Unfortunately, the Wildcats couldn't keep up with the Lancers in the 25-15 and 26-24 loss.



Members of the Louisburg volleyball team that finished second on Saturday are (front row, from left): Adelyn Moore, Aspen Coulter, Ashlyn Berck, Caileigh Kilgore, Madie Williams, Katie Elpers, Izzy Moreland, Delaney Nelsen, Hailey Sword, Evyn Richardson, McKenna Lohse and Megan Quinn.

"I was proud to see us battle in the second set," Willer said. "East sort of let us have it in the first set, and after a long day of volleyball, I was glad to see us fight harder in the second set. Although we fell a little short in the end, we felt proud of leaving it all out there on the floor."

Louisburg (13-8) will be back in action tonight as the Wildcats host rival Paola in a Frontier League matchup. Varsity is set to begin at 6:30 p.m.

Wildcats sweep home triangular

Coming off a league loss to Eudora earlier in the week, the Wildcats got back on the winning track Thursday in their home

triangular.

Louisburg opened with a 2-1 win over Girard, before sweeping Fort Scott 2-0.

"I am proud that we were able to bounce back to get two wins," Willer said. "After the Eudora match, everyone came into Wednesday's practice on a mission, knowing that we had some aspects of our game that we definitely wanted to work on and make adjustments to. It was great to see them work implementing those things."

The Wildcats faced a little adversity against Girard. After Louisburg won the first set 25-18, Girard responded to take the second 25-20. The Wildcats were able to respond with a 25-18 win in the third.

The injury bug also hit Louisburg during the match as the Wildcats lost middle Izzy Moreland with an ankle injury and they were already without senior outside hitter Madie Williams who was battling a knee injury.

Willer brought in sophomore McKenna Lohse to fill in and was pleased to see her play well in Moreland's absence.

"Unfortunately we have been hit with an injury bug lately, and losing Izzy in the middle of the match was a huge bummer for the team as she's been solid for us this year," Willer said. "I think it took us a little bit to get out of the shock and panic of the moment, but then we were able to regroup and continue on. It was also great to have Kenna be able to step up into this role with no hesitation, especially when it happened so suddenly. She did a great job."

Louisburg was solid from behind the service line in the two matches as it combined for 11 aces, including four each from Ashlyn Berck and Delaney Nelsen.

Sophomore Caileigh Kilgore led the Wildcats with 16 kills on

the night and senior Hailey Sword added 14. Senior Katie Elpers and Nelsen finished with 13 and 12, respectively.

Adelyn Moore added a team-high 32 assists to lead the Wildcat offense and senior Megan Quinn tallied 29.

Nelsen and Lohse led the defense as the net with four and three blocks, respectively. In the back row, Berck finished with a team-high 23 digs and Nelsen had 22.

“We saw a lot of positives throughout both matches, but I would say that the other sophomores were standouts to me,” Willer said. “Caileigh had a big night finishing with 16 kills. She has established herself as someone we can rely on to put a ball down which is awesome. Delaney also stepped up in a big way as she filled Madie’s 6 rotation position. She did a great job of being consistent in all aspects of the game.”

Wildcats sweep Bonner Springs in road league dual



Louisburg's Delaney Nelsen and Izzy Moreland team up for a block Tuesday during the Wildcats' 3-0 win over Bonner Springs.

Fresh off a tournament win where the Louisburg volleyball team reeled off six straight wins, the Wildcats kept that momentum going Tuesday at Bonner Springs.

Louisburg made quick work of Bonner Springs as it rolled to a 25-16, 25-12 and 25-14 victory over the Braves in Frontier League action.

"I was very happy that our girls kept our momentum from Saturday heading into league play this week," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. 'I love that our team is growing in confidence and comfortability with each other, and I'm glad to see that in our play on the court as we continue to perform this season. Our setters did a great job of moving the ball around and balancing the offense among all of our hitters, who each stepped up at different times to make some big plays."

The Wildcats (8-5) jumped out to a fast start against the Braves and never looked back. Louisburg's offense got rolling from the beginning and it started with its setters.

Freshman Adelyn Moore led the way with 17 assists on they night and senior Megan Quinn added 12.

Several hitters also had big nights as senior Madie Williams had a team-high 10 kills, while senior Hailey Sword finished with nine. Senior Katie Elpers was third on the team with five kills and sophomore Delaney Nelsen and senior Izzy Moreland had four and three, respectively.



Senior Katie Elpers rises up for a kill Tuesday against Bonner Springs.

Williams was also strong behind the service line with six aces, while Moore, Quinn and Moreland each finished with two.

Sword led the Wildcat defense with seven digs on the night, while senior libero Ashlyn Berck, Williams and Quinn each finished with six. Junior Evyn Richardson had a team-high two blocks.

The Wildcats were also able to work in sophomore middle McKenna Lohse into the match for her first-ever varsity

action.

“I loved that we were able to work McKenna into the rotation in the third set to see her varsity debut,” Willer said. “She is doing a great job on JV this year and stepped into our rotation with no issues. Under the leadership/mentorship of Izzy Moreland, she did great.”

With those seven straight wins, however, the Wildcats have now hit a lull in their schedule where they get a week off of game action. That all sets up a busy week for Louisburg next week that includes a league dual against Eudora, a triangular and its home tournament Saturday.

“As much as we would love to keep playing and continue the momentum, having a small break like this is nice heading into a big week,” Willer said. “We are using the extra practice time this week to focus in on some fundamental skills as well as give our bodies some time to rest and recuperate before such a big week. Without having to worry about preparing for a specific opponent, we can really hone in on the aspects of the game specific to our team that we want to improve.”

Week 2 Athlete of the Week: Megan Quinn



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week two of the fall sports season, sponsored by Landmark National Bank.

MEGAN QUINN, SENIOR, VOLLEYBALL

Louisburg senior Megan Quinn helped the Wildcat volleyball team to a successful week that ended with a championship of the Frontenac Invitational on Saturday. In the tournament, Quinn finished with a team-high 11 aces and 78 assists to go along with 22 digs in the six-game invitational.

Earlier in the week, the Louisburg senior setter helped the Wildcats get their first win of the season over Burlington as Louisburg played nine matches on the week and went 7-2. In total, Quinn finished with 121 assists, 43 digs and 16 aces over those nine matches.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the fall season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners:

Week 1: Declan Battle



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Wildcats win six straight to capture Frontenac Invite crown



Members of the Louisburg volleyball team that won the Frontenac Invitational are (front row, from left) Ashlyn Berck, Izzy Moreland, Hailey Sword, Madie Williams, Megan

Quinn, Katie Elpers; (back row) Delaney Nelsen, Evyn Richardson, Adelyn Moore, Caileigh Kilgore and manager Kira Kundt.

FRONTENAC – Prior to Saturday, it had been a tough start to the season for the Louisburg volleyball team.

The Wildcats lost four of their first five matches to start the year and they were searching for positives when they entered the Frontenac Invitational on Saturday.

Their search came to an end as Louisburg reeled off six straight wins on its way to the Frontenac Invitational crown. The Wildcats rallied to defeat the host school in the championship match, 2-1, to complete what was a memorable day.

“Saturday’s tournament was huge for this team, and I am really proud of how we played together as a team all day to finish undefeated and win the whole thing,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “With our close losses last week, we knew that we really wanted to take advantage of the opportunity in front of us on Saturday with the chance to turn around our record and get going in the right direction.

“Even though we weren’t perfect and still faced some adversity throughout the day, we fought hard each match to battle back and put ourselves in a position to win. Saturday was an extremely long day as we started playing at 9:15 a.m. and didn’t finish until about 7:15 p.m., so I am proud of our ability to stay focused and energized through an exhausting six-game day.”

After cruising to five straight wins, the Wildcats faced some adversity against Frontenac in the championship as they lost the first set 19-25, but rallied back to take the second 25-18.

Louisburg (7-5) found itself down 10-17 late in the third set, only to rally and win 25-22 and capture the tourney title.



Hailey Sword (left) celebrates a big point with her Wildcat teammates against Ottawa last Thursday.

“Frontenac was a really solid team,” Willer said. “They were very scrappy on defense and served tough throughout the match, pushing us out of system more than we would like. Our first set had us in a little bit of a panic mode at times, and we saw more miscommunication and errors on our side of the net. Going into the second set, we knew we just needed to regroup, reset, and start fresh. Cleaning up the little things on our side of the court made a huge difference.

“I am most impressed with our girls being able to shake off the mistakes made in the first set to bounce back even stronger in the second. Even in the third, we dug ourselves a bit of a hole, but we dug deep and played with a ton of heart to fight back and win. I am so proud of the tenacity that these girls showed.”

In the championship match, the Wildcats got a big game at the

net from seniors Hailey Sword and Madie Williams. They each finished with 11 kills to lead the Louisburg attack.

Defensively, Williams also had a big match with a team-high 17 digs, while freshman Adelyn Moore and senior libero Ashlyn Berck had 13 and 12, respectively. Junior Evyn Richardson tallied three blocks.

Louisburg had four aces in the match, including two from Berck. Offensively, senior setter Megan Quinn led the way 15 assists and Moore added 11.

Over six matches, Quinn had a strong day running the offense and behind the service line. She finished with a team-high 11 aces and had 78 assists.

Williams also had a big outing in her all-around position. She led Louisburg in both kills (43) and digs (45) and was second on the team with eight aces and nine blocks.

Sword, who plays all six rotations, was a factor all over the floor. She finished with 40 kills, 41 digs, five aces and four blocks.

Senior middle Izzy Moreland was big at the net as well with 28 kills and eight blocks. Richardson led Louisburg with 11 blocks.

Sophomores Delaney Nelsen and Caileigh Kilgore each had 15 kills and senior Katie Elpers finished with 12.



Megan Quinn sets up a teammate during the Wildcats' match with Ottawa last week.

"Megan and Madie did have great tournaments, and I think Hailey and Izzy did as well," Willer said. "Our outsides established themselves as our go-to hitters, and it was clear that both Megan and Adelyn knew to find them when we needed a point. That being said, I think we saw a lot of positives from every single player out there throughout the day."

"I liked seeing in each match we had some different leaders in different categories, which is exactly what we want from a well-rounded team. One of our goals will be to continue to distribute the ball through all of our hitters offensively to maintain a well-balanced attack."

Louisburg opened the tournament with a 25-23, 25-16 win over Girard and then rolled Baxter Springs, 25-7 and 25-13. The

Wildcats rounded out pool play with a 25-12, 25-13 win over St. Mary's-Colgan and downed Chanute, 25-22 and 25-20.

The Wildcats reached the semifinals against Fort Scott and held on for a 25-20 and 25-23 win to advance to the championship.

Willer liked what she saw from her entire team during its championship run and the way they pulled together.

"Our team chemistry was another positive for us," Willer said. "When one player was maybe struggling in a certain aspect of the game, the rest of the team rallied around her to continue to encourage each other and lift each other up. We love to see that on those long days."

Louisburg will try to build on its momentum today when it travels to Bonner Springs for a Frontier League dual.

Wildcats lose five-set thriller to Ottawa

Louisburg made the trip to Ottawa on Thursday for a Frontier League dual and nearly rallied for a big road win.

The Wildcats won the first set 25-21, but lost the next two, 25-11 and 25-20. Louisburg put together a strong fourth set to win 25-21 and tied the match at 2-all.

Ottawa held off a late charge from the Wildcats to win the final set, 15-10.

Hailey Sword and Madie Williams had big nights at the net with 14 and 13 kills, respectively. Senior Izzy Moreland tallied three blocks to lead the front row.

Senior setter Megan Quinn led the Wildcat offense with 21 assists and freshman setter Adelyn Moore and 17.

Defensively, Williams (15), Quinn (13) and Sword (12) all finished with double-digit digs.

Louisburg had a tough time containing one of the top players in the Frontier League, Emery Keebaugh. The Ottawa senior led all players with 26 kills as she hit from all over the floor.

“The Ottawa match was a tough battle throughout, and I am proud of the fight that we put up after losing sets 2 and 3,” coach Leanna Willer said. “Their outstanding player Emery Keebaugh is tough to stop, and it’s tough to beat a team like that who is scrappy on defense and has her as an offensive weapon in all 6 rotations. We are looking forward to a rematch with them at their home tournament in a couple of weeks.”

Louisburg volleyball downs Burlington for first win of season



Louisburg junior Evyn Richardson goes up for a kill during

Tuesday's home match against Piper. The Wildcats defeated Burlington, 2-0, before falling to Piper, 2-1.

It was a mixed bag of sorts for the Louisburg volleyball team Tuesday at home.

On one hand, the Wildcats picked up their first win of the season with a 25-5 and 26-24 victory over Burlington and used that momentum to go up early in their match against Piper.

Louisburg was primed for a sweep, but the Pirates had other ideas. The Wildcats fell to the Pirates, 23-25, 25-12 and 25-22 to get a split in their home triangular.

"It was great to get that first win under our belt," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "We came out ready to roll in that first set and never looked back. It was a fun way to start the night. We are currently battling the challenge of remaining consistent, but I think we are making progress toward better consistency every day with the work we are putting in during practice, and learning from our games."

The Wildcats got out to a fast start against Burlington as they jumped out to a 19-2 advantage in the first set, but had to battle in the second.



Senior Megan Quinn sets up a teammate Tuesday against Piper.

Louisburg (1-4) took a 14-6 lead and appeared on its way to another easy win. Burlington had other ideas as it battled back to eventually even it up at 23-all.

Wildcat junior Evyn Richardson recorded a kill to make it 24-23, before Burlington tied it up once again. Sophomore Delaney Nelsen registered a kill to make it 25-24 and Louisburg sealed the win on an ace from Megan Quinn.

Senior Hailey Sword and Richardson each led the Wildcats with seven kills and senior Katie Elpers finished with five. Setters Adelyn Moore and Quinn finished with 11 and 10 assists, respectively.

Sword and Moore each led the Wildcat defense with six digs. From behind the service line, Louisburg tallied six aces in the match, including two from Quinn.

Louisburg got out to good start against Piper as it was able to take the first set, but struggled to get going in the second. The Wildcats bounced back nicely in third and appeared well on their way to a victory with an 18-14 lead.



Louisburg senior Hailey Sword digs up a ball Tuesday at home.

Piper had other ideas as it ended the match on an 11-4 run to get the victory over Louisburg.

“Losing that second match to Piper in three was tough, but like I said, I think it provided some really great learning moments for our whole team,” Willer said. “Making 19 more errors than the other team makes it tough to win a match. Walking into practice the next day, we were very focused on specific things that we wanted to improve after that game, and as a coach that’s all I can ask for.”

Sword led the Wildcats at the net once again as she tallied 10

kills. Senior Madie Williams finished with seven kills and also had a team-high three aces.

Moore led Louisburg in assists with 14 and Quinn added 12 to go along with two aces. Defensively, Williams had a big night for Louisburg with 11 digs and senior Ashlyn Berck added seven.

Louisburg will try and bounce back tonight as it gets back into league play. The Wildcats travel to Ottawa for a 6:30 p.m. start.