

Lady Cats roll to Frontier League title



Louisburg senior Madison Turner (left) and Anna Dixon go up for a block Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament at Eudora High School. The Lady Cats recorded a 5-0 record and didn't lose a set all day on their way to the title.

EUDORA – The Louisburg High School volleyball team had a little different look about itself.

The Lady Cats sported new uniforms and some fresh faces as they opened the 2015 season Saturday. They may have had a new look, but the results were the same.

Louisburg rolled through the preseason Frontier League Tournament in Eudora as they finished the day with a 5-0 record and didn't lose a set. It was clear that the Lady Cats, the defending league champs, are the team to beat in the league once again.

“I thought the team had a pretty decent first outing of the season,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We had a few bumps along the way but that is to be expected for the first few matches of a season. I was pleased to see how the team handled those situations, and to finish every match in two sets is a good accomplishment.”

The No. 5 ranked team in Class 4A Division I showed why it is considered one of the best teams in the state as it came out swinging right from the opening match. Louisburg dispatched Baldwin, Eudora and Basehor-Linwood in two sets in pool play, before doing the same to Paola in the semifinals and De Soto in the championship.

Seniors Lauren Dunn and Madison Turner had a big day for the Lady Cats as they were able to turn the tide in a few different sets when the opposition tried to make a run.

Dunn finished with a team high 31 kills in the five matches to go along with seven aces and was also second on the team with 60 digs when she played in the back row. Turner controlled the net from her middle hitter spot as she led Louisburg with 28 blocks, finished with 25 kills and also had seven aces.



Louisburg senior Cate Stambaugh goes up for a kill during the semifinals of the Frontier League tournament Saturday in Eudora.

“Madison and Lauren both had a great tournament,” Compliment said. “They are both very seasoned players and stepped up big when we needed them. All of the players contributed yesterday,

and I was happy to see a well-balanced team effort. We had four players with 25 or more kills apiece so there was definitely a balanced effort made.”

The Lady Cats helped get that balance from sophomore setter Sophie McMullen as she moved the ball around to several different options. She finished the tournament with 125 assists, which averaged out to 25 a match. McMullen also finished with a team-high eight aces.

Whether it was Dunn, Turner, senior Cate Stambaugh, junior Olivia Bradley or freshman Anna Dixon, McMullen seemed to find the right option at the right time.

Louisburg also fared well on the defensive side as well, led by libero Makenzie Kallevig. The Lady Cats senior finished with a tournament-high 98 digs. Senior Megan Lemke also fared well with 31 digs and four aces.

“Our back row defense also did a good job throughout the day,” Compliment said. “We have some more work to do to make our blocking more consistent so our back row knows where to align, but for the first weekend out they still did a pretty good job.”

Different players stepped up at different times for the Lady Cats. In their opening match against Baldwin (25-19, 25-18), Stambaugh had a strong showing with nine kills and six blocks in the two sets. She finished the tournament with 25 kills and also had 21 blocks for the tournament.

Against Eudora (25-20, 25-18), Turner had nine kills and 11 blocks to pace the Lady Cats. Then against Basehor-Linwood (25-15, 27-25) in the final round of pool play, Louisburg nearly lost its first set of the day, but rallied to take the second behind 11 kills from Dunn and seven blocks from McMullen.

Dixon responded with her best outing in the semifinals against

Paola (25-13, 25-20). She didn't play like a freshman as she had 11 kills in the match to go along with two aces. Kallevig was also strong in the back row with 25 digs.

"If Anna had any nerves, she didn't show it on the court," Compliment said. "She plays pretty steady and with confidence wherever she is on the court."

In the championship match against De Soto (25-13, 25-22), the Lady Cats were in danger of being forced to a third set, but held on once again. Dunn led the way with seven kills, Turner had nine blocks and McMullen had three aces in the win.

"There were a couple of times they could have thrown in the towel and forced the third set, but the team rallied back well and finished the match," Compliment said. "We talked a lot about staying aggressive at the net and finishing the play rather than looking for that easy out play."



The Louisburg volleyball team pose for a shot after winning the league tournament Saturday. Members of the team (front row, from left) are Megan Lemke, Makenzie Kallevig, Lauren Dunn; (back row) coach Jessica Compliment, Olivia Bradley, Anna Dixon, Madison

**Turner, Cate Stambaugh and
Sophie McMullen.**

If there was one coaching point Compliment will get to use on her team this week, it was their serving. The Lady Cats had 27 service errors in the five matches, but even with that, they were able to counter with 35 aces a team.

“Serving is something we touch on every day at practice, and it is about the only skill where it’s just you, the player who has to make the play,” Compliment said. “We work a lot on spot serving and finding your ace serve. We may have missed some of our serves because we were going for ‘that spot’ on the court or for that ace serve, but those serves still need to be playable. Some of it may have been nerves since it was the first day out, but it still doesn’t excuse the missed serves back-to-back. We talk about when to never miss a serve, and we had a few of those moments yesterday.”

The Lady Cats will try and keep their winnings ways going tomorrow when they host Blue Valley Southwest in their home opener. Freshman matches begin at 4:30 p.m., followed by junior varsity and then varsity.