

Lady Cats finish strong at home tourney



Louisburg's Cate Stambaugh (left) and Ellie Katzer team up for a block during the Lady Cats' third-place match with Basehor-Linwood on Saturday in the Louisburg Invitational. The Lady Cats finished third overall.

The Louisburg volleyball team was used to playing in the championship match of its home tournament – the Louisburg Invitational – so it felt a little different for the Lady Cats to be playing on a different court for a different prize.

Louisburg didn't let struggles from the Saturday tournament bring them down as it made sure it ended on a positive note.

After losing 2-0 to Shawnee Mission East in the semifinals, the Lady Cats faced off with Basehor-Linwood for third place. Despite losing the first set, the Lady Cats rallied for a 23-25, 25-21 and 25-16 victory to secure their third-place finish.

Although the Lady Cats (21-9) had their ups and downs on the day, Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment was happy to see her team finish well, but knows there is still a lot to improve upon for the rest of the season.

"We are familiar with them," Compliment said of Basehor. "The

girls wanted to end the day on a win and end on a high note. I think that was really nice to see.

“We just need to find that confidence with everyone from time to time. It just a matter of coming together as a team and finding that confidence on every single play. We still second guess on defense on who is going to go get it, but it still a matter of confidence and just going after every single ball. They are a good group that works hard and I know they want it.”

Louisburg opened pool play with a 25-20 and 25-10 victory over Leavenworth and went three sets with Fort Scott in its next match, 21-25, 25-23 and 25-18.



Sophomore Sophie McMullen sets up teammate Madison Turner for a kill Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational.

The Lady Cats then went up against Class 6A's Olathe South in the final match of pool play, and despite a good start, fell 25-23, 10-25 and 20-25.

“We had a slow start to our day,” Compliment said. “It has

been a busy week with homecoming, then last night with the dance, you could tell they were tired. They weren't mentally and physically here and ready to play. We were slow to come out against Leavenworth and slow to come out against Fort Scott.

"We could not find our rhythm against Olathe South. They served really, really well and we could not get a serve or a pass. That is about being more mentally tough, mentally sound and learning to let a bad play roll off our shoulders and move on. We let too many balls go by us, and with a team like them, they take advantage of it. We came out with a little more energy in the third set, we just weren't hitting consistently."

Louisburg was still able to advance to the championship bracket, where the reward was the opportunity to play Shawnee Mission East, the No. 2 team in Class 6A, in the semifinals. East had already beaten Louisburg easily in the Lansing Invitational earlier in the year, but the Lady Cats put on a better showing this time around in the 22-25 and 15-25 loss.

The Lady Cats started out sluggish in their third-place match to Basehor-Linwood and it didn't get any better as senior Lauren Dunn left the game in the first set with an injury.

Junior Ellie Katzer filled in for Dunn for the rest of the first set and played the entire second set before Dunn entered in the third.

"She is going to be ok," Compliment said of Dunn. "I just wanted to keep her out and make sure she got her legs back underneath her before I put her back in. Plus, it gave Ellie a chance to get out there and play and get some touches. She hasn't spent a whole lot of time on the court with the varsity players and she did a nice job to step in."

It didn't look good for the Lady Cats as they trailed 14-10 in that second set, but freshman Anna Dixon responded with three

straight aces to cut into the lead. Senior Megan Lemke eventually tied it up at 17-all with another ace.

Senior Cate Stambaugh responded with a kill that led to a 7-3 run and it ended with a tip from senior Madison Turner to keep the match alive.

In the third set, the Lady Cats got off to a good start and never looked back. Louisburg took a 12-8 lead after three straight kills from Turner.

Back-to-back kills from Dixon, an ace from Dunn and a block from Sophie McMullen widened the lead to 18-12 and Basehor-Linwood couldn't get any closer.

"When we see the bigger 5A and 6A schools, we tend to shut down a little quicker and we can't bounce back," Compliment said. "When we play other 4A schools, we have that mental fortitude to bounce back and win. They wanted to win and I was happy to see how they held it together on the court."

Turner had a big day at the net for Louisburg as she racked up a team-high 49 kills to go along with 33 blocks. Dixon was second on the team with 37 kills and had a team-high five aces. Stambaugh led the Lady Cats with 36 blocks on the day and also had 24 kills.

McMullen, the team's setter, ran the offense well with 122 assists in the five matches and also had three aces and 39 digs. Libero Makenzie Kallevig had a team-high in digs with 63 and added three aces. Dunn added 48 digs from the back row, had 30 kills at the net and two aces. Lemke also finished with three aces.

Louisburg downs Baldwin

Louisburg competed in its first Frontier League road match of the season on Sept. 22 when it traveled to Baldwin.

The Lady Cats didn't have much of a problem as they cruised to a 25-18, 25-14 and 25-10 win over the Bulldogs.

Madison Turner led Louisburg at the net with 10 kills and also had three blocks. Cate Stambaugh had a team-high 11 blocks to go along with six kills.

Lauren Dunn played well all over the court as she finished with nine kills and also had a team-high 11 digs in the back row. Setter Sophie McMullen countered with 27 assists, nine digs and four blocks.

Senior libero Makenzie Kallevig posted a team-high three aces and also had eight digs. Anna Dixon finished with eight digs and six kills, while Olivia Bradley added four kills and three blocks.