

Lady Cats rally to victory in home opener



Louisburg senior Madison Turner goes up for a kill during Tuesday' home opener against Blue Valley Southwest. The Lady Cats rallied after a first set loss to win the next three and the match to go to 6-0 on the year.

Already down a set in its home opener against Blue Valley Southwest, the Louisburg volleyball team needed to find a spark.

Enter Sophie McMullen and Madison Turner.

The two players helped lift the Lady Cats to three straight set wins to capture the 3-1 (18-25, 25-12, 25-22 and 25-12) victory Tuesday at Louisburg High School. McMullen's serves helped get the Lady Cats on a roll in the second set, while Blue Valley Southwest had a tough time stopping the Lady Cat middle hitter as Turner found herself on the right end of a lot of kills.

"Once we started passing better and setting up Madison a little more, she was the momentum swing we needed to get those kills and side outs," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "I really think that changed the game in the second set and carried that throughout. I told Sophie to get her more

involved and she did a good job of finding spots and time to get her involved.”

Turner finished the game with a team-high 11 kills and had 17 blocks to go along with three aces to pace the Lady Cats. Blue Valley Southwest didn't have an answer for the 6-foot, 4-inch senior.

As for McMullen, she set the tone in the second set with four aces to help build a 9-0 advantage at the time. Overall, the sophomore setter finished with a team-high nine aces to go along with 31 assists.

“Sophie was really on with her serves,” Compliment said. “She did a really good job hitting her spots and she served aggressive. She is really finding her serve in her development and did a great job. She helped us going on a couple different long runs.”



Olivia Bradley goes up for a kill Tuesday during the Lady Cats' match with Blue Valley Southwest.

The Lady Cats (6-0) never let up in the second set as they

jumped out to a 16-2 advantage behind aces from McMullen and kills from Turner and freshman Anna Dixon to even the score at 1-1.

“The first set we just came out flat,” Compliment said. “We didn’t have a lot of energy or momentum on our side. I think we had a little nerves and we played tentative. The second set we just played a lot more aggressive and we definitely looked a lot better.”

A victory in the third set was going to provide either team a big advantage for the rest of the match as the loser would have to win two straight. The two teams traded leads seven times with several ties mixed.

Blue Valley Southwest had a 21-20 lead late, but the Lady Cats would rattle off a mini 5-1 run to take the set. A kill and a tip from Turner gave Louisburg a 22-21 lead, and after a couple side outs, Dixon finished it off with a kill.

Louisburg seized the momentum in the fourth set as it took a quick 5-1 lead after back-to-back aces from Dixon. Turner, Lauren Dunn and Cate Stambaugh followed it up kills and Megan Lemke added an ace to give the Lady Cats an 11-3 advantage they wouldn’t relinquish.

Dunn, a senior, was second on the team with nine kills and was also strong on the defensive end with 12 digs. Senior libero Makenzie Kallevig led the defense with 18 digs.

Dixon and Stambaugh finished with eight and seven kills, respectively, while Dixon added four aces.

As a team, the Lady Cats connected on some tough serves as they racked up 20 aces on the evening. With that, however, came 17 service errors.

Those errors are something Compliment hopes her team can clean up with a big week coming ahead. The Lady Cats will host

Burlington and Santa Fe Trail on Tuesday and then will travel to Blue Valley West, a Class 6A program, Thursday.

Throw in an always competitive Lansing Invitational on Saturday and the Lady Cats know they have a challenging week in front of them.

“I wasn’t really pleased with our serves again. In that first set, especially, we missed on so many serves and we still need to work on that,” Compliment said. “We have a few days to work on some stuff, but we have another tough week coming up, especially with Blue Valley West and the Lansing tournament. Lansing will be a tough tournament.”