

LHS volleyball wins league opener



Louisburg sophomore Sophie McMullen sets up a teammate at the net during the Lady Cats' league opener Tuesday against De Soto at home. Louisburg defeated De Soto in three sets.

The Louisburg High School volleyball team showed a couple things during Tuesday's league home opener.

One, the Lady Cats are really good.

And two, the other six teams in the Frontier League are going to have their hands full.

Louisburg competed in its first league dual of the season against De Soto, and other than an up and down first set, it didn't have much of a problem. The Lady Cats defeated De Soto 28-26, 25-19 and 25-18.

"We are not playing our best ball right now, which is fine, because we want to be playing our best ball at the end of the season," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "That is still something we have to work on and get better at. Overall, I thought we did a pretty decent job. The good thing about this group is that they play really well together and they feed off each other."

It is that chemistry that helped the Lady Cats, which are ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division I, get through a back and forth first set.

Louisburg built a small 8-5 advantage, but De Soto kept battling and eventually took a 15-4 lead midway through the set. After a kill from Madison Turner, the Louisburg senior rattled off six straight service points thanks to two kills from senior Lauren Dunn, a kill from freshman Anna Dixon and a block from senior Cate Stambaugh to put Louisburg back up 21-15.

De Soto then went on a 9-1 run to take 24-22 and appeared it was going to steal the first set. Instead, the Lady Cats buckled down and got back-to-back points after a tip and an ace from Dunn.

It remained tied at 26-all, but Dixon gave Louisburg the lead with an ace and senior libero Makenzie Kallevig finished the match off with an ace.



Megan Lemke sends the ball over the net during Tuesday home match with De Soto.

"I was really pleased that they were able to come back and win that first set," Compliment said. "It would have been easy to give up there, but they didn't.

"I think it is hard to keep that intensity and focus sometimes. This is the third time we have seen De Soto and we have beaten them twice before, and I think they had that in the back of their head. They will come out and play well, ease back and then push back at the very end."

The Lady Cats used that momentum in the second set to build a 21-13 lead behind kills by Dixon and Turner. De Soto made a little dent in the lead, but Stambaugh stopped the run with a kill and block. Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen and Dixon added kills of their own to finish the set out.

Dixon continued her strong play in the third set as she recorded five straight service points to build a 6-1 lead behind an ace of her own and a tip and kill from Dunn.

A block and a kill from Stambaugh, a block from Dixon and a kill from Turner put Louisburg up 16-8 and the Lady Cats never looked back. For most of the night, Louisburg was efficient with its offensive attack and Compliment saw quite a few positives from her team.

"Serving was pretty good," Compliment said. "We got into a little rut in that third set, but they served tough and they served aggressive.

"Defensively we still have some miscommunication at times, but overall it was a good night. Sophie did a great job moving the ball around and did some real nice things with her hitters."

Louisburg will face another tough part of its schedule Saturday when it travels to the Topeka Hayden Invitational. Matches are set to begin at 8 a.m.