

LEAGUE CHAMPS: Louisburg wins third straight crown



Louisburg senior Madison Turner goes up for a kill during the Lady Cats' senior night match Tuesday against Ottawa. The Lady Cats won their third consecutive league crown with a 3-0 win over Ottawa, while also saying goodbye to their five seniors.

It all seemed like a formality when the Louisburg High School volleyball team took to its home floor for the final time this season.

The Lady Cats, who were unbeaten in Frontier League play, faced off with winless Ottawa on Tuesday to claim an undefeated league crown. There was no drama to be had – just a lot of celebrating.

Louisburg rolled Ottawa in the best-of-5 dual, 25-18, 25-15 and 25-15, to claim its third consecutive league crown and each time the Lady Cats have had a perfect record in league play.

Those three league titles came partially thanks to the five Lady Cats seniors who were also honored on senior night. Lauren Dunn, Cate Stambaugh, Madison Turner, Megan Lemke and Makenzie Kallevig all played their final home match.

Along with the three league championships, those seniors have

been a part of some – or all – of the Lady Cats’ three consecutive state tournament berths.

“It was an emotional game for all of us I think,” Kallevig said. “Whether it was the night before, before the game, during the game and then when that last serve came. Before the last set we all just kind of looked at each other and realized this was it. We just went and played our hearts out knowing this would be the last time we play on our home court and it was a great ending.”



Senior Lauren Dunn rises up to tip the ball over the net during Tuesday’s senior night match against Ottawa.

However, it wasn’t the storybook ending the Lady Cat players had hoped for as they watched one of their seniors go down in practice last week as Stambaugh, one of the team’s middle hitters, injured her ankle and is done for the season.

“For those seniors, this was their final game on their home floor and with substate coming up and not having Cate out there I think played with them a little bit emotionally,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We will miss her

blocking because she and Madison were leading the team in stuff blocks and she would come up with the kills when we needed them too.”

In Stambaugh’s absence, junior Olivia Bradley moved over to the middle spot, while Lemke played all-around as she will also serve as one of the team’s outside hitters, along with her play in the back row.

The position isn’t unfamiliar to either player as both have been put in that position at different points in their careers.

“Megan has been swinging all year in practice and I told her that if anyone went down that she was going to go in,” Compliment said. “She has been practicing in that spot and Olivia played in the middle last year so she is comfortable as well. We just did that to keep things simple and we will look at it again in practice to see if that is what we want to do.”

Despite the new lineup, the Lady Cats didn’t have much of a problem with Ottawa as they jumped out to big leads in each set.

Louisburg (26-10) jumped out to a 4-1 lead in the first on a pair of Turner kills, an ace from Dunn and a block from freshman Anna Dixon. Dixon then did some damage from behind the service line as she recorded three aces to give Louisburg an 11-6 advantage and the Lady Cats rolled from there.

In the second set, Dunn gave the Lady Cats more strong serving as she recorded five straight service points, and kills from Dixon and Turner put Louisburg up 7-2.

Dunn used the same formula in the third set as she served the Lady Cats to an 8-0 lead thanks to three aces and a kill from Turner and Dunn again.

Turner and Dixon provided a lot of offense at the net as they

finished with 13 kills each and Dunn added nine in the win. Dunn also finished with team highs in aces (4) and digs (15).



Members of the Frontier League champion Lousiburg volleyball are (front row, from left) Ellie Katzer, Anna Dixon, Sophie McMullen, Ava Littrell, Mikayla Quinn; (back row) Olivia Bradley, Cate Stambaugh, Madison Turner, Makenzie Kallevig, Lauren Dunn, Megan Lemke and Carson Buffington.

Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen found her hitters with ease as she had 33 assists on the night and also had three aces. Defensively, Kallevig played well from libero spot with 13 digs and Lemke added 11.

At the end of the night, it was still a little surreal for those five seniors as they said farewell to their home gym. They did it going out on top, however.

“It was special because we got to spend our last moments playing with our best friends,” Dunn said.

“It feels good because we played as a team this whole time,” Turner added. “So to go undefeated in league is definitely nice.”

Now for the Lady Cats, the real fun begins as they try to make their fourth consecutive state tournament Saturday during the substate tournament in Spring Hill.

Louisburg, who earned the No. 1 seed, will play No. 4 Spring Hill (14-22) at 2 p.m. at Spring Hill High School. If the Lady Cats advance, they will play the winner of No. 2 De Soto (24-12) and No. 3 Paola (19-16) at approximately 4 p.m. in the championship match.

However, whether the Lady Cats win or lose, the five seniors will always remember the good times.

“When we win it is the best feeling in the world and when we lose we all know it is going to be OK because we are all there for each other,” Lemke said. “It is pretty special.”