

Stambaugh earns spot on JCCC volleyball team



Cate Stambaugh, a 2016 Louisburg High School graduate, recently got a chance to tryout for the Johnson County Community College volleyball team and made the most of it as she garnered a spot on the Cavalier team.

Cate Stambaugh thought her volleyball career was over the day she injured her ankle in a practice last October.

Stambaugh had to sit the bench as she watched the Louisburg High School volleyball team earn its fourth straight bid to the state tournament and later a third-place finish. It was after that the 2016 LHS graduate starting making plans for college without volleyball and attend Kansas State.

Needless to say Stambaugh was thrilled those plans went awry.

Instead, she was given an opportunity to try out on the Johnson County Community College volleyball team and hasn't left the Cavalier team since. Stambaugh earned a spot on the JCCC team and is now embarking on a second chance at the sport she loves.

"After volleyball ended (last October) I knew I missed it, so when my roommate decided she would not be attending Kansas State I saw it as a sign so I contacted the head coach, Jennifer Ei," Stambaugh said. "I got a tryout the next day and

I've been practicing ever since.

"I'm so happy to be playing college volleyball. I never saw this as one of my goals but then when my career ended I knew I wasn't ready for it to be done."

Stambaugh played a vital role for Louisburg before her injury in her senior season. She finished with 168 kills to go along with 217 blocks and 70 solo blocks as the team's middle hitter.

Now, Stambaugh is trying to get back into volleyball form after being away from the sport for so long and she is happy with her progress so far at Johnson County.

"We started 2-a-days two weeks ago and this will be our last week," Stambaugh said. "They consist of weights, agility and skill work with team lunches between practices. They are tough but I have already seen so much improvement in myself and my teammates. The team bonding is a lot of fun as well."

"I am just determined to get back to my 100 percent potential and get back into volleyball shape."

She joins a very successful JCCC program that has a rich volleyball history and the Cavaliers showed that in 2015. Last year, the Cavaliers finished fifth at the national junior college tournament and took first in the East Jayhawk Conference with a 9-0 record.

The Cavaliers were 35-7 on the season and have made 14 national tournament appearances since 1975, including 10 since 2003.

Stambaugh has shifted from her normal middle hitter position and is currently hitting from the right side at practice, but she is happy to help out wherever she can.

"I am open to the right or middle," Stambaugh said. "I love them both. I just hope to have a strong two years of my career"

and maintain my school work and volleyball.”