

Lady Cats finish third at league tournament



Louisburg junior Anna Dixon sends a kill past the outstretched arms of two Paola blockers Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament at Louisburg High School. Dixon and the Lady Cats finished third overall with a 4-1 record on the day.

The Louisburg High School volleyball team is considered one of the top teams in the Frontier League and its No. 3 state ranking is one of those reasons.

On Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament, the Lady Cats looked strong early as they didn't lose a set in pool play. However, it was one match that tripped them up.

Louisburg lost to Basehor-Linwood in the semifinals 25-22 and 26-24 and the Lady Cats were denied a spot in the championship match at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats did end the day on a positive note as they ousted Spring Hill 25-14 and 25-18 to finish in third place.

De Soto cruised to win its second consecutive league tournament and didn't lose a set on the day.

"For the first go-round this season, I think we started stronger to start the day and I just think we had more energy in the morning," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "I think the girls were excited with the anticipation of getting

the season going and our energy level was higher in the first two matches. After that, I think we started to level off and play more comfortable and more timid.”

The Lady Cats (4-1) opened pool play the right way as they rolled Baldwin 25-14 and 25-11. Senior Sophie McMullen gave Louisburg the boost it needed from behind the service line as she recorded 11 aces between the two sets and also added five kills.

Junior Anna Dixon led the Lady Cats with nine kills and junior setter Carson Buffington tallied 18 assists to lead the Louisburg offense. Defensively, sophomore libero Riley Kallevig added three digs.

Louisburg didn't let up as it defeated Spring Hill 25-23 and 25-11 to earn its second pool play win behind 10 kills and six blocks from Dixon and five kills and five digs from McMullen. Kallevig and McMullen each had a pair of aces the win.



Sophomore Erin Lemke (left) and senior Mikayla Quinn rise up for a block Saturday against Spring Hill.

The Lady Cats got to exact some revenge in their final pool play match against Paola. The Panthers ended Louisburg's season a year ago, but the Lady Cats rallied to win the first set 25-17 and won the second 25-18 to finish pool play undefeated.

Dixon had nine kills to lead the Lady Cats in the winning effort. Louisburg also served well with nine aces, including four from Dixon and three from Kallevig. Buffington also had 16 assists in the win.

Basehor-Linwood proved to be a much tougher opponent for the Louisburg in the semifinals. The Lady Cats had to play from behind most of the match, but did rally late in the second set to try and force a deciding third, but couldn't overtake a pesky Bobcat team.

“Basehor has always been a scrappy team,” Compliment said. “We just kind of struggled getting around their blocks and coming together as a team. I think we just let them dominate us mentally more than anything on that front. We didn’t play together as well as we should have.”

Sophomore Haley Cain stepped up in the front row to lead Louisburg with seven kills, while McMullen and Dixon each finished with six.

Senior Mikayla Quinn added four kills and Buffington tallied 18 assists. McMullen led the Louisburg defense with six digs.



Haley Cain goes up for a kill in the semifinals

Saturday against Basehor-Linwood.

Louisburg responded well in its final match against Spring Hill and the Lady Cats didn't let that one loss bother them to come back and take third.

"I was proud of the way the girls responded by coming back and beating Spring Hill and finishing the day with a win," Compliment said. "It just wasn't the ending they had anticipated or wanted. There was still a lot of good things that happened. I was impressed with our serve receive and how Riley and Reilly (Ratliff-Becher) passed the ball. Also having Sophie back there as well just adds more consistency to our serve receive."

Kallevig had four aces to lead the Lady Cats behind the service line against Spring Hill and Dixon added three aces and eight kills. McMullen and Quinn finished up with six and five kills, respectively.

Buffington ended the day with 16 assists and Kallevig had a team-high six digs. McMullen and Ratliff-Becher each had four digs.



Louisburg players (clockwise from left) Erin Lemke (14), Carson Buffington, Sophie McMullen, Riley Kallevig and Anna Dixon celebrate a big point Saturday.

“I was proud of Carson and how she ran the offense,” Compliment said. “We changed the offense again this year to the 5-1 and she has done a good job. We have four sophomores out there at times, so we are still kind of young and it all about getting court time for them. Sophie and Anna both had some good runs there on the front row as did Mikayla, so we did some good things.”

Louisburg will try and continue its winning ways tonight when it hosts Blue Valley Southwest. The freshman team opens play at 4:30 p.m., with the junior varsity and varsity to follow.

A photo gallery from Saturday’s tournament can be found [here](#).