

Lady Cats rally to knock off Blue Valley Southwest



Louisburg senior Mikayla Quinn tips the ball over the net Tuesday against Blue Valley Southwest at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats defeated Southwest in five sets to improve its record to 5-1 on the season.

It hasn't even been a full week into the season, and it was just one win, but the Louisburg High School volleyball team got a big victory Tuesday against Blue Valley Southwest.

The win was important but the way the Lady Cats pulled it off could pay dividends for the rest of their season.

Down 2-1, and on the verge of elimination, the Lady Cats rallied to win the final two sets and defeat Blue Valley Southwest 25-20, 19-25, 23-25, 26-24 and 15-9 in Louisburg. It was a victory the Lady Cats hope gives them confidence later on in the season.

"Coming back down 1-2 to win the last two sets is huge," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "The fourth set was 26-24, so it wasn't easy, but the players battled to the end. We seemed to start each set strong but would hit a wall and start pulling back once Southwest made a few runs. That is something we'll need to work on as the season progresses – establishing mental toughness and persevering.

"We lost some energy during the second and third set which Blue Valley Southwest capitalized on. Overall, I was pleased with how the team rallied back, played together and finished the night."

Louisburg senior Sophie McMullen guided the Lady Cats back from the brink of defeat to give them new life. McMullen recorded eight kills, three aces and a block in the fourth set alone to help the Lady Cats to the two-point win.

McMullen finished the match with 22 kills, 19 digs, nine aces and four blocks to lead Louisburg in a back-and-forth night.

"Sophie did a great job of making some big plays down the stretch that kept us in the match and helped us pull out the win," Compliment said. "She had a few huge hits as well as some big serves. Our middles (Haley Cain and Mikayla Quinn) established themselves early in the match which helped all of the hitters stand a better chance for a split block or a one-on-one opportunity. Carson (Buffington) did a good job of moving the offense around to each of the hitters."



Junior Anna Dixon goes up for a block Tuesday against Blue Valley Southwest.

Buffington had a good evening running the offense with 46 assists in the five sets and set up several teammates in the process.

Junior Anna Dixon had a team-high 30 kills to go along with four aces and six blocks. Cain finished with six kills and five blocks in the middle.

Defensively, Dixon added 16 digs to her line, while Buffington and sophomore libero Riley Kallevig added 10.

Louisburg (5-1) jumped out to a 12-4 lead in the first set and

kept the Timberwolves at arm's length to get off to a good start. Louisburg again got out quickly for a 5-1 lead in the second set, but Southwest stormed back to take the lead midway through the set and held on.

The Lady Cats held a 13-11 lead in the third, only to watch the Timberwolves come back again and capture the set.

Louisburg had to win the final two to pull off the comeback – and it did.

McMullen helped give Louisburg an early 5-1 lead after a pair of aces, and after Southwest tried to comeback again, McMullen responded with four kills and an ace to give Louisburg a 14-12 advantage.

The Timberwolves eventually took a 17-16 lead, but a Quinn kill tied the match and the Lady Cats responded with a McMullen kill and an ace from Dixon to regain the lead at 19-17.

Blue Valley Southwest led 22-21 late, but a kill and a tip from McMullen gave the Lady Cats the advantage back and Louisburg held on thanks to a pair of Dixon kills that ended the set when it was tied at 24-all.

Louisburg used that momentum and left no doubt on who would take that deciding fifth set. The Lady Cats jumped out to an 11-3 lead thanks to three kills and an ace from Dixon and cruised from there.

The Lady Cats will try for another dual win tonight when it hosts Olathe South. Freshmen begins at 4:30 p.m., with junior varsity and varsity to follow.