

Louisburg downs pair of state-ranked teams



Louisburg junior Carson Buffington (left) sets up teammate Haley Cain for a kill Thursday against Santa Fe Trail. The Lady Cats defeated both Burlington and Santa Fe Trail during a triangular at Louisburg High School.

The Louisburg High School volleyball team had its hands full Tuesday as the Lady Cats saw a pair of ranked teams invade their gym.

Burlington and Santa Fe Trail, who were slotted at No. 4 and No. 7, respectively, in Class 4A-Division II, each had a shot to knock off Louisburg – which is ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division 1. In the battle of top teams, the Lady Cats won each time.

Louisburg handed Burlington its first loss of the season with a 25-18 and 25-20 win in the first match of the triangular. The Lady Cats then did the same against Santa Fe Trail as they rallied to win the first set 26-24 and won the second 25-16.

Against Burlington, the Lady Cats (8-1) were in control in both sets but let Burlington hang around due to some miscues. Still, Louisburg was able to pull away when it needed to in both sets.

Junior Anna Dixon led the Louisburg offense with 12 kills and

senior Sophie McMullen added eight. McMullen also finished with a team-high three aces and nine digs.

Setter Carson Buffington tallied 20 assists, five digs and two aces in the victory and Dixon had six digs defensively.

“The first match against Burlington, we just didn’t play with a lot of energy and a lot of enthusiasm,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We just kind of went through the motions. I think we missed about 10 serves and had way too many errors. I told them they need to find some energy or some spark out there for their next match and I think they were able to do that.”

The Lady Cats needed to find that energy as they found themselves with their backs against wall in their first set with Santa Fe Trail. Louisburg was on the verge of losing the first set as they trailed 23-19, but the Lady Cats rallied behind a pair of kills and an ace from McMullen, and a kill from Dixon, to pull out the 26-24 win.

Louisburg used that momentum to pull away from Santa Fe Trail in the second set and won the match going away.



Senior Sophie McMullen goes up for a kill Thursday against Santa Fe Trail.

“For them to come back in that first set was huge,” Compliment said. “I always tell the girls that they have to stay aggressive. If they start pulling back, then the other team is going to get the momentum. I was proud of how they answered back and dug out of that deficit to come back and win. That energy just carried over into the second one.

“When they play together, and play with high energy like that, a mistake here or there isn’t going to hurt as much as when we play flat. I thought we really picked it up there and it was good to see.”

Defense propelled the Lady Cats against Santa Fe Trail as they recorded 26 digs as a team. Riley Kallevig, the team’s libero,

led the team with six digs. Sophomore Reilly Ratliff-Becher and McMullen also added five digs a piece in the win, while Dixon and Buffington added four each.

Senior Mikayla Quinn had a strong game at the net with a team-high four blocks, while sophomores Haley Cain and Erin Lemke each added three.

“Our defense was good there,” Compliment said. “Santa Fe has some good hitters and they were a good team. I thought our defense really stepped up against them and did a good job. Our back row did a great job as Kallevig had some big digs, Sophie had some big saves in the back and our hitters were stepping up. We had some aggressive serves that went in as well.”



Sophomore Reilly Ratliff-Becher chases down a ball Thursday against Santa Fe Trail.

Kallevig and McMullen each finished with a pair of aces and

McMullen added nine kills to her line. Dixon led the Lady Cats with a team-high 10 kills and Buffington had 21 assists.

Another ranked team will make its way to Louisburg today as the Lady Cats will face off with Lansing – the No. 2 team in Class 5A. Louisburg will follow that up with a trip to Lansing on Saturday for the Lansing Invitational in what is another tough stretch in its schedule.

“We have to come ready to go because Lansing is going to be a tough match,” Compliment said. “They are always good and it is great competition. We have the home court advantage, so hopefully that plays to our hand. The Lansing tournament is always tough and I think it will give us a good idea of where we are at after playing outside of some of our area schools.”

LOUISBURG SHUTS DOWN OLATHE SOUTH

The Louisburg volleyball team continued its schedule of playing larger programs on Sept. 1 when it hosted Olathe South.

The bigger school didn’t intimidate the Lady Cats as they downed Olathe South 25-10, 26-24 and 25-21 in the best-of-5 dual. Although it wasn’t the cleanest of matches, the Lady Cats were happy to take the win, but they know there are things they have to work on.

“Of Olathe South’s 10 points in the first set, 7 or 8 were on our errors,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “I think we had a lack of focus to start. We got down in the second set and we really had to dig deep and push to come out and win. I think we finished strong in the third set and they just need to find that level of intensity in every match. We lacked a little bit of tenacity and it showed at times.”

Senior Sophie McMullen led the Louisburg attack with 17 kills

to go along with a team-high three aces. Junior Anna Dixon added 16 kills in the win and junior setter Carson Buffington recorded 33 assists.

Defensively, Dixon led Louisburg at the net with four blocks, while senior Mikayla Quinn and sophomore Haley Cain each had three. Libero Riley Kallevig, sophomore Reilly Ratliff-Becher, Dixon and McMullen finished five digs on the night.