

Louisburg wins home tourney for first time in five years



The Louisburg High School volleyball team captured its home tournament title Saturday for the first time since 2013. Members of the team are (front row, from left) Riley Kallevig, Rinny McMullen, Reilly Ratliff-Becher, Davis Guetterman, Chase Kallevig; (back row) head coach Jessica Compliment, Alyse Moore, Sydni Keagle, Carleigh Pritchard, Anna Dixon, Carson Buffington, Haley Cain, Erin Lemke and assistant coach Mary Quinn.

A year ago, the Louisburg High School volleyball team found itself playing at the middle school of their home tournament.

A trip to the middle school usually means you are playing in the consolation bracket and it was a feeling the Lady Cats had a tough time letting go of last season.

They wanted to make sure it didn't happen again.

Louisburg put together a dominant performance Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational as it rolled through five matches without losing a set and the Lady Cats captured their first home tournament title since 2013.

"Last year was not good," senior Carson Buffington said. "We did not enjoy going to the middle school at all. To stay here and win the championship felt really good. It really is

exciting because the last tournament we played in we got second and I think we are just getting better and better as the season goes on.”

The Lady Cats (17-5) got off to a great start in pool play as they downed Leavenworth (25-16, 25-8), Shawnee Mission East (25-18, 25-12) and Olathe North (25-16 and 25-12).

Shawnee Mission West was Louisburg’s opponent in the semifinals of the championship bracket and the Lady Cats rolled to a pair of 25-14 victories. The Lady Cats then moved on to the championship against Basehor-Linwood, and saw their toughest competition of the day, but still won in two, 25-20 and 25-23.

“I am very proud of them,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “I wanted them to go after every match and not leave anything to chance. I wanted them to leave it all out on the court and finish it. It was big for them because it gives them a confidence boost and it allowed us to pick up five more wins and a tournament win. The biggest thing though is they had fun out there and that is important too.”



Members of the Louisburg volleyball team celebrate a big point Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational.

Although much of the day happened without a lot of suspense, the Lady Cats did encounter a some adversity in their championship match against Basehor.

After winning the first set, Louisburg built a 14-8 lead on the Bobcats in the second set and appeared as if it was going to run away with the match. Instead, Basehor fought back and took a 20-15 lead late before Louisburg made a run of its own.

The Lady Cats rallied to tie it at 23-all before they won the final two points to secure the championship.

"Teams are going to make good plays over and over again and we just can't let that get in our head and dig a big hole for ourselves," senior Anna Dixon said. "We just moved on to the next play and were able to pull it out."

“We knew coming in that we would be playing teams that we haven’t seen before, but we just wanted to come in and play our game. The record really matters this year for the postseason, so we are just taking it game by game and getting that record up for sub-state.”

Louisburg played well in many different areas Saturday, but its defense was a big reason for its success. Libero Reilly Ratliff-Becher, along with Riley Kallevig and Dixon, provided the team with several key digs throughout the day.



Anna Dixon sends one of her team-high 47 kills over the net Saturday.

Kallevig recorded a team-high 43 digs and Dixon finished with 34 as both play all six rotations. Ratliff-Becher also played well with 32 digs and freshman Rinny McMullen had 27.

“I thought our defense, especially Riley and Reilly, had some

great digs and some great saves,” Compliment said. “The libero always controls the defense and runs that back court, but one of the advantages we have is Reilly Ratliff, who is the current libero, running that defense and then we have Riley Kallevig who was our libero the last two years. Both of them back there is just amazing sometimes because of the plays that they get to.

“Then you see Kallevig’s defense show on the front row and she gets a lot of dunks and things that trickle over and she reads tips really well. I think that just comes from playing libero before and they both did really well.”

Dixon was a big threat at the net offensively as she recorded a team-high 47 kills to spark the Louisburg offense. Junior middle hitter Haley Cain had 14 kills, while fellow middle hitter Carleigh Pritchard and Buffington each added 13 win the win.

The setter combination of McMullen and Davis Guetterman also distributed a lot of those swing opportunities. McMullen led Louisburg with 46 assists over the five matches and Guetterman added 35.

Louisburg also served well at times as Kallevig led the team with seven aces, while Cain and Dixon each finished with six.



Junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher gets ready to make a pass Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational.

“Our serving was more aggressive this time around, even though we did make some more errors,” Compliment said. “Anna was a little more consistent on her serves, which is big, and we stepped it up there as well.

“Hitting-wise, I think we are moving the ball around more as well and more players are getting more opportunities to swing instead of just setting it to Anna all the time.”

Louisburg will try to keep its winning ways going today when it travels to Baldwin for a Frontier League dual, before the Lady Cats return home for another league dual Thursday against Tonganoxie. They are currently 4-0 in league play.

“One of our main goals to start the season was to win league, and right now we are undefeated,” Dixon said. “As we get

closer and closer to the postseason, we are working harder and harder in practice toward our ultimate goal – which is to get back to state.”

For a photo gallery from Saturday’s tournament, make sure to [click here](#).