

# Compliment resigns as Lady Cat volleyball coach



*Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment has resigned her post after 15 seasons with the Lady Cat program. Compliment helped guide the Lady Cats to eight state tournament appearances and three state runner-up finishes.*

When Jessica Compliment walked off the floor following her team's semifinal sub-state loss to Bishop Miege back in October, the only thought on her mind was how that match was more like a state championship battle.

It wasn't your normal match as the two perennial state contenders had to square off so early in the postseason. She was proud of her team and was looking forward to another season of helping Louisburg volleyball get to another state tournament.

Little did she know, it would be the last time she would find herself on the Lady Cat sideline.

In late January, Compliment submitted her resignation as head volleyball coach as she will be stepping away to spend more time with her growing family as she, and her husband Bret, are expecting their third child.

"It was a difficult decision, and I went back and forth on whether or not I could make the fall season work," Compliment said. "I've put many, many hours into building this program, and stepping away from it wasn't easy. My husband and I have

been blessed with two little kiddos and are expecting our third this summer. It came down to that I couldn't figure out a way to complete all of my duties of a head coach during the summer and at the start of the season while also being there for my three kids and husband. I have an amazing coaching staff with Leanna Willer and Kallie O'Keefe, and I know they would have been more than willing to pick up more of the load during the summer, but I didn't feel like it was fair to them or to the players. Plus, I was starting to feel the pull that I needed to devote more time to my family.

"I had 10 seasons without kids so I could spend as much time as I wanted to over the summer and during the season at the school. My husband coaches as well, so thankfully he's always understood the time commitment that goes into coaching. He has been a huge supporter over the years and quickly became a Louisburg volleyball fan. Over the past five seasons, I've had to learn to balance my time between coaching, teaching, and being a wife and mom. Every year since having kids, I hear from parents, 'Enjoy this time! Before you know it they'll be graduating'" 'They're only this little once so soak it all up.' My daughter is getting to the point where she's asking and wanting to participate in activities, and I'd like to be there for her. So I felt like it was time."

Compliment certainly left her mark on the Louisburg volleyball program as she finished her 15th season back in October and has an impressive resume to show for it.

In the decade-and-a-half as the Lady Cat coach, Compliment guided Louisburg to eight state tournament appearances and placed in the top four of seven of them.

She also finished nine wins shy of 400 as she posted a record of 391-226 and helped Louisburg to three state championship matches.



***Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment finished up her Louisburg career just nine wins shy of 400.***

As tough as it was to come to the decision, it was an even tougher for Compliment to tell her team of the news. It came as a surprise to all of them.

“I was shocked to say the least,” junior setter Davis Guetterman said. “Next year will be a different atmosphere because Coach Compliment has ran this program since I’ve known it.

“She was always was there if you needed something and those 6 a.m. bus rides she was always pumped and ready to go even if you were half asleep.”

Those bus rides – and many other things – Compliment has had a hard time saying goodbye to, including those memories with her players. It has been just as difficult for some of her team.

“Coach Compliment was a very caring coach to all of her athletes through the years,” junior Rinny McMullen said. “From letting me jump in drills when I was in middle school, to coaching me almost up until my senior year, she was always there with open arms with an end goal of making each individual better.

“Not only was she a coach on the court, she was a great teacher and a great second mother figure when some of us needed it the most. She definitely never failed to make us smile and put us before herself 100 percent of the time.”

The problem with having such a successful run at coaching is it is hard to remember all those positives and Compliment has plenty to choose from.

She has three state runner-up finishes on her resume, including in 2013 when the Lady Cats were named the Kansas Volleyball Association Program of the Year. Compliment was also named the MO-KAN Small Class Coach of the Year three times and helped Louisburg to four Frontier League championships.

However, it is the little moments that Compliment looks back on the most.



***Jessica Compliment was all smiles during a state tournament match in 2019.***

“It’s true what they say about how you won’t remember all of the Ws or Ls, but you’ll remember the time spent together as a team, the relationships built, and those moments that make up a whole season or career,” Compliment said. “There are a lot of matches and moments that stand out over the years, but honestly they do start to run together. Qualifying for state for the very first time is one that I don’t think I’ll ever forget. Beating Miege last year in the first round of sub state is another unforgettable match.

“There have been a lot of memorable moments, so it is hard to pick out a few, but one summer day that I’ll never forget is the day the senior moms (Mary Dvorak, Beth Dixon, and Angie O’Keefe) surprised me by throwing a bridal shower during an open gym practice. The best part was when the mom’s asked the

players to give me marital advice based on what they see/know from their own parents' marriage. There were a lot of laughs over their 'advice.' Dance parties...the volleyball team's hidden 'talent' over the years is dancing and singing. At the most random times one, two, or the whole team would break out the dance moves."

Now Compliment finds herself dancing off into the sunset as she takes great pride in what she has helped accomplish the last 15 years.

"It's kind of crazy when I look back over the years," Compliment said. "It hasn't always been smooth sailing. There were definitely some bumps along the way and some drama from time to time, but overall my experience as the head coach at Louisburg High School has been a positive one and one that I won't ever forget.

"I'm excited to see what the teams can accomplish next season and in the years to come. As I told the players at the meeting, I'll be their number one fan and cheering them on next season. I wish nothing but the best for the future of Louisburg volleyball and can't say enough thank yous to everyone who has supported me over the years. It has been quite the ride."