Louisburg can’t overtake Ottawa in five set loss at home



Louisburg senior Claire Brown puts down a kill Tuesday during the Wildcats’ home match against Ottawa. Brown led Louisburg with 17 kills in the team’s 3-2 loss to the Cyclones.

A difficult early schedule has made life tough on the Louisburg volleyball team to begin the 2022 season

The Wildcats had a chance to get back on track Tuesday when they hosted Ottawa for a Frontier League dual and they were one set win away from stopping a five-match losing skid.

Ottawa had other ideas. The defending state runner-up handed Louisburg a 3-2 loss in what was a highly-contested match on both sides.

Louisburg opened with a 25-21 win in the first set, Ottawa followed with a 25-15 victory in the second, before the Wildcats took the pivotal third set, 25-21. The Cyclones rallied back to take the next two 25-15 and 15-7 to win the match.

“I thought there were moments where we were playing really, really well, but we were unfortunately not as consistent with those moments as we needed to be to end up on top,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “Playing any five set match is tough, and losing in the end can feel especially draining.

That being said, I think we were able to recognize a lot of positive things from our play throughout the night to build on moving forward."

One of those positives was senior Claire Brown as she made her impact felt all over the floor. Brown led the Wildcats with 17 kills and was also among the team leaders in digs with 12.

"Claire stepped up at the net to lead our team and she became our go-to throughout the night when we needed a kill," Willer said. "Her court presence was felt by everyone all night long and she seemed to really find her groove."



Louisburg senior Allie Kennedy goes up for a kill Tuesday against Ottawa.

After the two teams traded victories in the first two sets, the Wildcats (3-9) came out strong in the third. Louisburg went on an 11-3 run to take hold of the match and seemed to have all of the momentum.

Brown had seven kills in that third set and the Wildcat defense stepped up in the process. Senior Emma Prettyman had a

team-high three blocks, while senior Allie Kennedy, along with juniors Megan Quinn and Hailey Sword, each had two.

Junior Madelyn Williams was also strong defensively in the back with a team-best six digs in that third set.

Ottawa took that momentum right back in the fourth. The Cyclones jumped out to a 12-5 advantage and went on to take the set. They used that string of good play to their advantage to take the fifth and final set, as well.

“Ottawa’s outsides are very strong and we had trouble stopping them in the sets we lost,” Willer said. “Additionally, I think Ottawa won the serve and pass game in those final two sets, which cost us in the long run.”

Along with Brown’s play at the net, the Wildcats had six kills each from senior Adyson Ross, Kennedy and Sword. Prettyman finished with a team-high five blocks.



Louisburg junior Madelyn Williams makes a pass Tuesday against Ottawa.

Williams was strong behind the service line with a team-best

four aces on the night and also led Louisburg with 17 digs. Ross was second on the team with 14 digs.

Quinn led the Wildcat offense with 34 assists from the setter spot.

Louisburg has a busy rest of the week and will try to get back on track tonight as the Wildcats travel to Fort Scott for a triangular with Girard. First match is set for 5 p.m.

The Wildcats will then host the Louisburg Invitational on Saturday in hopes of righting the ship.

“We are looking forward to the rest of this week as we have seven more games as opportunities to put what we’ve learned about ourselves in action,” Willer said. “We have some great opportunities to showcase what this team can really do in our triangular and home tournament, so I can’t wait to see how our girls attack these next few games.”