Wildcats get revenge win over Tonganoxie on Senior Night



Louisburg celebrates a big point from Hailey Sword during the Wildcats' 3-1 victory Tuesday over Tonganoxie on Senior Night.

On a night where Louisburg volleyball had a chance to honor its six seniors, the Wildcats also got the opportunity to exact a little revenge.

Coming off a tough tournament performance Saturday, Louisburg had a chance to avenge one of its losses from that day on Tuesday when it hosted Tonganoxie.

The Wildcats played like a different team as they downed the Chieftains, 3-1, and improved their record to 16-13 on the season.

"This was a big win for us," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "Our girls came in very determined to beat them. We lost to them over the weekend, but didn't play our best. We knew that we had it in us to win, and everyone wanted to win for the seniors on senior night as well."

Louisburg honored seniors Ashlyn Berck, Katie Elpers, Izzy

Moreland, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword and Madie Williams and their parents prior to the match. All of those seniors made an impact in some way in the 25-20, 25-22, 12-25 and 26-24 victory.



(From left): Louisburg seniors Madie Williams, Izzy Moreland, Hailey Sword, Ashlyn Berck, Megan Quinn and Katie Elpers were all honored Tuesday on Senior Night.

“These seniors have dedicated so much time and energy to our program,” Willer said. “They have each played different roles throughout the years and have been willing to take on whatever role best helps the team to be successful. Many of them have worked really hard to form relationships with our underclassmen and serve as mentors and leaders for the whole team.

“I think the impact they have had on this program was evidenced by the tears shed by all of our underclassmen on senior night who will be so sad to see them go. As none of them are planning to go on and play volleyball at the next

level, it means a lot that they have each given so much to a sport that they love to play with each other.”

It was a balanced effort for Louisburg as it jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the match thanks to different players stepping up at the net and on defense.



Louisburg senior Madie Williams goes up for a kill Tuesday against Tonganoxie.

Williams led the Louisburg attack with 12 kills on the night from her all-around spot, while Sword and sophomore Delaney Nelsen each had eight. Morland and Elpers added seven and six kills, respectively, and sophomore Caileigh Kilgore added five.

Quinn and freshman Adelyn Moore ran the offense well. Quinn led the way with 24 assists on the night and Moore finished with 15.

“I think we were able to really implement the balanced attack idea that we’ve been talking about all season,” Willer said. “Our setters did a great job of finding each hitter and putting them in a position to be successful. Everyone contributed, which helps make it easier to find a single blocker and holes in the defense on the other side.”

Defensively, several Wildcats made big plays throughout the night.



Senior libero Ashlyn Berck dives on the floor to dig up a ball Tuesday at home.

Along with leading the team in kills, Williams also had a team-best 18 digs and Sword was right behind her with 17. Quinn and Nelsen each had 14 and Moore contributed nine.

Berck also had a big night from behind the service line as she tallied a team-high five aces.

“Our defense stepped up throughout the night, and we made the

conscious decision to be nothing but relentless in our pursuit," Willer said. "After the third set, our captains talked to the team about how defense was going to win this game and that we just really needed to leave it all out on the floor. Their leadership in those efforts were definitely noticed, and their challenge to the team had everyone rising to the occasion."

The Wildcats got out to a pair of relatively easy wins in the first two sets, but the Chieftains controlled the third to keep the match alive.

Louisburg got right back on track as the Wildcats jumped out to a 7-3 lead in the fourth. However, the Chieftains made a run of their own to grab a 16-13 advantage.



Senior Izzy Moreland goes up for a kill Tuesday against Tonganoxie.

Moreland responded with back-to-back kills and then a Tonganoxie net violation tied the match. The Chieftains went back up 18-16, but again the Wildcats rallied with a kill from Sword and Williams.

Berck then added an ace to put Louisburg up 19-18. The lead would change hands a couple different times, but the Wildcats took a 24-22 advantage on a pair of Nelsen kills.

Tonganoxie tied the match again at 24-all, but Moreland notched a kill on a set from Quinn and then the Chieftains were called for under the net to give the Wildcats the win.

“Overall, I think we played well and toughed it out on defense to pull out the win,” Willer said. “We showed a lot of heart, and I am proud of the way that we were able to bounce back from mistakes or big plays that they made to answer with big plays of our own.”

Louisburg is back in action this Saturday when the Wildcats travel to the Atchison Invitational.

Wildcats go 1-4 at Ottawa

Louisburg competed at the Ottawa Invitational last Saturday and got out to a great start, which included a revenge win over Ottawa to start the day.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, it was the only victory they could garner on the day as they fell to Basehor-Linwood, Maize South, Bishop Miege and Tonganoxie.

The Wildcats fought hard for much of the day, including taking a set from the defending state champion – Bishop Miege.

“The Ottawa tournament is always filled with tough competition, and this year was no different,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “We started the morning off by beating Ottawa after losing to them a couple of weeks ago, so it’s

always nice to get that ‘revenge’ win. The biggest positives on the day were that we competed hard with each team and battled through some tough sets.

“We took a set from Bishop Miege, and in all of our matches we fought hard to stay in the game, we just didn’t quite have the power to pull off the wins in the end. We are looking forward to cleaning up some aspects of the game in practice this week and putting some more tallies in the win column.”