

Wildcats drop pair of close matches to Trinity, Piper



Louisburg junior Rylee Telken tips the ball over the outstretched arms of a Piper player Tuesday at Piper.

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – It has been a difficult schedule so far for the Louisburg volleyball team and it continued Tuesday at Piper.

The Wildcats squared off with Piper, a Class 5A program, and Wichita-Trinity Academy, which is the No. 3 ranked team in Class 3A. Although they left with a pair of losses, Louisburg more than held its own.

Louisburg fell to Trinity 25-23 and 25-21, and then ended the night with 25-23 and 25-23 loss to Piper. The Wildcats had

leads in both matches, but some rough stretches were too much to overcome.

“Overall, I was really proud of how our team played in the triangular,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “Both Trinity and Piper are really solid teams with wins over good teams thus far, so we knew we were in for some good matches. Losing sets by 2, then 4, then 2 and 2 points again is so frustrating because it feels like we are right there. We can taste that victory but we just couldn’t quite overcome the runs that we let each team go on in the end.”

Against Trinity, the Knights jumped out to a 22-14 lead in the first set, but the Wildcats made a run to make it interesting. Louisburg junior McKenna Lohse served seven straight points, had two aces, and the Wildcats got kills from Caileigh Kilgore, Addison Mallett and Rylee Telken to tie it up a 22-all.

Trinity would end up taking the set, but it gave the Wildcats some momentum for the second. Louisburg took a 14-10 lead behind kills from Mallett and Katie McKain.

The Knights would tie it at 14-all, but the Wildcats responded to take a 19-16 lead on kills from Adelyn Moore and Kilgore. Trinity responded with a run of their own to take a 21-19 lead and held on for the win.

Mallett led the Wildcats at the net with seven kills, while Kilgore finished with six. Defensively, Telken had two blocks, while Moore ran the offense with 22 assists.

Louisburg also had four aces in the match, including two from Lohse, who also had four kills. Senior Ally Brown led the Wildcat back row with 10 digs and an ace, while senior libero Aspen Coulter and Moore had eight and seven digs, respectively.



Louisburg sophomore Adelyn Moore recorded 36 assists in two matches on Tuesday at Piper.

In its match with Piper, Louisburg found itself down 23-15 in the first set, only to make another comeback. Moore served four straight points, and got a kill from Kilgore and block from Telken to make it 23-19.

Louisburg cut it to 24-23 as Brown served three straight points including an ace, but could get no closer.

Piper took another big 15-8 lead in the second set, but the Wildcats put together another run. Brown served four straight points including an ace, and after a block from Telken and a kill from Mallett, the Wildcats cut it to 15-13.

The Pirates widened their lead to 20-14 and were able to hold off Louisburg late.

Louisburg (1-4) wasn't at full strength as it was without senior middle blocker Eryn Richardson, who was sidelined with an injury. Telken came off the bench and responded as she led the Wildcats with four blocks and also had a pair of kills.

"Rylee stepped up in a huge way, and it was so fun to see her really shine in a position she hasn't played all year," Willer said. "She really loves the game and you can tell that she watches a lot of volleyball because of how well she can anticipate the next play. Her speed and agility were a big asset to us as well because she was able to put up a strong block against solid attackers from each team.

"I love the depth that this group of girls gives me. We have a lot of girls who can be versatile and excel in multiple positions and Tuesday was a great example of that."

Mallett and McKain each led the Louisburg attack with four kills each and Moore tallied 14 assists. Brown had the team's lone aces with two, while Moore and Coulter had nine and eight digs, respectively.

Piper did a lot of damage from behind the service line as it tallied 10 aces on the night, compared to just two for Louisburg.

The Wildcats will try and bounce back Thursday when they host Ottawa in a Frontier League dual. Varsity is set to begin at 6:30 p.m.

"Other than one, maybe two rough patches each set, we were playing some really great volleyball," Willer said. "So now, we are really focusing on what we can do as a team to cut teams off from those long runs and get the ball back in our servers' hands. We are all very much ready to get back on the winning side of the scoreboard."