

Wildcats down Wamego, Ottawa in regular season finale



Louisburg's Katie McKain (12) and McKenna Lohse go up for a block last Thursday at Wamego.

WAMEGO – With the Frontier League schedule complete and the postseason right around the corner, the Louisburg volleyball team had two games remaining on its regular season schedule.

As far as the league standings and postseason schedule goes, the matches last Thursday didn't mean much, but the Wildcats wanted to enter the postseason on a positive note.

Louisburg was able to accomplish that as the Wildcats defeated Wamego and Ottawa during a triangular at Wamego High School.

The Wildcats rallied to beat Wamego, 2-1, in the first match of the night and then took care of business against Ottawa in a 2-0 win. Louisburg finished its regular season with a 19-15 record.

‘It was great to go out to Wamego and get a couple of wins,’ Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “We talked a lot about how it was important to us to finish the regular season on a positive note and having fun as a team. There were moments in both games that were touch and go as we had more errors than we would have liked, but each time we were able to turn it around and play at a higher level later in the game.

“Both Wamego and Ottawa are scrappy teams that defended us well to start, but our girls did a good job at making some adjustments to end on a more successful note.”

After a tough start in a first set loss to Wamego, the Wildcats were able to rally in the 24-26, 25-13 and 25-19 victory.

Louisburg served tough to help get back in it as the Wildcats tallied 12 aces, including three from seniors Aspen Coulter, Ally Brown and junior McKenna Lohse. They also had two from Addi Mallett and one from Delaney Nelsen.

The middles also had a big night as Lohse and senior Eryn Richardson each had nine kills to lead the team, and junior Caileigh Kilgore had seven.

Sophomore Adelyn Moore had a team high 28 assists to help lead the offensive attack.

Defensively, senior Jaden Bentz and Coulter each had nine digs to lead the way and Moore had eight. Senior Ally Brown and Nelsen each had seven.

Against Ottawa, the Wildcats survived the first set with a 28-26 victory, but dominated the second set 25-10 to earn the

sweep.

Mallett led the Wildcat attack at the net with seven kills, while Lohse finished with six. Moore also had 16 assists on the night.

Defensively, the Wildcats found a lot of success at the net with 10 blocks, including three from Lohse and two from senior Katie McKain, Moore and Richardson.

In the back row, Brown led the way with six digs and also had an ace, as did Nelsen.

“Looking at the performances, one of the biggest positives in my mind is that all of our stats were well-distributed among every player,” Willer said. “We had 4 players with double digit kills on the evening, and 4 other players with double digit digs. We’ve been working on balance throughout the season so that was really good to see.

“Both Kenna Lohse and Ally Brown stood out as Kenna led us at the net with 15 kills and 5 blocks. Ally had a great night in the back row as she led the team with 4 Aces and 13 digs.”

Now the focus will be on the postseason for Louisburg. The Wildcats are the No. 9 seed and will face off with No. 8 Independence at 3 p.m. Saturday during the sub-state tournament at Rock Creek High School.

If the Wildcats win, they will advance to the championship where they will meet the winner of No. 1 Rock Creek and Labette Co./Fort Scott match.

“As we look ahead to the postseason, we are looking forward to putting in some hard work in the gym in our final guaranteed week of practices so that we are at our best by Saturday,” Willer said. “With the positive energy that this team can bring to the court, we know that we are capable of accomplishing some big things.”