

Wildcat volleyball battles Harrisonville to five-set victory



Louisburg junior Breck Nielsen goes up for a kill during a match earlier this season.

HARRISONVILLE, Mo. – The Louisburg High School volleyball team showed its toughness and depth last Thursday night, rallying on the road to defeat Harrisonville in a dramatic five-set match, 16-25, 25-20, 26-24, 18-25, 15-10.

After dropping the opening set, the Wildcats found their rhythm behind senior Caileigh Kilgore, who led the team in three statistical categories. Kilgore recorded a team-high 15 kills, fired in five service aces, and tied for the team lead with 14 digs.

"Harrisonville was our best match so far this season," Louisburg coach Rich Brown said. "Obviously we struggled at times and Harrisonville did a great job of making us adjust our play to cover our weaknesses. Five set matches are fun from the standpoint of looking at how a team can overcome adversity and stay focused on the long term goals.

"Early in the first set we made a bunch of unforced errors and it took a while to settle down. Midway through the fourth set, our serves started to fall inbounds and that gave us some momentum for the fifth set. I'm pretty sure I enjoyed the stress of the match more than our fans did."

Setter Adelyn Moore was the engine behind the offense, finishing with an impressive 44 assists to go along with steady decision-making throughout the night. At the net, Louisburg had several hitters contribute to the attack: Rylee Telken and McKenna Lohse each posted nine kills, while Delaney Nelsen and Breck Nielsen added eight apiece.

Telken also had a strong night defensively, leading the Wildcats with five blocks. Lohse added three blocks of her own, helping slow down Harrisonville's front line in critical moments.

In the back row, libero Regan Williams matched Kilgore with a team-high 14 digs and also served three aces. Nelsen and senior Stella Bohnenstiehl added 13 and 11 digs, respectively, helping Louisburg keep rallies alive and maintain control late in the match.

The win over Harrisonville capped off a strong week for the Wildcats, who also earned a straight-set sweep on Sept. 16 at Bonner Springs: 25-14, 25-21, 25-19.

"Bonner presented some unique challenges to us as far as playing at our pace," Brown said. "The faster a match goes, the happier and more energetic we are. Our match tempo lagged and we are going to have to work on pushing the pace of the

match in the future.”

Kilgore once again led the offense with 14 kills, while Moore tallied 33 assists in the win. As a team, Louisburg served up 13 aces, using aggressive serving to keep Bonner Springs off balance throughout the match.

Now riding a two-match winning streak, the Wildcats (8-3) will look to carry that momentum into their upcoming schedule as league play tonight at Eudora.