

Lady Cats end season with loss in title match



Sophomore Anna Dixon sends the ball over the net for Louisburg on Saturday during the Class 4A substate tournament at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats earned a spot in the title game before falling to Paola in two sets.

Louisburg left it all out on the floor.

The Lady Cats chased down and dug up every loose ball they could get their hands on, hit the ball as hard as possible and played it out to the final point. The problem was, when that final point came, Louisburg had to sit and watch as another team celebrated on its home court.

During the Class 4A substate tournament Saturday at Louisburg High School, Paola downed Louisburg 25-22 and 29-27 in the championship game to snap a streak of four straight substate titles for the Lady Cats.

“They are disappointed,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “A lot of girls wanted to keep that streak going and the tradition that has been set. They feel like they let some of their teammates down and they wanted that trip back down to state. For those that have already been, they wanted their teammates that haven’t been down there to experience that. It definitely hurts.”

The teams went back and forth at each other in both sets and created for an intense match between the two rivals. Louisburg jumped out to an early 14-10 lead in the first set behind four kills from sophomore Anna Dixon and a pair of aces from junior Sophie McMullen.

However, Paola went on a mini 6-2 run to grab a 19-18 lead. The Panthers eventually built a 23-20 advantage and pulled away to take the opening set.



Freshman Haley Cain (left) and junior Sophie McMullen team up for a block Saturday during the Class 4A substate tournament.

In the second set, Louisburg again built an early 7-3 lead after three kills from Dixon and an ace from McMullen. The Panthers followed with a 6-1 run to go up 9-8, but the Lady Cats went back on top after a long volley and then McMullen

followed with a kill to take a 13-10 lead.

Paola battled back to grab an 18-17 lead late in the match and both squads would trade points the rest of the way. Dixon and McMullen added kills to keep the Lady Cats in it and freshman libero Riley Kallevig added a big dig to tie the match at 25-all.

The Lady Cats faced match point four different times and each time responded to tie it up and eventually went up 27-26 to force a match point of their own.

Senior Ellie Katzer, Kallevig, Dixon, McMullen and sophomore Carson Buffington were all a part of several big volleys late, but with it tied at 27, the Panthers responded with the final two points and the victory.

“The Paola match was a good one,” Compliment said. “Paola played great, but I thought we played really well too. We played some of our best ball today. We were running down so many balls, the girls were fighting for everything and didn’t let the ball drop. They really wanted it and they 100 percent went after it. I think some nerves got us a few times and that comes with the territory. Overall, we played well though.”

Dixon led the Louisburg offense with 15 kills, while McMullen added six kills and three aces. Senior Olivia Bradley also played well at the net with a team-high five blocks.

Dixon also added a team-high 17 digs, while Katzer and Kallevig had 14 and 13, respectively. Buffington ran the Louisburg offense and led the way with 14 assists and McMullen added eight.

Louisburg (23-17) started the day strong with a 25-16 and 25-18 win over Ottawa in the substate semifinals. The Lady Cats were never threatened by the Cyclones as they played with the lead most of the way.



Freshman Riley Kallevig sends a serve over the net Saturday in Louisburg.

McMullen had a big match with a team-high 14 kills. Dixon added nine kills in the win to go along with three aces. Buffington also handed out 21 assists.

Defensively, Dixon also had a team-high 12 digs and four blocks, while freshman Haley Cain added eight digs. Bradley also finished with four blocks.

“Coming out against Ottawa, we had a lot of energy,” Compliment said. “All day we talked about getting that energy and mental game. We played Ottawa really tough, served tough, were aggressive at the net and the girls did a good job of setting the pace.”

For the first time in five years, Louisburg will not be making the trek out to Salina for the state tournament and the Lady Cats will look back on what was an up and down season. It also marked the final time seniors Tayler Lancaster, Katzer and Bradley suited up for Louisburg.

“The season overall was kind of a roller coaster ride for us,” Compliment said. “We had a lot of roller coaster rides out there and we played with some different lineups throughout the year. Throughout it all, I think they learned a lot about each other and they learned a lot about themselves. They grew as a team and overall it was a good season. We have a tough schedule to where we see a lot of good teams and hopefully that just builds experience for us.”

Lady Cats down Ottawa to end regular season



Louisburg freshman Haley Cain splits a pair of Ottawa blockers for a kill Tuesday at Ottawa High School. Louisburg defeated

Ottawa in three sets to win its regular season finale.

OTTAWA – As far as records and standings go, Louisburg's match with Ottawa on Tuesday was essentially meaningless.

The Lady Cats already had the No. 2 seed in the substate tournament locked up and they didn't have much to gain in the Frontier League standings. However, this was more than just about seedings and records.

Coming off a 2-4 performance at the Emporia Invitational last Saturday, the Lady Cats needed to hit the reset button on their season. So far, so good.

Louisburg began its fresh start with something positive with a 25-21, 26-24 and 25-13 win over the Cyclones at Ottawa High School.

"We played pretty well," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "They really came out focused and ready to play. After the Emporia tournament, we talked a lot about how we have to approach every match with a level of intensity, focus and determination and we didn't have that Saturday. We just were going through the motions and this was different. They set their tempo during warmups and that carried them into the game. They were determined to play well as a team."

They did that as the Lady Cats (22-16) jumped out to a 7-3 lead in the first set behind four kills from sophomore Anna Dixon and an ace from sophomore Carson Buffington. Louisburg held a 20-13 before Ottawa went on a 7-1 run to get to within one point.

Junior Sophie McMullen helped Louisburg pull away as she recorded three kills and freshman Riley Kallevig added an ace to score the final four points and grab the first set.



Junior Sophie McMullen sets up a teammate at the net for a kill Tuesday in Ottawa. McMullen led the Lady Cats with 20 kills on the night.

In the second set, Louisburg once again jumped out to a big 16-8 advantage thanks to kills from senior Olivia Bradley, McMullen, Dixon and freshman Haley Cain. A tip from McMullen and an ace from Kallevig gave Louisburg a 22-15 lead, but the Cyclones came roaring back.

Ottawa went on a 7-0 run to tie the set at 22-all before Cain notched a kill to give the Lady Cats a one point lead. The Cyclones tied it up two more times before Dixon had back-to-back kills for the close 26-24 win.

“We definitely had to battle to win that one, so I was glad to see that determination to finish a match and not give up,” Compliment said. “There were a couple times where we were

playing a little tight and a little nervous and they just need to work on loosening up.

“We have been in a lot of close matches all season long. We fell short at the beginning of the season, but we have had some close ones lately that we have been able to pull out so that was good to see.”

There wasn't as much drama in the third set as the Lady Cats jumped out to a 9-3 lead behind three kills and an ace each from McMullen and Dixon. McMullen then recorded two more kills and a block to put Louisburg on top 15-7 during a span in which senior Ellie Katzer served five straight points.

McMullen led the Louisburg offense with a team-high 20 kills, and also had 12 assists and two aces. Dixon added 18 kills and a team-high 20 digs. Kallevig had three aces to lead the Lady Cats along with 12 digs and Katzer recorded 13 digs.

Buffington also had a good night setting the ball with 23 assists and was also in double figures with 11 digs.

“Sophie had a good night,” Compliment said. “All the girls defensively really played well too. I think that Ellie, being a senior, she has helped keep people calm back there. Carson and Sophie did a better job of moving the ball around more and giving our hitters a chance. We were just more focused.”

Louisburg will see the same Ottawa team again Saturday when it hosts the Class 4A-Division I substate tournament. The Lady Cats, the No. 2 seed, will play No. 3 Ottawa (13-22) following the first match between No. 1 Paola (23-12) and No. 4 Fort Scott (12-22), which begins at 2 p.m.

The Lady Cats are vying for their fifth consecutive regional crown and another trip to the state tournament.

“They are excited,” Compliment said of her players. “There are still a lot of nerves but they are starting to get that

mindset that they are ready to see what they can do.”

Dixon commits to Kansas State volleyball



Louisburg sophomore Anna Dixon sends one of her team-high 382 kills over the net during a match earlier this season. On Sunday, Dixon made a verbal commitment to play volleyball for Kansas State.

Most eighth graders spend their time thinking about what high school is going to be like, what they are going to wear to school the next day or how much homework they have to do.

Anna Dixon did some of that, but she also spent most of her days in eighth grade wondering where she was going to go to college. You see, schools have been recruiting Dixon to play volleyball since her time in Louisburg Middle School.

Division I programs from across the Midwest expressed interest in Dixon and those programs ask their recruits to make a decision by their sophomore season in high school. After two years of recruitment, the Louisburg High School sophomore figured out where she wanted to go to school.

Dixon verbally committed to Kansas State on Sunday after receiving offers from three other schools and interest from several others.

“A lot of my family went there and I was looking for a college in a top conference and the Big 12 is one of the top three conferences for volleyball,” Dixon said. “I was wanting to go somewhere where I could be a part of the program and I felt K-State was somewhere that I could fit in well.

“The atmosphere at K-State is just incredible. The people were so much nicer than anywhere I went and that definitely stuck out to me. That was a big thing for me too.”

Dixon received offers from Creighton, Missouri and Wichita State and also had strong interest from Kansas and Colorado State, but she felt a tug toward Manhattan. Kansas State started recruiting her in eighth grade and made her an official offer over Christmas break last year.

The decision was a tough one for Dixon, as she had several choices to choose from, but she admits she is glad for it to all be over.

“It felt like a huge relief,” she said. “The recruiting process started for me around eighth grade, and while the process was exciting, it also got super stressful because I am at such a young age and it is hard to know where you want to go in four years because there is so many things you have to think about.

“It is different for every girl, but for me it was stressful because colleges were asking me what I wanted to major in and what I look for in a college. I was like I don’t even know what I want for breakfast the next morning, much less what I want to do in four years.”

Although Dixon can’t officially sign her letter of intent until her senior year of high school, she is excited to join

the Wildcat program. Her family, including her parents Jerry and Beth Dixon, were all smiles as well.

“They were super excited, especially my dad,” Anna said. “They were going to support me wherever I went, but I think they all wanted me to K-State. They were all really happy for me.”

The K-State coaches have told Dixon they plan to use her as an outside hitter, but could also see her playing six rotations. She currently plays all six spots for Louisburg as she leads the Wildcats with 382 kills, 128 blocks and 44 aces on the season.

“They told me they think I can be pretty big for their program,” Dixon said. “I hope they are right and I am going to help out the program in any way that I can. I am really looking forward to it.”

Lady Cats cruise on senior night



Senior Olivia Bradley rises up for a kill during Tuesday’s senior night match against Eudora at Louisburg High School as the Lady Cats recorded a 3-0 win. Bradley, Ellie Katzer and Tayler Lancaster were all honored before the contest.

Olivia Bradley, Ellie Katzer and Tayler Lancaster walked out onto the Louisburg High School court Tuesday for their final regular season home game.

After it was over, all three Lady Cat seniors walked off the court winners. Louisburg earned the sweep over Eudora with a 25-20, 25-22 and 25-17 victory as Bradley, Katzer and Lancaster were sent out in style.

“For those three seniors, it is a special night for them, especially to get a win and clean sweep against Eudora is always nice,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “It is a good feeling for them.

“With Ellie and Olivia being here all four years, they have put in a lot of time and effort. Both of them have stepped up this year and have been leaders. Also to have Tayler come in this year has been great as well. Just one year in the program, she has fit right into the program and the players. She has given us another good defensive player when we have needed it.”

All three players made an impact in the match. Bradley did it at the net as she finished with six kills and an ace in the victory.



Louisburg seniors (from left) Tayler Lancaster, Ellie Katzer and Olivia Bradley were all honored before Tuesday's senior night match with Eudora.

"It has been a crazy ride, from having team-bonding sleepovers to going to state two years in a row for me is an incredible feeling," Bradley said. "It is weird to think this is my last league home game. We played a lot better than we have the last couple weeks. We came together and played from our old rotation. It was great to have a couple kills on my last match."

Katzer and Lancaster contributed in the back row as Katzer had 10 digs to go along with an ace. Lancaster served the final two points of the third set to help secure the win for the Lady Cats.

"It has been a lot fun," Katzer said. "I really like all the girls and working with them has been great. I have improved so much because of the upperclassmen before me and this year I get to be the leader and help everyone on the court and that

has been fun.

“It was pretty awesome and we had a great student section out there supporting us. All the girls worked hard and played pretty well. We were kind of quiet in the second set, but we picked it up after that.”



Senior Ellie Katzer gets ready to dig a ball up Tuesday.

Louisburg (19-12) got off to a strong start against the Cardinals as it jumped out to a 6-2 lead in the second set behind kills from Anna Dixon, Carson Buffington and an ace from Sophie McMullen.

Eudora rallied to tie the set at 7-all, but Dixon recorded three straight kills to help put Louisburg up 15-10 and the Lady Cats never looked back.

The Cardinals presented a bigger challenge in the second set as they took an 18-15 lead, but kills from Dixon, McMullen and Haley Cain during a 6-1 run gave the Lady Cats a 21-19 advantage and were able to hold on.

Louisburg got off to another quick start in the third set as it took a 7-3 lead on an ace and kill from McMullen, and kills from Dixon and Bradley. It was a lead it wouldn't relinquish as it cruised to the 3-set win.

"We played alright for the most part," Compliment said. "We still had a few errors here and there that we need to get fixed, but for the most part not bad. We stepped up and did what we needed to do when we needed to get the points."

Dixon led the Lady Cats' attack with 15 kills and two aces, while McMullen finished with 12 kills and two aces. Freshman Riley Kallevig led the Louisburg defense with 15 digs and McMullen had 10, along with Katzer.



Senior Tayler Lancaster serves the ball up during the third set Tuesday against Eudora.

Buffington racked up a team-high 26 assists from the setter spot and McMullen added seven.

“They did a good job moving the offense and talking to their hitters,” Compliment said of her setters. “I think we jelled a little bit more than we have in the past, which is good to see.”

Louisburg returns to action Saturday for the Emporia Invitational and then will play its final regular season match this Tuesday in Ottawa.

Lady Cats fall to Olathe North

The Louisburg High School volleyball team had a chance to exact some revenge Thursday when it traveled to Olathe North.

The Lady Cats fell to Olathe North in their home tournament in September and hoped for a little payback. Although Louisburg played well at times, the Lady Cats fell in five sets 29-27, 22-25, 25-12, 18-25 and 15-8.

“The team played really well for three of the five sets,” coach Jessica Compliment said. “As a team, we did a good job on defense. Our defense seemed to flow better last night than it had been all season. We lost our focus during the third set and at the beginning of the fifth. We created a big hole, and we weren’t able to dig ourselves out.

“We made quite a few mental mistakes, and Olathe North took advantage of those moments. It was a good learning opportunity for the team.”

Sophomore Anna Dixon had a big day at the net with 17 kills and five blocks. Junior Sophie McMullen was right behind her with 14 kills and had a team-high six aces.

Senior Olivia Bradley finished with seven kills and a team-high six blocks and freshman Haley Cain had six kills.

Dixon also had a team-high 33 digs on defense and freshman Riley Kallevig was right behind her with 31. Setter Carson Buffington finished with 34 assists and also had 20 digs.

Lady Cats snap losing skid with win over Spring Hill



Louisburg junior Sophie McMullen records a kill in the Lady Cats' match with Spring Hill on Tuesday at Spring Hill High School. Louisburg defeated Spring Hill 3-1 to move its record to 18-11 on the season.

SPRING HILL – Trailing by five points in a critical third set, the Louisburg High School volleyball team didn't want to trail Spring Hill by a set with two remaining.

The Lady Cats were tied at one set a piece with the Broncos in a best-of-5 dual and they knew they had to make something happen. Louisburg picked up its energy and rallied for a 26-24 win.

Louisburg went on to win the match 23-25, 25-14, 26-24 and 25-17 to snap a two-game losing streak and improved its Frontier League record to 2-2 on the season.

“For us to come back in that third set, that was big for us,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We have had close matches all year where we have lost 32-30, 28-26 or something like that and we haven't been able to finish those matches. For us to finish that one was a good confidence boost for us

and let the girls know that they can win sets like those and pull it out. They showed a lot of heart and determination to finish that third set out and was key for us.”

Mistakes hurt the Lady Cats in the first set as they weren't able to find much of a rhythm and it was the same for Spring Hill in the second set.

Some of those mishaps came back to the forefront for Louisburg and Spring Hill was able to take a 20-15 lead in that pivotal third set.

“That first set we made a lot of mental errors,” Compliment said. “They were the mistakes where we just weren't focused and had a lot of miscommunication or missed serves. Those are things we need to clean up across the board. As the match went on we got a little bit better.”



Senior Olivia Bradley (left) and Anna Dixon team up for a block Tuesday in Spring Hill.

The Lady Cats (18-11) cut into the lead thanks to kills from Anna Dixon, Sophie McMullen and Haley Cain. McMullen recorded a kill to tie the match at 22-all and during that time Dixon served four straight service points.

Spring Hill then battled back to take a 24-22 lead to set up game point, but the Lady Cats rattled off four consecutive points. McMullen got the game winner as she chased down the ball, dug it out and sent it over the net for the final point.

Energy didn't seem to be a problem late in the third set as the Lady Cats made their run and eventually closed the match out in the fourth.

"Our energy seems to ebb and flow," Compliment said. "(Senior)

Ellie Katzer stepped up and challenged the girls that she wanted to see and hear the energy out there. That is what we need to have the whole time and we play so much better when we have high energy on the court.”

Dixon led the attack for the Lady Cats as she finished with a team-high 23 kills and also had team-high 15 blocks to dominate the net for Louisburg. Senior Olivia Bradley also had a big night with 14 blocks to go along with five kills.

McMullen had 14 kills in the win and also tallied 18 assists, while Cain had six kills and six blocks. Sophomore Carson Buffington led the way with 19 assists, while she and Katzer each had three aces. Katzer and freshman Riley Kallevig also had several digs in the back row.

Louisburg returns to action Tuesday when it hosts Eudora for senior night. Freshman matches will begin at 4:30 p.m., with junior varsity and varsity matches to follow.

Lady Cats fall to Olathe Northwest, Paola

Louisburg lost a pair of duals last week, including one on Sept. 27 against rival Paola and another on Sept. 29 against Olathe Northwest.

In their home match with Paola, the Lady Cats got off to a slow start after losing the first set 25-18. Louisburg nearly tied the match in the second set, but lost a close one, 27-25.

Momentum was with Paola in the third set and the Panthers finished out the match with a 25-18 win.

“Paola had all the momentum,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “Paola did a fantastic job of digging everything. They were aggressive on the front line and aggressive on defense. We started to miscommunicate on a few things and Paola played to win. They came out ready and we

need to find that mentality. We just played nervous and played tight.”

Anna Dixon led Louisburg with 14 kills and four blocks. Olivia Bradley added seven kills and four blocks in the win, while Carson Buffington had 18 assists.

Against Olathe Northwest, the Lady Cats got off to a rough start on the road as they lost the first set 25-7 to the Class 6A school. Louisburg played better in the final two sets, but still fell 25-21 and 25-16.

Dixon and Sophie McMullen finished with seven kills to lead the Louisburg offense and Ellie Katzer had four aces and 10 digs on the day.

Louisburg rallies for fifth at home tournament



Louisburg senior Ellie Katzer sends the ball back over the net during a volley Saturday at the Louisburg Invitational. Katzer and the Lady Cats finished fifth overall with a 3-2 record on the day.

The Louisburg High School girls volleyball team is accustomed

to playing in its home gym for the Louisburg Invitational, but Saturday felt a little foreign to the Lady Cat players.

After starting out at the LHS gym, Louisburg went 1-2 in pool play and was forced to move over to the middle school to play in the consolation bracket. It's not something the Lady Cats are used to.

They didn't let that bother them, however.

Instead of getting down, the Lady Cats rose up to win the final two matches in the consolation bracket to finish in fifth place. Louisburg defeated Fort Scott (25-20, 25-22) in the consolation semifinal match and then downed Basehor-Linwood (25-16, 25-16) in the fifth-place match.

"Our tournament is a tough tournament, especially when you bring in teams like the two Shawnee Mission and Olathe schools and those four schools are really good teams," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "Even though we came out in fifth place, it was still good to see the girls respond and answer back."



Sophomore Carson Buffington chases a ball from going out of

**bounds during the
Louisburg Invitational
on Saturday.**

The Lady Cats (17-9) got off to a good start early in the morning Saturday as they faced Leavenworth in the first match of the day, and despite losing the first set, rallied for a 23-25, 25-18 and 25-19 win over the Pioneers.

A win in one of the next pool play matches would have put Louisburg in the championship bracket and the Lady Cats nearly got that win against Olathe North. Louisburg found itself in a back-and-forth first set, but Olathe North came away with a 32-30 win.

Louisburg held a 29-28 and 30-29 lead, but couldn't get the extra point that would have kept the momentum going. The Lady Cats went on to lose the second set 25-13.

"Had we found a way to win that first set against Olathe North, I think we would have taken a lot of momentum into that second set," Compliment said. "I just think girls lost some of that energy after losing a tough first set and it was hard to carry it over.

"But I keep telling the girls that when you play teams like Olathe North, Shawnee Mission West and Lansing close, we need to take that as confidence and keep building on that. We are playing against very good teams and playing well at times, but the girls just need to have more confidence in themselves."

Next up was Shawnee Mission West and Louisburg couldn't get much going in a 25-20 and 25-15 loss to wrap up pool play.

The consolation bracket gave the Lady Cats a nice jump start as they controlled both matches against Fort Scott and Basehor-Linwood to end the day on a good note.

Sophomore Anna Dixon had big day offensively as she registered

a team-high 55 kills and tied for a team-high with eight aces. Dixon's biggest performance came at the start of the day when she registered 16 kills, five aces and five blocks against Leavenworth.

Senior Olivia Bradley also stepped up offensively with 21 kills and freshman Haley Cain added 18 in the five matches. Senior Ellie Katzer joined Dixon to lead the Lady Cats with eight aces, while junior Mikayla Quinn and freshman Riley Kallevig each had six aces.

Carson Buffington also ran the offense well as the Louisburg sophomore recorded 91 assists.

"It was good to see some different girls step up," Compliment said. "I thought Olivia did a nice job hitting the ball at times with Haley and that is what we need is to have a couple other girls step up. Riley did a great job in the back row for us defensively so there were a lot of positives."

Lady Cats breeze past Baldwin in home opener



Louisburg seniors Olivia Bradley (left) and Ellie Katzer team up for a block Tuesday during the Lady Cats' home opener against Baldwin. Louisburg made quick work of Baldwin in the 3-0 win and picked up its first Frontier League victory in the

process.

Three weeks into the season and the Louisburg High School volleyball team was finally able to compete on its home floor.

The Lady Cats felt right at home Tuesday when they hosted Baldwin for a Frontier League dual. Louisburg picked up its first league win of the season as it ousted the Bulldogs 25-10, 25-18 and 25-19.

“We were looking forward to this match for a while just because this was our home opener and we like to play here and have an advantage,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “But too the girls were excited to play on the new setup. The girls were excited to play on the new court and new net. Just added a little different element to the game

The setup was quite a bit different for the Lady Cats and their fans. Instead of being sectioned off into one part of the gym, they were able to play on the entire floor with the net coming down at halfcourt and fans were able to watch from the side to see all of the action.

“I really like it,” Compliment said. “It was nice having the fans on both sides of the court instead of just compacted to one side. I think it was great having that student section in the middle and them getting loud during the game always helps us out.”



Senior Tayler Lancaster digs up a ball during Tuesday's match against Baldwin.

Louisburg's players seemed to like the setup too as they were quick to put Baldwin in a hole as the Lady Cats went on an 11-1 run to end the first set. Junior Mikayla Quinn served seven points in a row and had two aces during that stretch.

Sophomore Anna Dixon added a pair of blocks and a kill to keep the momentum going and later recorded an ace for the set's final point.

Midway through the second set, senior Olivia Bradley had a kill and a tip to give Louisburg (14-7, 1-1) a 13-9 lead and the Lady Cats added on from there. Senior Ellie Katzer, Dixon and freshman Haley Cain all had kills to increase Louisburg's lead.

It appeared the third set was going to go the same way as the others. Louisburg jumped out to a 9-3 advantage, but Baldwin didn't back down and eventually took a two-point lead after a 9-1 run.

Bradley had back-to-back kills to give the Lady Cats the lead, but Baldwin rallied to take the lead again. With the match tied at 18-all, Dixon recorded a kill and an ace in back-to-back plays and Cain added a kill to help the Lady Cats pull away

“The third set we started pulling back and playing too loose,” Compliment said. “Instead of playing to win, we just played comfortable and didn’t push. Baldwin was playing to win and they were playing scrappy and digging everything up.”

Louisburg was still trying to get used to playing with a new rotation after the injury to starter Sophie McMullen, who played an all-around spot. Katzer moved into McMullen’s spot and the team moved back to a 5-1 offense that features sophomore Carson Buffington as the main setter.

“Ellie has been solid and reliable out there,” Compliment said. “It is going to take some time because they are still kind of second guessing on whose ball it is instead of just going for it and knowing their roles. Hopefully we will catch on soon.”

Dixon had a big outing for the Lady Cats as she finished with team-highs in kills (15), blocks (5) and aces (3). Buffington led the Louisburg offense with 30 assists, while freshman libero Riley Kallevig had five digs. Cain, another freshman, had nine kills in the win and Bradley finished with six.

The Lady Cats will get to play at home once again Saturday when they host the Louisburg Invitational. They will meet Leavenworth, Olathe North and Shawnee Mission West in pool play, which begins at 8 a.m.

Other teams in the tournament are Shawnee Mission East, Olathe South, Fort Scott and Basehor-Linwood.

“The girls are looking forward to it,” Compliment said. “Our home tournament, and I like it, but it is always a tough tournament with the teams we bring in. We always want to defend our home court and the goal is to stay here when they bracket out for the championship instead of going over to the middle school. We are going to have to start strong at 8 a.m. and continue that throughout the day.”

Lady Cats overcome adversity, win three straight



Louisburg sophomore Anna Dixon tips the ball past two De Soto blockers on Sept. 13 at De Soto High School. On Thursday, the Lady Cats went 3-0 in a triangular in Osawatomie.

OSAWATOMIE – Coming off a tough Frontier League loss can be difficult enough to overcome by itself, but the Louisburg High School volleyball had to rebound without one of their leaders.

Following a loss to De Soto earlier in the week, the Lady Cats ventured to Osawatomie for a quadrangular with Fort Scott and Prairie View and they had to do it without junior Sophie McMullen, who was out with an injury. In her absence, the rest of the Louisburg team banded together to leave with three victories.

Louisburg didn't lose a set as they defeated all three teams 2-0 and improved its record to 13-7 on the season.

Without McMullen, the Lady Cats leaned on several players in her absence and they came through. Senior Ellie Katzer took McMullen's spot in the rotation and played all-around, while sophomore Anna Dixon was looked to do more offensively.

Senior Tayler Lancaster also filled in for Katzer's spot in the back row and gave Louisburg some quality time on the floor.

"Sophie took about 75 percent of the swings when she was front row and without her the other players needed to step up," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "I thought that those players did a good job of taking on more responsibility. Ellie did a great job stepping in and playing all the way around for us. She made some very smart plays and kept the ball in play.

"We still have some growing to do as a team and as individuals, but I thought that by the end of the night that the team was playing well together. Our schedule slows down a little next week so we'll have more time to focus on the new rotation and adjusting to playing without Sophie."

Louisburg opened play against Prairie View, and despite a few bumps early, the Lady Cats rolled to a 25-20 and 25-16 win. Dixon led the offensive attack with 13 kills to lead Louisburg and Katzer finished with five.

Katzer and junior Mikayla Quinn were strong from behind the service line with four aces each. Senior Olivia Bradley led Louisburg's defense with a team-high 10 blocks, while freshman libero Riley Kallevig had seven digs.

Sophomore Carson Buffington, who is now the team's lone setter in McMullen's absence, had a big game with 19 assists.

"Our first match against Prairie View was a little rough," Compliment said. "It took us awhile to get comfortable in the new rotation. We finally settled down a little during the Osawatomie and Fort Scott matches, and we started to find some rhythm with the changes."

Next up was Osawatomie and it was much of the same for Louisburg as it breezed to a 25-15 and 25-10 victory behind nine kills and five blocks from Dixon and five kills from

Katzer. Kallevig served well for the Lady Cats as she had seven aces and Buffington had a team-high 18 assists.

Dixon again led the Lady Cats offensively against Fort Scott with 12 kills and had six blocks to help Louisburg to a 25-18 and 25-15 win over Fort Scott.

Freshman Haley Cain and Buffington each had four kills in the win, while Quinn and Kallevig had six of the team's 10 aces with three each. Buffington also had 17 assists.

Louisburg will try and keep its winning ways going today when it hosts Baldwin in a league matchup. Varsity is set to begin at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Lady Cats suffer league loss at De Soto

Going into the season, De Soto and Louisburg were considered as the Frontier League's top two teams, but De Soto took the first victory of the season between the two in the league's preseason tournament in August.

On Sept. 13, the two teams met again and was a vital match on who would take a firm hold on first place in the Frontier League. Although Louisburg got off to a good start in the first set and took an early lead, the Lady Cats couldn't hang on in a 26-24, 25-16 and 25-21 loss.



Louisburg's Olivia Bradley (left) and Sophie McMullen team up for a block on Sept. 13 at De Soto.

"We knew going in to the match against De Soto that it would be tough," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "They played us tough last year and returned almost their entire team. We managed to get a good lead in the first set. Had we won that set I think the outcome may have been different. After losing the first set, we lost some confidence and started playing tight. We had our chances in the third set, but couldn't convert when we needed to and couldn't pull out a win."

Sophomore Anna Dixon had a big day at the net with a team-high 14 kills. Sophomore Carson Buffington recorded 16 assists running the Lady Cat offense.

Dixon tied senior Olivia Bradley with a team-high five blocks. Bradley also had three aces, while freshman libero Riley Kallevig had two. Dixon also played well defensively with 10 digs and senior Ellie Katzer added seven.

For a photo gallery from the match, make sure to [click here](#).

Louisburg finishes fifth at Lansing

Louisburg watched as just a few points separated it from being

in the championship or consolation bracket on Sept. 10 at the Lansing Invitational.

During pool play, the Lady Cats found themselves in a pair of close matches with Shawnee Mission West and Lansing, but in the end Louisburg up short and finished with a 2-2 record in the pool.

Louisburg moved to the consolation bracket, but the Lady Cats didn't let the disappointment earlier in the day get them down as they responded with a pair of straight set victories over Piper and Topeka Seaman to finish fifth overall.

"The Lansing tournament is always a tough tournament," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "We had a few close matches with Shawnee Mission West and Lansing but couldn't pull out the win. Hopefully those close matches will provide the team with some confidence going in to the rest of the season. We see a lot of quality 5A and 6A teams throughout the season. Hopefully the team takes away some positives from the losses and that will help us later in the season."

The Lady Cats opened the tournament with a 25-12 and 25-18 victory over Spring Hill behind 15 kills from sophomore Anna Dixon. Junior Sophie McMullen and Dixon also added a pair of aces each.

Next up was Shawnee Mission West and after a tough 25-19 loss in the first set, the Lady Cats took West to the limit before falling 30-28. Dixon had a team-high 12 kills and McMullen added eight. McMullen also finished with three aces.

Senior Olivia Bradley had a team-high nine blocks, while sophomore Carson Buffington and freshman Haley Cain had six and five, respectively.

Louisburg downed Shawnee Mission North 25-15 and 25-15 to get back on track. Buffington had five aces in the win and also got six digs each from freshman libero Riley Kallevig and

senior Tayler Lancaster. Dixon and McMullen had eight and six kills, respectively.

The host team Lansing dashed any hopes of Louisburg earning a spot in the championship bracket with as it defeated the Lady Cats 25-18 and 28-26. The Lady Cats held a 16-10 lead in the second set before Lansing rallied

Dixon had a team-high 13 kills in the loss and Bradley had seven blocks. Buffington had 16 assists and also had a team-high 12 digs.

Louisburg didn't have any problem against Piper as it rolled to a 25-13 and 25-22 to start the consolation bracket. Dixon had eight kills and three aces in the win, while McMullen had seven kills. Freshman Haley Cain had a big game defensively with nine blocks.

In the fifth-place match, Louisburg dispatched Topeka Seaman 25-14 and 25-23 to end the day on a positive note. Dixon and McMullen had 11 and 10 kills, respectively.

Kallevig had a team-high 12 digs and McMullen finished with nine. McMullen also had a team-high four blocks.

For a photo gallery from the tournament, make sure to click [here](#).

Lady Cats get back on winning track



The Louisburg High School volleyball team celebrates a point during a match earlier this season. The Lady Cats defeated Santa Fe Trail and Burlington in two sets Tuesday in Carbondale.

CARBONDALE – The Louisburg High School volleyball team has been a victim of its own schedule as of late as it has had to compete against larger schools, and being in the rebuild process, the Lady Cats haven't been able to get over the hump against those programs yet.

Louisburg's schedule evened out a bit Tuesday when the Lady Cats traveled to Santa Fe Trail for a triangular with Burlington and they left with a positive result.

The Lady Cats defeated Santa Fe Trail 25-23 and 25-23 and then downed Burlington 25-16 and 25-20 to stop a two-game losing streak going into the triangular.

"I thought we played OK," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "We lost our focus a few times during both matches and made too many errors on our side of the net. We need to work on maintaining our focus and minimizing our errors if we want to continue seeing success.

"There were moments during both matches where I saw a glimpse in to the potential this team has. We just need to find our game and stick to it for an entire match and not get caught in the ups and downs of a volleyball match."

Louisburg (6-3) opened up with Santa Fe Trail and got a good

performance at the net from sophomore Anna Dixon as she finished with nine kills in the two sets and also had a team-high five blocks along with senior Olivia Bradley. Dixon also led Louisburg with four aces.

Junior Sophie McMullen led with way with 12 assists to go along with five kills and four blocks. McMullen also played well defensively with 15 digs, while freshman libero Riley Kallevig had a team-high 16 digs. Sophomore Carson Buffington, who splits setting duties with McMullen, had eight assists.

The Lady Cats had a little easier time against Burlington to complete their perfect night.

Dixon was busy up front as she had 11 kills and McMullen ended up with eight. McMullen was also strong from behind the service line with five aces and Bradley added three.

Buffington ran the offense well with 17 assists and Kallevig had 12 digs on defense. McMullen and Dixon had eight and seven digs, respectively. Seniors Tayler Lancaster and Ellie Katzer also had big digs in both matches.

Louisburg will make a couple different trips to Lansing this week, starting at 5 p.m tonight for a dual. Then on Saturday, the Lady Cats will compete in the Lansing Invitational. The tournament is set to begin at 9 a.m.

Louisburg falls to Blue Valley Southwest, Olathe South

The Louisburg High School volleyball team opened its dual schedule on Aug. 30 when it traveled to Blue Valley Southwest and then again at Olathe South on Sept. 1.

Louisburg got a big test against the two bigger schools and came up just short. The Lady Cats fell to Blue Valley Southwest in a best-of-3 match, 25-19 and 25-17, and lost to Olathe South in a best-of-5, 22-25, 25-21, 25-20 and 25-17.

“Olathe South and Blue Valley Southwest are both good teams,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We played them tough but fell short during both of those matches. Both teams ran faster offenses than what we had seen so far this season so our front row struggled to put up consistent blocks. It was good to see what we needed to work on, and I was proud of how they played those two evenings. They hustled and went after every ball and didn’t give up.”

Against Southwest, junior Sophie McMullen had a big day at the net with a team-high 10 kills and sophomore Anna Dixon finished with seven. Dixon and senior Olivia Bradley led Louisburg with seven blocks each.

Setter Carson Buffington and McMullen had 12 and eight assists, respectively. McMullen also had a team-high 13 digs, Dixon had 11 and senior Ellie Katzer finished with 10.

In the Lady Cats’ match with Olathe South, McMullen had another big night with 17 kills in the four sets and Dixon was right behind her with 15. McMullen also led Louisburg with nine blocks and freshman Haley Cain added six.

Freshman libero Riley Kallevig led Louisburg with 14 digs, while Dixon recorded 13 and McMullen had 10. Buffington led the offense with 23 assists.

Lady Cats come in second at league tourney



Sophomore Carson Buffington (left) sets up teammate Olivia Bradley for a kill during the Frontier League Tournament on Saturday at Baldwin High School. The Lady Cats finished second overall and went 4-1 on the day.

BALDWIN CITY – It may have ended one win short of its actual goal, but for the Louisburg High School volleyball team, the Frontier League Tournament provided the Lady Cats a lot of what they needed to see.

Head coach Jessica Compliment watched her team battle back from adversity, dominate matches and saw an inexperienced team grow together. The Lady Cats had just one loss on the day as they finished second Saturday in the 8-team tournament at Baldwin High School, and even that provided a good learning tool.

Louisburg finished undefeated in pool play as it beat Basehor-Linwood (25-21, 18-25, 26-24), Spring Hill (25-10, 25-17) and Eudora (25-15, 25-13). The Lady Cats rallied to defeat Paola in the semifinals (25-22, 22-25, 25-15) before falling to De Soto in two sets (25-23, 25-13).

“I thought the team played well on Saturday,” Compliment said. “We had our moments when we were playing really well, and then moments when you could tell it was the first time out and our nerves showed. Overall I was pleased with how the players competed and fought throughout the day.

“We had to fight back twice to beat Basehor-Linwood and Paola. Seeing the team’s determination to bounce back and fight for

the win is a positive take from the tournament. De Soto is a good team and we knew they were going to be tough to beat.”

The Lady Cats (4-1) faced adversity in the first match of the day as they had to play a deciding third set against Basehor-Linwood and squeaked out a win over the Bobcats with a 26-24 victory in a back-and-forth final set.



Junior Mikayla Quinn (left) and freshman Haley Cain go up for a block during the Lady Cats' semifinal match against Paola.

Veterans Anna Dixon and Sophie McMullen carried Louisburg through the match as Dixon, a sophomore, finished with a team-high 13 kills and nine blocks. McMullen, a junior, had a strong serving match with six aces and eight kills.

Freshman libero Riley Kallevig also provided some good defense with a team-high 15 digs and also had three aces. Sophomore Carson Buffington had 14 assists and McMullen added nine.

Louisburg really picked up its game the rest of the day, especially from behind the service line.

In the win over Spring Hill, Dixon served 13 straight points in the first set and finished with 11 aces for the match. Then

in the victory against Paola, senior Olivia Bradley and junior Mikayla Quinn provided a big boost as well.

Bradley had five aces as she reeled off several points in a row to help Louisburg rally from behind and win the first set, while Quinn finished with a team-high seven aces against the Panthers that helped spur the three-set win.

“Anna, Olivia and Mikayla all stepped up big with their serves throughout the day as well and helped sway the momentum in our direction,” Compliment said. “The team’s ability to fight back and win against Paola showed me that they are willing to work hard and can mentally recharge themselves during a match. We have a few with a lot of experience, and I think that helped team on Saturday.”

Against De Soto, Louisburg stayed within one or two points for much of the championship match before losing the first set. However, De Soto went on a big run midway through the second set and the Lady Cats weren’t able to recover.

“I knew going in to the season that De Soto would have a good team this year,” Compliment said. “They returned a large portion of their team from last season. During the last set, we started to slowly fall apart because we started trying too hard to make the right play rather than sticking to what works for us as a team. It was a learning experience and we can take away a lot from that loss.”

Saturday was also the first time the Lady Cats used their new 6-2 offense in game action and it seemed to work well at times.

Dixon and McMullen did a lot of work at the net. Dixon led the Lady Cats with 46 kills on the day and McMullen was right behind her with 43.

The Louisburg duo also had team-highs in aces with 13 and 12, respectively. Quinn was in double figures in aces with 11 and

Bradley added eight.

The difference for Louisburg was its setting combination as McMullen and Buffington shared duties throughout the day. Buffington led the team with 72 assists and McMullen finished with 48.

“Overall I think the new offense went okay,” Compliment said. “We have a few kinks to work out and it needs some work to help smooth a few things out. Having two setters means the players all need to communicate a lot more so we’ll need to focus on continuing to increase communication on the court before, during and after rallies.”

The Lady Cats also played well defensively and it was led by one of the younger players on the team. Kallevig, a freshman libero, led Louisburg with 47 digs out of the back row and handled 65 serves out of the 12 sets played by the team.

Seniors Ellie Katzer and Tayler Lancaster, along with McMullen, Buffington and Dixon, provided the Lady Cats strong defense in the back row and up front. Dixon also had a team-high 27 blocks at the net, and another freshman, Haley Cain, was next on the team with 17.

“Riley did a great job of controlling the back row and was very steady throughout the day,” Compliment said. “That can be tough for a freshman, but she did a great job. Ellie and Tayler also added some great defensive plays during the tournament.”

Louisburg returns to action tonight when it travels to Blue Valley Southwest and then will play at 6 p.m. Thursday at Olathe South.

For a photo gallery of Saturday’s action, make sure to click [here](#).