

Summer starts reloading process for Lady Cats



Louisburg sophomore Anna Dixon works on her serve-receive during a drill in the final day of the Lady Cats' team camp July 13 at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats also took part in the University of Kansas volleyball team camp the next day.

Success had not eluded the Louisburg High School volleyball program and with that has come high expectations every season.

The Lady Cats have qualified for the state tournament the last four seasons and have won the Frontier League three years in a row. Louisburg has placed at state each of those four trips and the Lady Cats have written another impressive chapter in the program's history.

However, after last year's third-place finish at state, the Lady Cats had to say farewell to five seniors and are now forced to regroup as they return just three varsity players from a year ago. Louisburg started that rebuilding in early June when they began summer workouts and recently ended it when they had its team camp that ended on July 13.

Head coach Jessica Compliment had 39 girls out for the three-day team camp as she began sorting out where they different pieces were going to fit.



Louisburg head coach Jessica Compliment talks to her players during the final day of the Lady Cat team camp July 13.

“It thought our camp went pretty well,” Compliment said. “We went over a few things during that time and really stressed our back row defense and passing, which is what we do every year. It also gave the girls chance to learn how to play together, especially since we have so many younger kids this year after losing a big senior class.”

Following their camp, several Lady Cats made the trip to the University of Kansas volleyball team camp for the first time to learn from players and coaches from the Jayhawk program that made it to the semifinals of the NCAA Division I Volleyball Tournament.

Louisburg sent 21 players to the 3-day Jayhawk team camp that ended on July 16. The Lady Cats learned from Big 12 Coach of the Year Ray Bechard and also had the opportunity scrimmage against other programs from around the area.

“I really think the girls had a good time at the KU camp,” Compliment said. “I had a couple tell me that they wanted to come by next year, so I think this was a good opportunity for our team. We had about eight hours of practice drills and eight hours of competition. This gave us a chance to play

teams that we usually won't see and it was a good experience."

Earlier in the summer, all three levels – freshmen, junior varsity and varsity – competed in summer leagues in the area and each program played a level up. The freshmen group played in a junior varsity league, while the junior varsity played against other varsity level programs. The varsity competed against several larger teams in a league in Blue Valley.

"We definitely took our lumps at times," Compliment said. "It gave us some time to figure out some things with our rotation and we went through some adversity. At the same time, I think we saw a lot of growth out of the girls, which will help this season."

Those league also gave chances for returning players like Olivia Bradley, Sophie McMullen and Anna Dixon to assert themselves as leaders of the team.

Bradley, a senior, returns as the team's middle hitter, while Dixon will join her on the outside as a sophomore. McMullen, a junior, comes back for her third season as the team's setter.



Ryann Kramer sends the ball over the net

during a hitting drill

“For us to be successful those three girls need to become leaders for us, especially for the younger players,” Compliment said. “As the setter I think it is important Sophie to be the leader on the floor and she has a lot of experience out there now. Anna and Olivia played big roles on our team last year so they need to do that as well. I think the summer has helped them in that regard.”

Turner takes part in KVA all-star match despite injury



Louisburg High School graduate Madison Turner stands in the huddle with her Blue team during a timeout in the Kansas Volleyball Association All-Star match on June 4 at Washburn University in Topeka. Turner was forced to sit out of the match with an injury.

When she was selected to participate in the Kansas Volleyball Association All-Star match, Madison Turner had every intention of playing against some of the best seniors Kansas had to offer.

The Louisburg High School graduate was looking forward to

taking the floor for the June 4 match at Washburn University in Topeka. However, a knee injury derailed that plan as Turner, who was supposed to play for the Blue team, had to sit from the bench and watch.

Turner's Blue team lost a close five set match to the Red team, 25-13, 19-25, 25-19, 22-25 and 16-14. Although Turner didn't get a chance to showcase her talents with the rest of the state's best, she still had a good time.



Madison Turner enjoyed her weekend at the KVA All-Star match in Topeka.

"It was a great experience and a fun weekend," Turner said. "I was really bummed that I wasn't able to play. I was coming off an injury that I had been dealing with since nationals for club volleyball in April. I was planning on playing in the match, but a week before I realized that I would not be able to because of my injury. I feel that I worked hard to get the honor to be on the team and to not be able to play was hard."

She had to do a lot of leg work to earn a spot on the team. Louisburg High School head coach Jessica Compliment nominated Turner for the team, and once she was selected, Turner had to

secure \$300 worth of sponsors for expenses for the weekend-long event.

The event featured a lunch and dinner for the players and parents and it helped take Turner's mind off not playing.

"I spent several days going around to individual businesses in Louisburg asking them for donations to sponsor the event," Turner said. "Most of the places I went to were very willing to donate. When we got there we each received a shirt and spandex to play the match in and it was just a great time. They really made each of us feel very special.

"Some of the girls that were on the team I have played against in club or high school volleyball. There were some girls that I had not met before and I am friends with now. Everyone was really nice and it was a great weekend."

Turner, who played the middle hitter spot for Louisburg last season and stands at 6-foot, 4-inches, had a big season for the Lady Cat program. She garnered a first team all-Frontier League selection as she helped Louisburg to its third straight undefeated league crown and a third-place finish at the state tournament.

She was also on three state tournament teams during her career, including a second-place finish as a sophomore. This past season, Turner led the Lady Cats with 327 kills and also had a team-high 266 blocks to go along with 37 aces.

Now Turner's focus will turn to staying healthy and getting ready for her next volleyball experience. Turner signed to play with Arkansas State University, a Division I program out of Jonesboro, Ark.

She has to report to the Red Wolves program in two weeks and she is looking forward to playing college volleyball.

"I am super excited to head down to Arkansas State," Turner

said. "I have to report on July 5 because I have to take two summer classes so I can be on campus and practice with the team. My parents and I are heading down a couple days before so I can get moved into my dorm. There are three volleyball camps in July that I will working as well, which will be fun."

Paola AD proposes bill to help classification issue



Last October, Paola activities director Jeff Hines went to a Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) regional meeting to get updates on classification issues.

Six months later, Hines found himself in Topeka, in front of the Kansas Senate Education Committee to talk about a bill that could change the way schools are classified.

On Thursday, Hines sat in front of the committee to discuss Senate Bill 464 – a bill that he proposed with guidance of Sen. Caryn Tyson.

Statute 72-130 establishes specific guidelines pertaining to the organizational structure and functions of KSHSAA. Senate Bill 464 would change one part of the statute and strike the line which allows schools to be classified only by student enrollment.

"The total number of students in schools is a great starting point for classifying them," Hines said. "It makes sense that the largest schools should play the largest schools and the smallest schools should play the smallest schools, but there are other things that need to be considered."

For several months, KSHSAA has had a classification committee discuss different ways to have a competitive balance with its member schools. They came up with ideas of reducing the number of classifications or changing the number of schools in a division.

"There were no other factors being considered and that bothered me," Hines said, "All that would do was reshuffle the schools just a little bit but we would have the same problem."

The problem for the committee was its hands were tied thanks to the wording in Statute 72-130 that specifically states schools can only be classified by enrollment numbers and nothing else.

So Hines went to work and helped create Senate Bill 464, which does not give a specific solution to the problem, but rather would take wording out of the statute to allow KSHSAA to figure out how to classify schools on its own.

Hines gave a 15 minute testimony in front of the committee and then answered questions from the committee members for more than 30 minutes afterward. Before the hearing, Hines received support from every member in the Frontier League, Pioneer League and all but two schools in the Kaw Valley League, as those two didn't respond before the hearing.

Following Hines' testimony, Sen. Vicki Schmidt, R-Topeka, had concerns as to why KSHSAA did not come in front of the committee itself to ask for changes.

Hines informed the committee that it would be redundant for KSHSAA to endorse the plan, because if approved, member

schools would still have to vote on it. He believes Bill 464 would let KSHSAA come up with a system and let schools improve it, instead of the legislature.

“KSHSAA wants to be neutral because this proposal would affect different schools in different ways,” Hines said. “It could be very beneficial to some schools and others may not like it because they might have to move up a class. So, why should KSHSAA have to pick sides in it and pit member against member? It doesn’t have to be that way in my opinion.

“Yes, a school that has to move up a classification might not like it, but is it the best thing overall for the association? They can’t look themselves in the mirror and say ‘No, this isn’t the right thing to do?’

A major problem for some member schools in KSHSAA is they do not believe it is competitively equal the way it is currently structured.

“I am not a believer in participation medals,” Hines said. “If they are kindergartners, sure, but when you start playing, part of being successful later in life is learning how to compete. We all competed for a job when you have gone in for an interview and that is good. You need to have that skillset and I am not saying that we need to give more trophies out and give everyone a shot, but I just want a system in place that is equitable for all so that some don’t have an unfair advantage at the expense of the rest and I think that is what is happening.”

One of the problems is the lack of balance between championships won between public and private high schools. Hines did research and presented numbers at the hearing at the number of state championships won between private and public schools from 2004 to 2014.

Here is what he found.

- Private schools make up slightly less than 8 percent of the KSHSAA membership.
- Private schools have won slightly less than 32 percent of the state championships.
- Based on membership percentage, private schools should only win approximately 8 percent of the titles, not nearly 32 percent.
- Private schools are winning four times more state titles than should be expected based on their memberships.
- Private schools are nine times more likely to win five or more state titles than their public school peers.

“In that period of time, I looked for who has won five or more state titles,” Hines said. “That is a difficult feat. You look at Paola’s history and we have won like seven and Louisburg has won three in 100-plus years. During those 10 years, 37 percent of those private schools won five or more during that time and public schools had 4 percent win five or more. Private schools are nine times more likely to become a dynasty or a successful program with strong tradition. You tell me how we are all the same?”

Another problem they are facing is schools with a high percentage of low socioeconomic status (SCS) students, cannot compete against fellow schools in their own classification in many activities, including football.

“There is a whole bunch of schools in the Kansas City, Kansas school district that are 6A or 5A that have no business competing against those really hard schools,” Hines said. “They don’t have resources, they don’t have the students, there is no interest and they have all those things working against them and I feel bad for those kids. Who wants to trot out against some of those bigger schools and know you are going to get your ears boxed in? That is not fun. Moreover, it is not challenging for the kids those schools are playing against.”

Hines believes competition is important when it comes to the growth of the student athlete and it is beneficial for the school and its community.

“Not only what it does for grades, but for what it does for the human spirit,” Hines said.

“When I was the FFA advisor in Paola, we won 10 state championships in nine years and you could tell the interest by the students and the community went through the roof. You can say the same thing about Louisburg and what Jim Morgan does with his FFA kids. People flock to success.

“Naturally, when they are there they feel better about themselves, they want to work harder in the classroom to stay eligible and kids that want to stay involved are going to be more successful in life. It is all about having the chance to be successful.”

During Hines’ testimony in front of the Senate Education Committee, not all of the legislatures seemed open to the idea. Molly Baumgardner, R-Louisburg, asked Hines if he would be willing to relinquish state funding if the legislature agrees to release oversight of how KSHSAA classifies schools.

“If we relinquished the funding behind it, (high school activities) would disappear,” Hines said at the hearing.

No action was taken following the hearing, but the committee chairman spent 15 minutes with him and Tyson to help them strategize on what to do next.

One option is to amend the bill to include more specifics that could include a multiplier or a separate division for private schools and a low SCS school de-multiplier.

Another option, Hines said, would be to have the classification committee draft a letter to the Senate Education Committee that states they would like to study these other factors as part of a proposal for revamping the

classification system, but not until they feel the legislature is open to changing the law.

Whatever decision comes next, however, Hines wants it to be decided by multiple people within KSHSAA on how to proceed.

“I don’t feel comfortable making that change because I feel a committee needs to do the work,” Hines said. “I shouldn’t be doing it, nor should 11 legislators, you need more. We should let the classification committee work on it and hopefully we can get some things accomplished.

“The only way to allow this to happen is to remove the barrier in place that exists due to the state statute.”

Top 10 stories of 2015



Here are the Louisburg Sports Zone Top 10 Stories of the Year. In each brief explanation of the story, there will be a link to the full story of when the event actually happened. Thanks again for a successful 2015 and I am already looking forward to 2016.



Hogan Welch (left) and Wyatt Reece each qualified for state in their respective sports.

10. Welch and Reece qualify for state

LHS students Hogan Welch and Wyatt Reece each put together strong seasons in their respective sports.

In May, Welch qualified for the Class 4A state golf tournament after he shot an 85 at the Osawatomie Golf Course to become one of five individual qualifiers for state. It was the first time Welch had qualified for the state tournament and would shoot a 79 a week later in McPherson to finish 40th overall.

As for Reece, he qualified for the state cross country meet for the first time in his career in October. The Louisburg sophomore came in 13th overall and was also one of five individual qualifiers. A week later Reece traveled to Wamego to compete at the state meet and ran a 18:43 to come in 71st.



Louisburg's Jimmy Dolan (left) and Mya Diacono each suffered major head injuries from an accident just days apart. The Louisburg community rallied together to help the two families.

9. Accidents bring Louisburg community together

Jimmy Dolan and Mya Diacono live in the same community but were worlds apart from each other.

Jimmy, a junior at Louisburg High School, loves to wrestle, hang out with friends and live the life of a teenager.

It was a far cry from 9-year-old Mya who loves soccer, horses and spending time with her fourth-grade friends at Broadmoor Elementary. In a town of less than 5,000 people, the two had never met.

Two tragic accidents changed all of that.

On Jan. 12, Jimmy lost control of his vehicle while driving to school and suffered a major brain injury. Just 42 days later,

Mya was involved in an automobile accident just outside the Louisburg city limits that left her with the same severe brain trauma.

That was when the Louisburg community came together to help the two families cope with a burden no family should have to bear. Since then, both Jimmy and Mya are on the road to recovery thanks to the help of a lot of people.



Louisburg Soccer Club president Karin Olson (second from left), Louisburg High School junior Maddie McDaniel (middle) and fundraising organizer DIana Moore (right) receive the WIN for KC Sprint Teamwork Award on Feb. 13 in Kansas City, Mo.

8. Girls soccer raises funds to start program, wins award

A fundraising committee made a big push to make sure there was a girls soccer program at Louisburg High School.

The committee raised \$39,000 in almost a year's time to fund the program for three years. Thanks to all the hard work, the group was also recognized by the WIN for KC organization. The

Lady Cats' soccer season will kickoff in late March.



Louisburg graduates Kody Cook (left) and Garrett Griffin are each winding down their careers with their respective Division I football programs.

7. Griffin, Cook wrap up college careers

Louisburg High School graduates Kody Cook and Garrett Griffin have lived the lives a lot of football fans could only hope for.

Both are wrapping up their Division I collegiate football careers and are doing it with a lot of success. Cook is living his dream with the Kansas State football team as he has made contributions at both the wide receiver and quarterback positions to help the Wildcats to the Liberty Bowl.

Griffin, on the other hand, battled through an injury-plagued senior season to help Air Force reach the Armed Forces Bowl and made several big plays at the tight end spot.



Louisburg quarterback Austin Terry was one of several players responsible for the Wildcats' turnaround this season.

6. Wildcat football has big turnaround

After finishing with just three wins a year ago, the Louisburg High School football team put together a strong season in 2015 as they finished with seven wins.

Those seven victories put the Wildcats within a game of Paola for the Frontier League title and Louisburg also earned a spot in the regional playoffs before falling to Basehor-Linwood in a tight contest.



The Louisburg High School soccer team captured its first regional crown since 2010 after a 2-0 win over Coffeyville.

5. Louisburg soccer wins regional crown

Through much of the regular season, the Louisburg High School soccer team didn't have much to cheer about.

The Wildcats had just four wins during the regular season, but they seemed to find the right chemistry in the postseason. Louisburg rattled off three consecutive wins in the postseason, including a 2-0 victory over Coffeyville-Field Kindley in the regional championship.

It was the Wildcats' first regional title since 2010 and their sixth in the last 10 years.



Anders Vance won a regional title in the 285-pound weight class last February as he was one of five Wildcats to earn state bids.

4. Louisburg wrestling qualifies five for state

The Louisburg wrestling team hadn't been a part of the state tournament since 2012 – that is before last season.

The Wildcats put together a breakout season as they qualified five for the state tournament, while Anders Vance won the regional crown at 285 pounds. Brenton Wrigley (195 pounds), Mason Koechner (220), Nathan Keegan (113) and Ryan Adams (138) all made the trip to Salina for the Class 4A state tourney.



Jeff Lohse (left) and Ben York each stepped away from their head coaching posts in 2015.

3. Long-time coaches resign from post

Jeff Lohse and Ben York had been fixtures in their respective sports for Louisburg High School, but both decided to call it quits this year.

Lohse, who spent the last 17 years as the head coach for the LHS baseball team, stepped down from his spot in May, citing personal reasons. Lohse led the Wildcats to two state tournament appearances.

York, who was the head coach when the boys soccer program started, also cited personal reasons for leaving the Wildcat soccer program after 13 years. York helped the Wildcats to six regional titles in the last 10 years.



Connor McMullen won the state title in the discus back in May and became Louisburg's first track state champion since 2011.

2. McMullen wins state title in discus, Dennis medals in hurdles

Louisburg High School senior Connor McMullen finally got the state title in the discus he had been searching for.

McMullen recorded a throw of 173 feet, 1 inch on his final attempt to win the Class 4A state discus title in Wichita back in May. He would also medal eighth in the javelin with a toss of 164-02.

Fellow senior Sean Dennis also garnered a state medal as he took fourth in the 110-meter hurdles. The boys and girls team combined sent a total of 11 athletes to the state meet.



The Louisburg High School volleyball team finished third overall in 2015 after making it to state for the fifth time in the last six seasons.

1. Lady Cat volleyball takes third at state

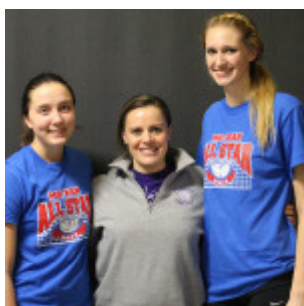
The Louisburg High School volleyball team has made a habit of making the trip to Salina in recent years and this season was no exception.

This time, however, the Lady Cats finished with a victory.

After ending their season with a runner-up performance and two fourth-place finishes at state the last three years, Louisburg won its final match of the season in 2015 as it defeated Tonganoxie in the third-place match.

The Lady Cats qualified for the state tournament for the fifth time in the last six years.

Dunn, Turner help Kansas to all-star victory



Lauren Dunn (left) and Madison Turner (right) pose for a picture with Louisburg High School coach Jessica Compliment following the GKCVCA Mo-Kan All-Star match on Nov. 15 at Avila University. Dunn and Turner helped Kansas to a 3-0 victory. Both players, along with LHS freshman Anna Dixon, also earned KVA all-state honors.

Photos courtesy of Amy Turner

Lauren Dunn and Madison Turner might have walked off the volleyball court together for the final time as members of the Louisburg volleyball team back in late October, but they weren't done teaming up just yet.

Dunn and Turner were selected to participate in the Greater Kansas City Volleyball Coaches Association Mo-Kan All-Star Match on Nov. 15 at Avila University. The two players joined with several other Kansas City area all-stars to compete in the small-class match.

The Louisburg duo did their part in helping Kansas to a 25-13,

25-16 and 25-17 victory over Missouri to avenge a loss from a year ago, when then-Louisburg seniors Bailey Dvorak and Sydney Dixon fell just short in their attempt.

“It was bittersweet,” Dunn said. “In the very last set of the game, I turned toward Madison and I was like ‘Last time on the same side of the net.’ So it was awesome to have one more game with her.”

Turner felt the same way.

“Lauren and I have been playing volleyball together since the third grade, either on a rec team or through CYO (Catholic Youth Organization), so knowing that the all-star game was the last time we would be playing together was definitely bittersweet.”



Madison Turner (left) and Lauren Dunn team up for a block during the Nov. 15 all-star match at Avila University.

Each player scored some big points during the match and both players left the court the same way they did during the high school season – with a win.

“It was really fun to be on the all-star team and to play with

all the girls,” Turner said “I have played against them all during the high school season and four or five of the girls I have played with on the same club team or against during club season, so it was really nice to be on the same side of the net as a team.

“It was a really fun experience. Everyone selected to be on the team are really good players and all really nice girls and I am glad that I had the opportunity to play with them all. And it’s always fun to win.”

Being selected as an all-star wasn’t the only honor to come their way in recent weeks.

The Kansas Volleyball Coaches Association announced the all-state teams and both players received honors, along with Louisburg teammate Anna Dixon.

Turner was named to the Class 4A Division I all-state first team for her role as the Lady Cats’ middle blocker. She led the Lady Cats in both kills (327) and blocks (266) and she also finished with 37 aces.

“I was very honored to be selected to be on the all-state first team,” Turner said. “I feel that I had a really good senior season and it was really nice to be recognized for all my hard work.”

Dunn garnered second team honors as she played all six rotations for Louisburg. She was second on the team in digs (289), third in kills (281) and third in aces (39).

“I was pretty excited to get the honor but I was proud that we had three girls from our team on it as well,” Dunn said. “It was a great way to cap off the season.”

As for Dixon, she was named to the honorable mention team as the Louisburg freshman had a great first year for the Lady Cats. Dixon was second on the team in kills (304), aces (59)

and third in digs (251) as she played all six rotations as well.

Turner and Dunn are both moving on to play in the college ranks. Turner signed to play at Arkansas State, while Dunn inked with the Pittsburg State volleyball program.

Turner signs with Arkansas State



Louisburg High School senior Madison Turner signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Arkansas State on Wednesday at Louisburg High School. Sitting next to Madison are her parents Amy and Brad Turner. Standing is Louisburg High School coach Jessica Compliment.

It isn't hard to spot Madison Turner on the volleyball court.

Turner, who stands at 6 feet, 4 inches, can usually be found in the middle of all the action at the net. Whether it was with blocks or kills, Turner turned a lot of heads and college coaches seemed to take notice.

The Louisburg High School senior pulled in a lot of college offers and took a dozen visits, but when it came down to it, Turner's college choice was an easy one to make.

On Wednesday, Turner signed her letter of intent to play for Arkansas State University, a Division I program in Jonesboro, Ark. Her dream finally became a reality.

"It is very exciting," Turner said. "I knew I always wanted to play Division I and it has been my goal for a long time."

It was a goal that took a lot of hard work in the weight room and countless matches on the floor, whether it was in high school or club volleyball.

"I am just really excited for her and to see what she can do in her four years there," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "Madison has had to deal with some injuries from time to time that has prevented her from coming to the summer weights program, but when she could come she would and work hard. I am very excited she found a school that she really likes."

Turner joins an Arkansas State program that is on the rise. The Red Wolves recently won the regular season Sun Belt Conference championship and have nearly had a perfect season.

Arkansas State is 25-1 on the season and finished with a 16-0 record in the conference. The Red Wolves' lone loss so far was to Missouri in early September and have since rattled off 21 wins in a row.

Red Wolves coach David Rehr is excited to see what Turner can bring to their program.

"Madison is already an excellent blocking middle and her offensive game profiles to our style of play," Rehr said in a statement. "She's got great size and is a good athlete too so I'm excited on getting her on campus next season and watching her compete. I expect her offensive game to just get better

and better once she gets here.”

Although it was an exhaustive process at times that brought along plenty of offers, Turner’s decision wasn’t a difficult one as she fell in love with the program during her visit last May.

“It was really easy to choose Arkansas State because I knew I wanted to attend there after I visited,” Turner said. “I had visited about a dozen other colleges and had other offers, but Arkansas State just felt right. I really liked it there. The coaches are amazing, and I really liked the campus and everything about their volleyball program.”

Turner had a big season for the Lady Cat program as she garnered a first team all-Frontier League selection as she helped Louisburg to its third straight undefeated league crown and a third-place finish at the state tournament. She was also on three state tournament teams during her career, including a second-place finish as a sophomore.

Serving as the team’s middle hitter this season, Turner led the Lady Cats with 327 kills and also had a team-high 266 blocks to go along with 37 aces.

“Playing Louisburg volleyball has been really fun, especially my senior season because I got to play with all my close friends which was great,” Turner said. “My high school career ended with a win at state which was how I wanted to end it. It was great going to state all those years.”

As for her future, Turner knows the jump from high school to Division I volleyball is going to be a big one, but she is looking forward to the challenge.

“The coaches said they wanted to redshirt me the first year because they want me to get stronger before I get out there and play,” Turner said. “I think it would be beneficial because it will give me a chance to get better and stronger.”

Madison is the daughter of Brad and Amy Turner and is planning on entering the medical field.

Dunn inks with Pittsburg State



Louisburg High School senior Lauren Dunn signed her letter of intent Wednesday to play volleyball at Pittsburg State University. Sitting next to Lauren are her parents Don and Janie Dunn. Standing is Louisburg High School volleyball coach Jessica Compliment.

When Lauren Dunn started thinking about where she wanted to play college volleyball, there was really only one school that stood out among the rest.

As it turns out, it is only about 80 miles down the road.

Dunn's top choice became a reality Wednesday when she signed her letter of intent to play volleyball at Pittsburg State University.

"It was kind of a family thing for me," Dunn said. "A lot of my family has gone there and I have always liked the school

and the program.

"I ended up deciding last summer and the coaches and seniors that were there when I took my visit really welcomed me in. I got a chance to meet the freshmen that are playing there now and they are all a really nice group of girls. It is a lot of the same type of friendships there that I saw on our Louisburg team."

Dunn, a senior, has had quite the career for the Louisburg High School volleyball program. She has participated in state tournaments all four years and has placed each time out.

As a sophomore, she helped the Lady Cats to a runner-up finish at the Class 4A-Division I state tournament. Louisburg also finished third place this past season and fourth the other two years.

It is those state tournament appearances that she hopes can propel her to a big career with the Gorillas.

"It has prepared me quite a bit," Dunn said. "We have been to state the last four years so that has really helped with the experience of playing high, intense volleyball."

For much of her Lady Cat career, she has played all-around the court and has thrived in the different spots.

Dunn, who was a first-team all-Frontier League player this past season, was among the team leaders in several different categories. She was second on the team with 389 digs, third in kills with 281 and third with 39 aces.

"The coaches have told me that they see me playing six rotations all the way around," Dunn said. "I am just hoping that I can work hard enough to earn that six rotation spot when I get down there. There are seven freshmen playing down there now and there are five of us in this incoming class."

The process wasn't too difficult for Dunn who always had Pitt

State in the front of the line and now she will get the opportunity to live out her dream.

“Lauren has always been 100 percent Pitt State,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “I am so glad to see that she got what she wanted because that is what she has been working so hard for. I am happy to see what the next four years brings for them.”

Next fall Dunn will take the floor for the Division II Gorillas in the MIAA Conference. Along the way she will run into a couple familiar faces. She will play against former teammates Sydney Dixon (Fort Hays State) and Bailey Dvorak (Lindenwood) next season as both have completed their freshman seasons with their respective schools.

“I talked to them a little bit, but they have been pretty busy with their seasons,” Dunn said. “It will be different seeing them on the other side of the net because we played together for three years. I think it will be a lot of fun, but it will be different for sure.”

Pitt State is in the rebuilding process this season with seven freshmen this season and even more new players coming in for next year. It will be a lot of competition for Dunn to go against, but she is looking forward to the challenge.

“It is really exciting,” Dunn said. “I hope that I end up playing freshman year down there, but if not, I still think it is going to be a great experience for me. I am going to be learning from some of the best players down there.”

Lauren is the daughter of Don and Janie Dunn and she is planning on majoring in nursing or physical therapy.

Lady Cats put five on all-league team



Louisburg seniors Madison Turner (left) and Lauren Dunn were named to the all-Frontier League first team on Monday and were two of five Lady Cats that were selected to the squad.

It was a special season in many ways for the Louisburg High School volleyball team and now it is starting to reap the rewards from it.

After finishing third at the Class 4A-Division I state tournament and winning their third consecutive Frontier League crown, it wouldn't be hard to figure out that the Lady Cats would have plenty of representation on the all-Frontier League team when it came out.

The all-league list was released on Monday and there were plenty of Louisburg names to be found – five to be exact.

Seniors Lauren Dunn and Madison Turner garnered first-team honors to lead the Lady Cats. Senior Makenzie Kallevig and freshman Anna Dixon earned spots on the second team, while sophomore Sophie McMullen was named honorable mention.



Makenzie Kallevig, a senior, was named to the all-league second team.

"It was nice to see the girls get recognized," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "You always wish you could get more girls on there, or get another girl on first team or whatever the case may be. There were some other good teams in the league that had some good players, but it was nice to have two girls get first team, two get second and another get honorable mention. It is good recognition for the volleyball team."

Dunn played all-around for the Lady Cats and was a vital part of the team in several different areas. She was second on the team with 389 digs, third in kills with 281 and third with 39 aces.

"For the past three years, playing front row and back row, Lauren reads the ball really well," Compliment said. "She reacts to the ball really well. There was a play at state that really showed that when she played the ball while laying on the ground. She can play the ball from anywhere, no matter what position she is playing."



Freshman Anna Dixon earned all-league second team honors.

As for Turner, the 6-foot, 4-inch middle hitter was a focal point at the net for Louisburg. Turner led the Lady Cats with 327 kills and also had a team-high 266 blocks to go along with 37 aces.

“With Madison being the middle, she was pretty unstoppable whenever we could get the ball to her in the middle,” Compliment said. “She has added a couple different variety of hits, which has allowed her to hit from a couple different spots and really helped the team there. I think she also got stronger with some of her blocking as well.”



Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen was named as an

honorable mention.

Kallevig was a fixture on the back row as the team's libero. She led Louisburg with 500 digs on the season and also finished with 33 aces.

Dixon became a big part of the team for Louisburg as a freshman as she was given the task of playing all-around with Dunn. Dixon was second on the team with 304 kills and finished with 59 aces, which was also second on the Lady Cat squad. She was third on the team with 251 digs.

As for McMullen, she ran the Louisburg offense from the setter spot and was a weapon at different spots on the court. McMullen finished four assists shy of 1,000 on the season with 996 and ran away with the team lead in aces with 82. She also added 246 digs.

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE VOLLEYBALL

First team: Lauren Dunn, Louisburg, senior; Madison Turner, Louisburg, senior; Aubri Hinkle, De Soto, senior; Kylie Corneliusen, De Soto, senior; Makaila Garcia, Eudora, senior

Second team: Makenzie Kallevig, Louisburg, senior; Anna Dixon, Louisburg, freshman; Emma Burnett, Baldwin, senior; Chandler Karr, Paola, junior; Moira Frakes, Spring Hill, senior; Madi Miller, Spring Hill, senior

Honorable mention: Sophie McMullen, sophomore, Louisburg; Kelsey Kehl, Baldwin, senior; Kaitlyn Bell, De Soto, freshman; Ally Barnhart, De Soto, freshman; Kristi Daigh, Eudora, senior; Kamryn Shaffer, Ottawa, sophomore; Megan Milroy, Spring Hill, junior

Opinion: Lady Cat seniors carry on tradition



Louisburg High School seniors (from left) Makenzie Kallevig, Cate Stambaugh, Lauren Dunn, Megan Lemke and Madison Turner share a few tears after they receive the team's third-place trophy Saturday during the Class 4A-Division I state tournament in Salina.

SALINA – As a freshman, Lauren Dunn was all sorts of nervous when she walked onto the state tournament floor the first time.

Madison Turner, Megan Lemke and Makenzie Kallevig probably had the same feelings when they made their first state tournament as sophomores. Cate Stambaugh had some butterflies when she made her state debut last season as a junior.

For these five Louisburg High School seniors, the state tournament has become an expectation and not just a goal of trying to get there. Every season, the Lady Cat leaders have goals of winning state tournaments – a goal they are still trying to achieve as a program.

Dunn, Turner, Lemke, Kallevig and Stambaugh gave it their all in their final go around, but couldn't bring that state title home to Louisburg. It certainly wasn't for a lack of trying.

The Lady Cats took eventual state champion Bishop Miege to three sets in pool play and had a lead against McPherson in the semifinals before falling in two sets. Louisburg eventually beat Tonganoxie on Saturday for third-place.

"I am so proud," Kallevig said. "We had five seniors so we had a lot of fun leading the team through the first match of the year to senior night to substate and now state. We wanted to end our season on a win.

"Getting fourth last season, we wanted to do better than that and we did. Plus I got to finish the season with all my best friends and that was special."

This senior class carried on the traditions that was laid before them under coach Jessica Compliment. It began six years ago when seniors Emily Lemke, Marisa Mackey, Colleen O'Brien and Caitlin Schneider broke through to qualify for the first state tournament under Compliment in 2010. It was the first time the program had been to state in 18 years.

After not qualifying in 2011, the Lady Cats used that state experience to get back the next four years and would place every year. In 2012, seniors Regan Wertz, Bailey Aiken, Katie Dixon, Amy Dennis and Anna Bell put together a strong performance to finish fourth.

The following year, seniors Maddie DeShazer and Ellie Walter helped the Lady Cats to the state championship game and placed second. In 2014, Bailey Dvorak and Sydney Dixon helped guide Louisburg to a fourth-place finish as well.

If you want to go back even further, Louisburg's tradition was first started under hall of fame coach Larry Harding in the 1970s and 80s, who guided the Lady Cats to nine state

tournaments, including several top four finishes.



Sophomore Sophie McMullen jumps in the air with excitement as she gathers around teammates (from left) Madison Turner, Megan Lemke, Makenzie Kallevig, Lauren Dunn and Anna Dixon on Friday at the state tournament in Salina

It is hard to win state championships, especially if you are a public school like Louisburg.

Certain schools have advantages Louisburg can't compete against, or others just have the better team that year. This run of state tournaments is something the school and the community should be proud of because nothing is guaranteed.

Not many schools their size, public ones anyway, can match the success the Lady Cats have achieved in their program's history. Past and present Lady Cats should hold their heads high for everything they have accomplished.

It is all about handing the baton from one class to the next and this year's senior class did a great job of preparing the underclassmen for what they can expect.

All five seniors played vital roles on this year's team and meshed well with a great setter in sophomore Sophie McMullen, a fantastic hitter in freshman Anna Dixon and junior outside hitter Olivia Bradley, who played in a couple different spots for the Lady Cats and did them well.

"It was an easy transition," Anna Dixon said. "I was so happy to play with this group of seniors and I am going to miss them a lot next year. I felt pushed a lot to do better and those upperclassmen were a big reason I was able to improve this year."

It was Bradley who stepped in for Stambaugh after she injured her ankle toward the end of the season and moved to the middle hitter spot.

"Olivia did such a good job in my spot and maybe even better than I could have done," Stambaugh said. "I was just glad to end on a win because that is what our team deserves. We work together and we have worked too hard to end on a loss."

Louisburg ended its state tournament with a win Saturday for the first time in these five appearances and the emotions were bittersweet. It was especially hard for Dunn, who stepped onto the floor at the state tournament for the first time in 2012 as a freshman with a core of five seniors similar to her group this season. Since then, she has been named to two state all-tournament teams.

"The whole season has been so fun," Dunn said. "All the underclassmen and all the players have been so great. It is a great group of girls and I am going to miss being a Louisburg Wildcat."

"It is has been an awesome experience to be here four times. It is just sad that it has to end."

Lauren, Madison, Megan, Makenzie and Cate showed the underclassmen the blueprint for what it takes to have success

and now it is their job to add to it

“We have set the bar for the underclassmen for leadership and how we play the game,” Megan said. “I would say Louisburg volleyball has a good future.”

That it does.

Lady Cats take third at state tourney



The Louisburg girls volleyball team pose with the Class 4A-Division I third-place trophy Saturday in Salina. Pictured are (front row, from left) Cate Stambaugh, Lauren Dunn, Makenzie Kallevig, Madison Turner, Megan Lemke; (standing) assistant coach Mary Quinn, Olivia Bradley, Mikayla Quinn, Sophie McMullen, Ellie Katzer, Ava Littrell, Anna Dixon, Carson Buffington and coach Jessica Compliment.

SALINA – Lauren Dunn felt something different.

That says a lot for a person who has been on state tournament teams the last four years. Dunn has felt heartbreak, joy, nervousness and probably a little frustration.

She has been through a lot of good and bad times, but

following Saturday's third-place state finish, Dunn and the rest of her teammates had a little different emotion.

The Lady Cats were finally able to end their state tournament with a victory.

After two fourth-place finishes and a runner-up, the Lady Cats' 25-19 and 25-17 win over Tonganoxie in the third-place match of the Class 4A-Division I tournament at the Salina Bicentennial Center gave Dunn, and fellow seniors Madison Turner, Makenzie Kallevig, Megan Lemke and Cate Stambaugh, a chance to end their season the right way.

"That was something that I emphasized in the locker room is that this was going to be the year that we end on a win," Dunn said. "Getting second and all that was great, but getting to end on a win is one of the best feelings."



Lauren Dunn dives to the court for a dig during Friday's pool play action at the Class 4A-Division I state tournament in Salina.

It was a much-needed win for the Lady Cats, who experienced heartbreak in their two previous matches against the top two ranked teams in the state.

Louisburg found themselves in the semifinals against No. 2-ranked McPherson on Saturday, and despite getting out to an early lead in the first set, fell 25-21 and 25-17.

“McPherson is a good team and they were able to put up some good blocks against us and I think that just got in our heads a little bit and we couldn’t find a way to get around those,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We just started playing more not to lose instead of playing to win. The momentum just stayed on McPherson’s side and we couldn’t break in.”

Then on Friday, the Lady Cats, who are ranked No. 3 in Class 4A, got a chance to go up against No. 1 Bishop Miege in the final match of pool play. Louisburg made Miege, the eventual state champion, work for everything.

Even though Louisburg fell 25-19, 17-25, 25-16, the Lady Cats were the only team to take a set from the Stags, who beat McPherson in two sets in the championship match.



Megan Lemke (left) and Olivia Bradley go up for a block Friday against Chanute

“We played our hearts out,” Kallevig said. “We wanted to get revenge on them from my sophomore year when we lost in title match. I am really proud of the way we played and I wouldn’t

change anything.”

Louisburg also earned honors following the state tournament as it had three players make the all-tournament team. Dunn, Turner and freshman Anna Dixon all earned spots on the team. It was the second time in her career that she was named to the squad.

The Lady Cats, who ended the year with a 31-12 record, made sure to come out strong against Tonganoxie as they took a 12-7 lead after three kills and an ace from Dixon. Kallevig then served four straight service points that included an ace from her, along with a kill from Dunn and a block from Turner.

Dixon and Turner then added two kills each to stretch out the lead to 20-11 and the Lady Cats never looked back in the first set.

The second set was much of the same went out to a 9-4 lead thanks to three kills from Turner, two kills from Dixon and an ace from Lemke. Ahead 19-15, Louisburg then closed out the match thanks to four kills from Dixon and another from sophomore Sophie McMullen.



**Senior Madison Turner
gets a stuff block**

**against Chanute on
Friday at the Salina
Bicentennial Center.**

"It means a lot, especially with this being my first state tournament," Dixon said of the third-place finish. "We definitely wanted to get back with Miego in that championship match, but it was good to end on a win."

Louisburg had its sights set on the championship match and appeared at one point the Lady Cats were going to get there against McPherson. They found themselves down 11-6 early on, but the Lady Cats made a furious rally.

McMullen led the charge as she served five straight service points, including three aces to give Louisburg a 12-11 lead. The Lady Cats then went on another mini 4-0 run thanks to two tips and a kill from Dunn to give them an 18-13 lead.

All that momentum quickly went away as McPherson charged right back and went on an 11-3 run to end the set.

The first half of the second set, the two teams went back and forth and neither could pull away. McPherson had a 17-13 lead, but McMullen's serving came up big again with two aces and Dixon added a pair of kills to tie it.

Unfortunately for the Lady Cats, McPherson scored the final eight points to take the set and the match.

"I think it was just a confidence issue," Dunn said. "Some of us were just playing timid. Our players are so great that we just need to play with confidence. We just started tipping too much instead of just hitting the ball and that gave them more free balls instead of making them work for the points."

After losing the first set against Bishop Miego, the Lady Cats put together some of their best volleyball of the tournament in the second set.

Lemke served up five consecutive points to put Louisburg up 9-7 after an ace of her own, along with a block, tip and a kill from Turner. Miego rallied to tie the match at 13-all, but two kills and an ace from Dixon and a kill from Dunn put the Lady Cats up 17-14.

Kallevig put on another serving show for the Lady Cats as she served five straight points and added an ace during that stretch. Turner then added a pair of kills and a block to close out the match.

"We were playing to win against Miego," Compliment said. "They wanted that game and that set and played aggressive that whole time."



(Clockwise from left) Megan Lemke, Sophie McMullen, Makezie Kallevig, Anna Dixon, Olivia Bradley and Lauren Dunn celebrate a big point against Bishop Miego.

In the third set, Miego went on a 7-2 run to take a 19-12 lead and the Lady Cats were unable to get any closer.

The Lady Cats also put together good performances to start pool play as they defeated Andover Central (25-19, 25-23) and Chanute (25-15 and 25-12).

Despite the up and down state tournament and some disappointment, the Lady Cats were happy with the way

everything turned out.

“It feels great to end on a win, especially with this being my senior season,” Turner said. “I didn’t want to end it on a loss. It would have been better to get into championship match against Miego and beat them so they didn’t win three times in a row, but it still feels good to get third.”

It was never easy for the Lady Cats as they competed in tough tournaments and played several bigger, state-ranked teams in September. Louisburg then had to play without one of its seniors, in Stambaugh, during the final stretch that included substate and state.

“It was a real fun season,” Lemke said. “Even with Cate going down, I don’t think that set us back too much because she was always there to support us and help us. I had a lot of fun, but sad it is over though.”