

Lady Cats finish strong at home tourney



Louisburg's Cate Stambaugh (left) and Ellie Katzer team up for a block during the Lady Cats' third-place match with Basehor-Linwood on Saturday in the Louisburg Invitational. The Lady Cats finished third overall.

The Louisburg volleyball team was used to playing in the championship match of its home tournament – the Louisburg Invitational – so it felt a little different for the Lady Cats to be playing on a different court for a different prize.

Louisburg didn't let struggles from the Saturday tournament bring them down as it made sure it ended on a positive note.

After losing 2-0 to Shawnee Mission East in the semifinals, the Lady Cats faced off with Basehor-Linwood for third place. Despite losing the first set, the Lady Cats rallied for a 23-25, 25-21 and 25-16 victory to secure their third-place finish.

Although the Lady Cats (21-9) had their ups and downs on the day, Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment was happy to see her team finish well, but knows there is still a lot to improve upon for the rest of the season.

"We are familiar with them," Compliment said of Basehor. "The

girls wanted to end the day on a win and end on a high note. I think that was really nice to see.

“We just need to find that confidence with everyone from time to time. It just a matter of coming together as a team and finding that confidence on every single play. We still second guess on defense on who is going to go get it, but it still a matter of confidence and just going after every single ball. They are a good group that works hard and I know they want it.”

Louisburg opened pool play with a 25-20 and 25-10 victory over Leavenworth and went three sets with Fort Scott in its next match, 21-25, 25-23 and 25-18.



Sophomore Sophie McMullen sets up teammate Madison Turner for a kill Saturday during the Louisburg Invitational.

The Lady Cats then went up against Class 6A’s Olathe South in the final match of pool play, and despite a good start, fell 25-23, 10-25 and 20-25.

“We had a slow start to our day,” Compliment said. “It has

been a busy week with homecoming, then last night with the dance, you could tell they were tired. They weren't mentally and physically here and ready to play. We were slow to come out against Leavenworth and slow to come out against Fort Scott.

"We could not find our rhythm against Olathe South. They served really, really well and we could not get a serve or a pass. That is about being more mentally tough, mentally sound and learning to let a bad play roll off our shoulders and move on. We let too many balls go by us, and with a team like them, they take advantage of it. We came out with a little more energy in the third set, we just weren't hitting consistently."

Louisburg was still able to advance to the championship bracket, where the reward was the opportunity to play Shawnee Mission East, the No. 2 team in Class 6A, in the semifinals. East had already beaten Louisburg easily in the Lansing Invitational earlier in the year, but the Lady Cats put on a better showing this time around in the 22-25 and 15-25 loss.

The Lady Cats started out sluggish in their third-place match to Basehor-Linwood and it didn't get any better as senior Lauren Dunn left the game in the first set with an injury.

Junior Ellie Katzer filled in for Dunn for the rest of the first set and played the entire second set before Dunn entered in the third.

"She is going to be ok," Compliment said of Dunn. "I just wanted to keep her out and make sure she got her legs back underneath her before I put her back in. Plus, it gave Ellie a chance to get out there and play and get some touches. She hasn't spent a whole lot of time on the court with the varsity players and she did a nice job to step in."

It didn't look good for the Lady Cats as they trailed 14-10 in that second set, but freshman Anna Dixon responded with three

straight aces to cut into the lead. Senior Megan Lemke eventually tied it up at 17-all with another ace.

Senior Cate Stambaugh responded with a kill that led to a 7-3 run and it ended with a tip from senior Madison Turner to keep the match alive.

In the third set, the Lady Cats got off to a good start and never looked back. Louisburg took a 12-8 lead after three straight kills from Turner.

Back-to-back kills from Dixon, an ace from Dunn and a block from Sophie McMullen widened the lead to 18-12 and Basehor-Linwood couldn't get any closer.

"When we see the bigger 5A and 6A schools, we tend to shut down a little quicker and we can't bounce back," Compliment said. "When we play other 4A schools, we have that mental fortitude to bounce back and win. They wanted to win and I was happy to see how they held it together on the court."

Turner had a big day at the net for Louisburg as she racked up a team-high 49 kills to go along with 33 blocks. Dixon was second on the team with 37 kills and had a team-high five aces. Stambaugh led the Lady Cats with 36 blocks on the day and also had 24 kills.

McMullen, the team's setter, ran the offense well with 122 assists in the five matches and also had three aces and 39 digs. Libero Makenzie Kallevig had a team-high in digs with 63 and added three aces. Dunn added 48 digs from the back row, had 30 kills at the net and two aces. Lemke also finished with three aces.

Louisburg downs Baldwin

Louisburg competed in its first Frontier League road match of the season on Sept. 22 when it traveled to Baldwin.

The Lady Cats didn't have much of a problem as they cruised to a 25-18, 25-14 and 25-10 win over the Bulldogs.

Madison Turner led Louisburg at the net with 10 kills and also had three blocks. Cate Stambaugh had a team-high 11 blocks to go along with six kills.

Lauren Dunn played well all over the court as she finished with nine kills and also had a team-high 11 digs in the back row. Setter Sophie McMullen countered with 27 assists, nine digs and four blocks.

Senior libero Makenzie Kallevig posted a team-high three aces and also had eight digs. Anna Dixon finished with eight digs and six kills, while Olivia Bradley added four kills and three blocks.

Lady Cats seventh at Hayden Invite



Louisburg senior Lauren Dunn sends a kill over the net during a match earlier this season. The Lady Cats traveled to the Topeka Hayden Invitational on Saturday and finished seventh overall with a 1-4 record.

TOPEKA – The Topeka Hayden Invitational featured seven state ranked teams in three classifications, so the Louisburg volleyball team knew it was going to be a tough road Saturday.

The Lady Cats had their hands full, got off to a bad start and couldn't recover as they finished with a 1-4 record on the day. Louisburg did finish the tournament on a positive note as it defeated Bishop Carroll 25-18 and 25-9 in the seventh-place match.

It was a revenge match of sorts as it was Bishop Carroll, the No. 7 team in Class 5A, that handed the Lady Cats their first loss of the day. After Louisburg won the first set 25-23, Carroll responded with 25-19 and 25-15 victories in the first match of pool play.

Louisburg (17-7) got strong performances from seniors Madison Turner and Lauren Dunn in that first match. Turner led the way with a team-high 12 kills to go along with six blocks.

Dunn finished with eight kills, but also had a team-best 14 digs on defense. Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen added 27 assists in the three-set match.

Next up in pool play for the Lady Cats was Olathe East, the No. 2 ranked team in Class 6A. It was a tough battle, but Louisburg came up short in the 25-17 and 25-21 loss.

Freshman Anna Dixon led the Louisburg attack with six kills and an ace. Turner had a team-high 10 blocks on defense and fellow senior Cate Stambaugh added eight in the loss.

It didn't get any easier as Louisburg squared off with host Topeka Hayden, which also happens to be the No. 1 team in Class 4A-Division I. The Lady Cats, which are ranked No. 4, couldn't get the momentum it needed in the 25-20 and 25-20 setback.

Dunn led the Lady Cats with seven kills and Dixon added six, while senior Megan Lemke finished with two aces. Turner added a team-best nine blocks and senior libero Makenzie Kallevig had eight digs in the back row. McMullen also had 17 assists to lead the Lady Cat offense to go along with five blocks.

Louisburg finished up pool play against the No. 10 team in Class 6A, Manhattan. The Lady Cats wrapped up pool play winless in the 25-22 and 25-17 defeat.

Turner and Dixon finished with nine and seven kills, respectively, to lead the Lady Cat offense and McMullen added 21 assists. Defensively, Kallevig racked up a team-high 16 digs and Dunn finished with 10. Stambaugh also had nine blocks to help the Louisburg defense.

After all the losing, the Lady Cats took their aggression out on Carroll in the seventh-place match to win in two sets.

Turner and Stambaugh had a strong match at the net from their middle hitter positions with eight and six kills, respectively. Dunn added a team-high four aces and Kallevig recorded three.

Kallevig also came up big again defensively with 14 digs. McMullen moved the ball well from the setter spot with 18 assists.

The Lady Cats will try and rebound as they host the Louisburg Invitational on Saturday. Pool play is set to begin at 8 a.m. Teams scheduled to attend are Basehor-Linwood, Fort Scott, Leavenworth, Olathe North, Olathe South, Shawnee Mission East and Turner.

Lady Cats sweep quad at Prairie View

Louisburg didn't have much of a problem Thursday when it traveled to Prairie View High School for a quadrangular with

Osawatomie and Fort Scott.

The Lady Cats won all three matches in two sets and didn't get much of an opposition.

Louisburg defeated Fort Scott 26-24 and 25-15 behind 10 kills from Lauren Dunn and six kills each from Cate Stambaugh, Madison Turner and Anna Dixon. Stambaugh also had a big match at the net with 10 blocks.

Setter Sophie McMullen handed out 22 assists, while three Lady Cats posted double-digit numbers in digs. Dixon led the way with 14, while Dunn and McMullen added 11 and 10, respectively.

It was much of the same against Osawatomie as the Lady Cats rolled to a 25-13 and 25-13 win. Dixon, Dunn and Turner had five kills each, while Dixon had three aces to lead the Louisburg offense. McMullen also added 18 assists.

Against Prairie View, Louisburg took care of business against the home team with a 25-15 and 25-9 victory. The Lady Cats served well as they racked up 11 aces in the two sets, with Dixon and Turner recording four each.

LHS volleyball wins league opener



Louisburg sophomore Sophie McMullen sets up a teammate at the net during the Lady Cats' league opener Tuesday against De Soto at home. Louisburg defeated De Soto in three sets.

The Louisburg High School volleyball team showed a couple things during Tuesday's league home opener.

One, the Lady Cats are really good.

And two, the other six teams in the Frontier League are going to have their hands full.

Louisburg competed in its first league dual of the season against De Soto, and other than an up and down first set, it didn't have much of a problem. The Lady Cats defeated De Soto 28-26, 25-19 and 25-18.

"We are not playing our best ball right now, which is fine, because we want to be playing our best ball at the end of the season," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "That is still something we have to work on and get better at. Overall, I thought we did a pretty decent job. The good thing about this group is that they play really well together and they feed off each other."

It is that chemistry that helped the Lady Cats, which are ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division I, get through a back and forth first set.

Louisburg built a small 8-5 advantage, but De Soto kept

battling and eventually took a 15-4 lead midway through the set. After a kill from Madison Turner, the Louisburg senior rattled off six straight service points thanks to two kills from senior Lauren Dunn, a kill from freshman Anna Dixon and a block from senior Cate Stambaugh to put Louisburg back up 21-15.

De Soto then went on a 9-1 run to take 24-22 and appeared it was going to steal the first set. Instead, the Lady Cats buckled down and got back-to-back points after a tip and an ace from Dunn.

It remained tied at 26-all, but Dixon gave Louisburg the lead with an ace and senior libero Makenzie Kallevig finished the match off with an ace.



Megan Lemke sends the ball over the net during Tuesday home match with De Soto.

“I was really pleased that they were able to come back and win that first set,” Compliment said. “It would have been easy to give up there, but they didn’t.

“I think it is hard to keep that intensity and focus

sometimes. This is the third time we have seen De Soto and we have beaten them twice before, and I think they had that in the back of their head. They will come out and play well, ease back and then push back at the very end.”

The Lady Cats used that momentum in the second set to build a 21-13 lead behind kills by Dixon and Turner. De Soto made a little dent in the lead, but Stambaugh stopped the run with a kill and block. Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen and Dixon added kills of their own to finish the set out.

Dixon continued her strong play in the third set as she recorded five straight service points to build a 6-1 lead behind an ace of her own and a tip and kill from Dunn.

A block and a kill from Stambaugh, a block from Dixon and a kill from Turner put Louisburg up 16-8 and the Lady Cats never looked back. For most of the night, Louisburg was efficient with its offensive attack and Compliment saw quite a few positives from her team.

“Serving was pretty good,” Compliment said. “We got into a little rut in that third set, but they served tough and they served aggressive.

“Defensively we still have some miscommunication at times, but overall it was a good night. Sophie did a great job moving the ball around and did some real nice things with her hitters.”

Louisburg will face another tough part of its schedule Saturday when it travels to the Topeka Hayden Invitational. Matches are set to begin at 8 a.m.

Lady Cats get revenge to take third at Lansing



Senior Cate Stambaugh (left) celebrates a big point during Louisburg's pool play match against Topeka Seaman on Saturday at the Lansing Invitational. The Lady Cats defeated Topeka Seaman and finished third overall.

LANSING – The Louisburg High School volleyball team went up against some big and talented schools during the Lansing Invitational on Saturday.

The Lady Cats showed resiliency several different times as they left Lansing with a third-place finish overall, including big wins over Topeka Seaman (Class 5A) in pool play and Shawnee Mission West (Class 6A) in the third-place match.

Louisburg defeated Shawnee Mission West 25-23 and 25-20 for third and exacted a little revenge in the process. The Lady Cats fell to West in pool play in two sets, which put them in danger of not making the championship bracket.

It was a weird day as the tournament lasted longer than normal and the team had to do a lot of sitting in-between matches.

“Saturday was definitely a roller coaster ride,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “We had a lot of highs, but we also hit a lull where we let too many things get to us and let

the other teams get the momentum.

“We are used to that tournament where you play back-to-back, but with the new format and only three courts, we played and then sat. It was just harder to stay focused after sitting for so long and then having to play.”

Senior Lauren Dunn had a big day at the net with a team-high 33 kills. Defensively, she was second on the team with 42 digs.



Senior libero Makenzie Kallevig gets underneath the ball during the Lansing Invitational on Saturday.

Freshman Anna Dixon was second with 29 kills and had a strong day serving with eight aces, including four in the third place match against Shawnee Mission West.

Middle hitters Madison Turner and Cate Stambaugh also made their presence known. Turner finished with 22 kills and a team-high 46 blocks, while Stambaugh added 20 kills and 33 blocks on the day.

Sophomore setter Sophie McMullen ran the offense well as she moved the ball around and racked up 97 assists in the six matches. McMullen was also the best from behind the service line with 13 aces.

Makenzie Kallevig, the team's libero, was busy in the back row with a team-high 51 digs and also had five aces. Megan Lemke also had 25 digs and two aces from the back, while outside hitter Olivia Bradley had five kills and four blocks.

The Lady Cats didn't have much of a problem to start the day as they opened with a 25-20 and 25-20 victory over De Soto. Then came Shawnee Mission West in the second match, which left them a little frustrated in the 25-17 and 25-20 loss.

"We just never found our groove against Shawnee Mission West the first time," Compliment said. "They played good defense and they were picking every single ball and that was frustrating, which got in our hitters' heads a little bit."

If Louisburg wanted to keep its hopes alive for the championship bracket, then it had to beat Topeka Seaman in its next match, and it did, 26-24 and 25-18.

It was no easy task as the Lady Cats trailed early on in the first set, but put together a big run to grab a 17-12 lead. Seaman put together a rally of its own to record 10 straight points and take a 22-17 advantage.

Louisburg had one more run left in it as it took a 24-23 lead before winning 26-24. The Lady Cats used that momentum to finish off the match in two sets.

Stambaugh was a force defensively at the net with 11 blocks to turn away several Topeka Seaman attempts, while Dunn and Dixon each had six kills.

"We needed to beat Topeka Seaman to stay at the top of our pool so that was a big win for us to be able to stay in the

top two and allowed us to move on," Compliment said. "Once they find that rhythm, they don't give up. They are good at competing and being able to bounce back. Volleyball is very much a game of momentum and I was happy with the way they fought there."

The Lady Cats made quick work of Piper (25-17, 25-14) to advance to the championship bracket where they faced Shawnee Mission East in the semifinals. East, which is ranked No. 5 in Class 6A, showed why as they defeated Louisburg 25-9 and 25-16 to stop the Lady Cats' bid of a title.

"Shawnee Mission East just dominated us with their serves," Compliment said. "We never found a rhythm against them. They are a good team and they just started picking us apart. I don't think we showed them the team that we are."

Louisburg came to life against Shawnee Mission West in its third place game and it had revenge on its mind. The Lady Cats won the match in two sets behind seven blocks and six kills from Turner, along with six kills and four aces from Dixon.

McMullen ran the offense well with 18 assists and also had three aces. As a team, the Lady Cats had nine aces. Defensively, Kallevig had her best game of the day with a team-high 14 digs to go along with two aces.

"To come back and beat Shawnee Mission West was good for us," Compliment said. "To play in that consolation game is always tough. It was the last match of the day, it was late in the evening and for the girls to find the energy and drive to beat a team you had already lost to, I was happy to see where they came out and played."

Louisburg returns to action Thursday when it travels to Prairie View for a quadrangular with Osawatomie and Fort Scott.

Lady Cats fall to Blue Valley West

Louisburg still had yet to lose its first match of the season when the Lady Cats traveled to Blue Valley West last Thursday.

The Lady Cats, ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division I, went up against the No. 4 ranked team in Class 5A and couldn't stay with the bigger program in the 3-0 loss. Louisburg had a tough time staying with West as it fell 25-17, 25-18 and 25-14 in the best-of-five dual.

Dunn led Louisburg with seven kills on the evening and Dixon added two aces. Stambaugh finished with a team-high eight blocks, while Kallevig had 12 digs. McMullen also had 12 assists and five blocks in the loss.

Lady Cats cruise in home triangular



Freshman Anna Dixon sends the ball past the outstretched arms of a Santa Fe Trail player Tuesday at Louisburg High School. The Lady Cats improved their record to 8-0 on the season with wins over Burlington and Santa Fe Trail.

With no practice because of the Labor Day weekend, and a tough end of the week schedule looming, Tuesday's triangular with Burlington and Santa Fe Trail was sandwiched in between and had all the makings of a trap game for the Louisburg volleyball team.

The Lady Cats, who are ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division I, faced off with two smaller, and lesser-talented programs.

As it turned out, there was no trap at all.

Louisburg rolled to victories in both matches to run its record to 8-0 on the season. The Lady Cats defeated Burlington 25-15 and 25-10 and then downed Santa Fe Trail, 25-17 and 25-12.

"Having (Monday) off, we just never really got into a rhythm against Burlington," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "We made too many errors and mistakes on our side. We were watching balls drop and we didn't play with that sense of urgency that we need to have. The Santa Fe game there was a lot more energy and momentum and we played more of our game."

Louisburg had its rough spots against Burlington, but it was never in any danger of dropping a set. In fact, the Lady Cats had a 17-2 lead in the second set before clinching the match.

The Lady Cats' match against Santa Fe Trail went much the same way.



Louisburg senior Makenzie Kallevig passes the ball to a teammate Tuesday during the Lady Cats' match with Santa Fe Trail.

Louisburg jumped out to a 5-1 lead in the first set thanks to back-to-back aces from Sophie McMullen and kills from Anna Dixon and Madison Turner. Louisburg eventually widened its lead to 20-10 and easily claimed the first set.

Cate Stambaugh helped get the Lady Cats going in the second set as she recorded two kills to help give them a 7-1 lead. Turner and Dixon also provided several blocks and kills down the stretch to give Louisburg a 24-12 advantage before Megan Lemke finished the night off with an ace.

The Lady Cats dominated the net as they have done for most of the season. Dixon, a freshman, led Louisburg with seven kills against Santa Fe Trail. Stambaugh and Turner finished with six each, while senior Lauren Dunn added five kills in the win.

Junior Olivia Bradley led Louisburg with six blocks in the match, while Stambaugh and Turner each finished with four. McMullen ran the offense well as she finished with 20 assists.

“The nice thing about this team is that we are pretty even across the net,” Compliment said. “We have Lauren who can hit the ball, we have Madison, Cate is playing a lot better this year and has really stepped up and playing with more confidence. Anna has been playing well, too. So, Sophie can go anywhere she wants to and know her hitters are going to do well.”

Defensively, Dunn led the Lady Cats against Santa Fe Trail with 12 digs and senior libero Makenzie Kallevig added six. Serving-wise, Turner finished with three aces to lead Louisburg.

“Kenzie and Lauren have been doing a good job on defense,” Compliment said. “Both got under balls and did a good job of digging them out, especially in that second match.

“Our serving was a lot better and we didn’t have many errors. I can’t really blame them on the errors we had because they were serving tough. When Madison, Sophie and Megan are back there serving, I feel that we can really get on a roll with those three.”

Louisburg will be tested starting today as it travels to meet the No. 4 team in Class 5A, Blue Valley West. The Lady Cats will then travel to the Lansing Invitational on Saturday with matchups against De Soto, Piper, Topeka Seaman and Shawnee Mission West.

If they advance far enough, the Lady Cats could meet Shawnee Mission East (No. 5 in 6A) and Lansing (No. 5 in 5A).

Lady Cats rally to victory in home opener



Louisburg senior Madison Turner goes up for a kill during Tuesday' home opener against Blue Valley Southwest. The Lady Cats rallied after a first set loss to win the next three and the match to go to 6-0 on the year.

Already down a set in its home opener against Blue Valley Southwest, the Louisburg volleyball team needed to find a spark.

Enter Sophie McMullen and Madison Turner.

The two players helped lift the Lady Cats to three straight set wins to capture the 3-1 (18-25, 25-12, 25-22 and 25-12) victory Tuesday at Louisburg High School. McMullen's serves helped get the Lady Cats on a roll in the second set, while Blue Valley Southwest had a tough time stopping the Lady Cat middle hitter as Turner found herself on the right end of a lot of kills.

"Once we started passing better and setting up Madison a little more, she was the momentum swing we needed to get those kills and side outs," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "I really think that changed the game in the second set and carried that throughout. I told Sophie to get her more

involved and she did a good job of finding spots and time to get her involved.”

Turner finished the game with a team-high 11 kills and had 17 blocks to go along with three aces to pace the Lady Cats. Blue Valley Southwest didn't have an answer for the 6-foot, 4-inch senior.

As for McMullen, she set the tone in the second set with four aces to help build a 9-0 advantage at the time. Overall, the sophomore setter finished with a team-high nine aces to go along with 31 assists.

“Sophie was really on with her serves,” Compliment said. “She did a really good job hitting her spots and she served aggressive. She is really finding her serve in her development and did a great job. She helped us going on a couple different long runs.”



Olivia Bradley goes up for a kill Tuesday during the Lady Cats' match with Blue Valley Southwest.

The Lady Cats (6-0) never let up in the second set as they

jumped out to a 16-2 advantage behind aces from McMullen and kills from Turner and freshman Anna Dixon to even the score at 1-1.

“The first set we just came out flat,” Compliment said. “We didn’t have a lot of energy or momentum on our side. I think we had a little nerves and we played tentative. The second set we just played a lot more aggressive and we definitely looked a lot better.”

A victory in the third set was going to provide either team a big advantage for the rest of the match as the loser would have to win two straight. The two teams traded leads seven times with several ties mixed.

Blue Valley Southwest had a 21-20 lead late, but the Lady Cats would rattle off a mini 5-1 run to take the set. A kill and a tip from Turner gave Louisburg a 22-21 lead, and after a couple side outs, Dixon finished it off with a kill.

Louisburg seized the momentum in the fourth set as it took a quick 5-1 lead after back-to-back aces from Dixon. Turner, Lauren Dunn and Cate Stambaugh followed it up kills and Megan Lemke added an ace to give the Lady Cats an 11-3 advantage they wouldn’t relinquish.

Dunn, a senior, was second on the team with nine kills and was also strong on the defensive end with 12 digs. Senior libero Makenzie Kallevig led the defense with 18 digs.

Dixon and Stambaugh finished with eight and seven kills, respectively, while Dixon added four aces.

As a team, the Lady Cats connected on some tough serves as they racked up 20 aces on the evening. With that, however, came 17 service errors.

Those errors are something Compliment hopes her team can clean up with a big week coming ahead. The Lady Cats will host

Burlington and Santa Fe Trail on Tuesday and then will travel to Blue Valley West, a Class 6A program, Thursday.

Throw in an always competitive Lansing Invitational on Saturday and the Lady Cats know they have a challenging week in front of them.

“I wasn’t really pleased with our serves again. In that first set, especially, we missed on so many serves and we still need to work on that,” Compliment said. “We have a few days to work on some stuff, but we have another tough week coming up, especially with Blue Valley West and the Lansing tournament. Lansing will be a tough tournament.”

Lady Cats roll to Frontier League title



Louisburg senior Madison Turner (left) and Anna Dixon go up for a block Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament at Eudora High School. The Lady Cats recorded a 5-0 record and didn’t lose a set all day on their way to the title.

EUDORA – The Louisburg High School volleyball team had a

little different look about itself.

The Lady Cats sported new uniforms and some fresh faces as they opened the 2015 season Saturday. They may have had a new look, but the results were the same.

Louisburg rolled through the preseason Frontier League Tournament in Eudora as they finished the day with a 5-0 record and didn't lose a set. It was clear that the Lady Cats, the defending league champs, are the team to beat in the league once again.

"I thought the team had a pretty decent first outing of the season," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "We had a few bumps along the way but that is to be expected for the first few matches of a season. I was pleased to see how the team handled those situations, and to finish every match in two sets is a good accomplishment."

The No. 5 ranked team in Class 4A Division I showed why it is considered one of the best teams in the state as it came out swinging right from the opening match. Louisburg dispatched Baldwin, Eudora and Basehor-Linwood in two sets in pool play, before doing the same to Paola in the semifinals and De Soto in the championship.

Seniors Lauren Dunn and Madison Turner had a big day for the Lady Cats as they were able to turn the tide in a few different sets when the opposition tried to make a run.

Dunn finished with a team high 31 kills in the five matches to go along with seven aces and was also second on the team with 60 digs when she played in the back row. Turner controlled the net from her middle hitter spot as she led Louisburg with 28 blocks, finished with 25 kills and also had seven aces.



Louisburg senior Cate Stambaugh goes up for a kill during the semifinals of the Frontier League tournament Saturday in Eudora.

“Madison and Lauren both had a great tournament,” Compliment said. “They are both very seasoned players and stepped up big when we needed them. All of the players contributed yesterday, and I was happy to see a well-balanced team effort. We had four players with 25 or more kills apiece so there was definitely a balanced effort made.”

The Lady Cats helped get that balance from sophomore setter Sophie McMullen as she moved the ball around to several different options. She finished the tournament with 125 assists, which averaged out to 25 a match. McMullen also finished with a team-high eight aces.

Whether it was Dunn, Turner, senior Cate Stambaugh, junior Olivia Bradley or freshman Anna Dixon, McMullen seemed to find the right option at the right time.

Louisburg also fared well on the defensive side as well, led by libero Makenzie Kallevig. The Lady Cats senior finished with a tournament-high 98 digs. Senior Megan Lemke also fared well with 31 digs and four aces.

“Our back row defense also did a good job throughout the day,” Compliment said. “We have some more work to do to make our blocking more consistent so our back row knows where to align, but for the first weekend out they still did a pretty good job.”

Different players stepped up at different times for the Lady Cats. In their opening match against Baldwin (25-19, 25-18), Stambaugh had a strong showing with nine kills and six blocks in the two sets. She finished the tournament with 25 kills and also had 21 blocks for the tournament.

Against Eudora (25-20, 25-18), Turner had nine kills and 11 blocks to pace the Lady Cats. Then against Basehor-Linwood (25-15, 27-25) in the final round of pool play, Louisburg nearly lost its first set of the day, but rallied to take the second behind 11 kills from Dunn and seven blocks from McMullen.

Dixon responded with her best outing in the semifinals against Paola (25-13, 25-20). She didn't play like a freshman as she had 11 kills in the match to go along with two aces. Kallevig was also strong in the back row with 25 digs.

“If Anna had any nerves, she didn't show it on the court,” Compliment said. “She plays pretty steady and with confidence wherever she is on the court.”

In the championship match against De Soto (25-13, 25-22), the Lady Cats were in danger of being forced to a third set, but held on once again. Dunn led the way with seven kills, Turner had nine blocks and McMullen had three aces in the win.

“There were a couple of times they could have thrown in the towel and forced the third set, but the team rallied back well and finished the match,” Compliment said. “We talked a lot about staying aggressive at the net and finishing the play rather than looking for that easy out play.”



The Louisville volleyball team pose for a shot after winning the league tournament Saturday. Members of the team (front row, from left) are Megan Lemke, Makenzie Kallevig, Lauren Dunn; (back row) coach Jessica Compliment, Olivia Bradley, Anna Dixon, Madison Turner, Cate Stambaugh and Sophie McMullen.

If there was one coaching point Compliment will get to use on her team this week, it was their serving. The Lady Cats had 27 service errors in the five matches, but even with that, they were able to counter with 35 aces a team.

“Serving is something we touch on every day at practice, and it is about the only skill where it’s just you, the player who has to make the play,” Compliment said. “We work a lot on spot serving and finding your ace serve. We may have missed some of our serves because we were going for ‘that spot’ on the court or for that ace serve, but those serves still need to be playable. Some of it may have been nerves since it was the first day out, but it still doesn’t excuse the missed serves back-to-back. We talk about when to never miss a serve, and we had a few of those moments yesterday.”

The Lady Cats will try and keep their winnings ways going

tomorrow when they host Blue Valley Southwest in their home opener. Freshman matches begin at 4:30 p.m., followed by junior varsity and then varsity.

Five seniors to lead Louisburg volleyball



Lauren Dunn goes up for a kill during the Louisburg team camp in July. Dunn is one of five seniors on the Lady Cat team this year as they prepare to qualify for their fourth consecutive state tournament.

Lauren Dunn has walked onto the state tournament floor in Salina the last three seasons.

Madison Turner, Makenzie Kallevig and Megan Lemke have graced the hardwood at state the last two years. Cate Stambaugh made her first appearance a year ago.

For the five Louisburg High School volleyball seniors, experience is definitely not an issue. The Lady Cats have made the Class 4A or 4A-DI state tournament the last three seasons and four of the last five.

With all that success comes one of the bigger senior classes in recent history for Louisburg. It certainly isn't a bad problem to have as the Lady Cats aim for their fourth consecutive state appearance.

"There is a lot of experience with this group of seniors," Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. "Four of the seniors have made the trip to state (at least) twice already and have their sights set on making it again this year. From their previous years on varsity, they also understand that nothing will be handed to them. They will need to work harder than everyone else and will need to maintain their level of focus."

The Lady Cats, who are the preseason No. 5 team in Class 4A-Division I, have a lot of fire power returning on the front row this season as Dunn (outside hitter) and Turner (middle hitter) were among the team leaders in kills and blocks a season ago. Turner, who stands at 6 feet, 4 inches, will provide a presence in the middle, while Dunn will continue as an all-around player this season.

Louisburg brings back two of the best players in the league from a year ago. Dunn returns as a first-team all-Frontier League selection and Turner was named honorable mention.

Dunn and Turner, along with Kallevig, will enter their third season as starters for the Lady Cats. Kallevig returns as the team's libero and was among the team leaders a year ago. She will anchor the back row defense along with Lemke.



Sophomore Sophie McMullen sets up teammate Cate Stambaugh during the Lady Cats' team camp in July.

“Their experience will be key this year, and I look to those three to help lead the team,” Compliment said. “Makenzie has worked very hard in the off season, and I have been impressed with her improved mobility on the court and ability to read and react defensively. Lauren and Madison will be two that the team looks to get kills and side outs. They both can be offensive powerhouses.”

Along with all those pieces, the Lady Cats also return one of the most – if not the most – important position on the court in their setter. Sophomore Sophie McMullen will lead the Louisburg attack this year as she took over the position halfway through last season.

Now that McMullen has that varsity experience, including setting at last year’s state tournament as a freshman, Compliment believes she will have a strong second campaign.

“Last year, Sophie was thrown in to the mix halfway through the season, and it took a while for the players to build chemistry with her,” Compliment said. “The chemistry between a setter and her hitters is key to having a successful team. By the end of last season, that trust was in place.

“This season we are starting out with the chemistry and trust already well established. The level of confidence for all the players is also a lot higher this season.”

The biggest question for Louisburg coming into the year was how it would replace its two strong seniors from a year ago in Sydney Dixon and Bailey Dvorak, who both went on to sign at Division II programs. One of the answers was an easy one – just replace one of them with another Dixon.

Freshman Anna Dixon will have the task at replacing her older sister Sydney’s spot at outside hitter, and despite being a first year varsity player, has a lot of experience under her belt. Anna will be the third Dixon player in the last four years as her sisters Sydney and Katie were both on previous state tournament teams.

“Anna has been around a lot of volleyball, whether it has been watching her two older sisters compete or playing volleyball herself and that has helped her become a strong player at such a young age,” Compliment said.

Stambaugh will rotate with Turner in the middle of the Lady Cats front line and Olivia Bradley will also see some time at outside hitter as well to round out the varsity lineup.

It won’t be an easy road for the Lady Cats as they will play in a few challenging tournaments in September, along with duals against Class 5A’s Blue Valley Southwest and Blue Valley West.

Louisburg will travel to Lansing early in September and then to Topeka Hayden two weeks later for a tournament that features several ranked teams from different classifications.

“We do have another tough schedule,” Compliment said. “The Topeka-Hayden and Lansing tournaments are loaded with quality teams. Those tournaments and other matches throughout the season will hopefully prepare us for post-season play.”

“In the end, it comes down to which team wants it the most and which team is willing to leave it all out there on the court. We have a lot of players that want another trip to state, but it will take hard work and a lot of focus to reach that goal.”

Louisburg opens its season Saturday when it travels to Eudora for the preseason Frontier League Tournament. Play begins at 8 a.m.

2015 LOUISBURG VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 29 Eudora	Frontier League Tourn. @ 8 a.m.
Sept. 1 Southwest 4:30 p.m.	Blue Valley
Sept. 8 Trail	Burlington/Santa Fe 5 p.m.
Sept. 10 West p.m.	@ Blue Valley 5
Sept. 12 Invitational 9 a.m.	@ Lansing
Sept. 15 Soto	De
	4:30 p.m.
Sept. 17 Scott	@ Prairie View/Osawatomie/Ft. 5 p.m.
Sept. 19 Invitational	@ Topeka Hayden 8 a.m.

Sept. 22 Baldwin	4:30 p.m.	@
Sept. 26 Invitational 8 a.m.		Louisburg
Sept. 29 Paola	4:30 p.m.	@
Oct. 1 Northwest 5 p.m.		Olathe
Oct. 6 Hill	4:30 p.m.	Spring
Oct. 13 Eudora	4:30 p.m.	@
Oct. 15 North	5 p.m.	Olathe
Oct. 20 Night) p.m.		Ottawa (Senior 4:30

Opinion: Rough patch leads to new beginning



I am just going to come right out and say it, "I'm scared."

Yeah, it is an unusual way to start out an opinion piece, but there is no two ways around it – I am petrified. But believe it or not, it is what keeps me going.

We have all had at least one point in our existence where our lives changed for better or worse. I have had more than a few of those in my life, but the latest one came on Jan. 9.

It started out like all the other Fridays over the last seven years. I reported to work, spent a few hours in the office getting ready for what was a busy weekend of prep coverage ahead. It was the first action after Christmas break and I was ready to get back into the swing of things.

That never took place.

My bosses came into my office early that afternoon to inform me I was being let go. The job of covering Louisburg athletics was no longer mine. I packed up my things, turned in my key, went home, punched the wall a couple times and cried.

I was scared.

After all the tears came the questions. How was I going to support my family? What am I going to do for a job? The list went on and on and I couldn't come up with many answers.

As it turned out, one of the worst experiences of my life turned into one of the best.

Thanks to a lot of prayers, and support from family and friends, I decided to start Louisburg Sports Zone. Yep, that's right, I went from being unemployed to starting my own business for the first time in my life.

Not exactly the best way to alleviate fears.

However, when I kicked off the site just a month later, I was overwhelmed with the amount of support from students at Louisburg High School, employees throughout the district, parents and several others who offered encouragement and supported my new venture.

I finished the last half of the winter season and all of the spring doing what I took for granted the previous seven years. I got the chance to cover Louisburg athletics again.

You know, this whole starting your own business thing might not have been a bad idea after all. I would have never had the courage to go out on my own had I not been pushed in that direction.

Fast forward to the present and I am still alive and kicking, ready to start my eighth season of roaming the Wildcat sidelines with camera in hand, waiting to tell that next story.

This fall brings a lot of story lines to the Wildcat programs. The football team is looking to improve off its 3-win season a year ago and find its way back to the playoffs with a veteran group returning.

Volleyball is primed and ready to make its fourth consecutive state tournament this year after placing in the top four in the last three years. The Lady Cats return five seniors that have a lot of state experience and that bodes well for another

trip to Salina.

The Wildcat soccer team returns an experienced group from a year ago as they try to crack the top of the Frontier League standings. The cross country team also has several returning runners who will try and qualify for the state meet.

There is a lot to be excited about when it comes to Louisburg sports, but for me personally, I am just fortunate enough to still be a part of it in a small way.

I take a lot of pride in what I do and I hope that it shows when you read stories or look at pictures on this site. I started this business knowing that I will never be rich, but it gives me an opportunity to continue to do what I love.

Thanks to all those who have supported me and for the more than 23,000 views on the site in the last six months. I have said it before, but I am extremely blessed to live in a community that supports each other through good times and bad.

Every day I am fortunate enough to be able to go to work and support my family doing what I know how to do. That is all I have ever wanted, so thank you Louisburg for allowing me to do it.

I am still scared, though.

It is that fear that drives me to do the best I can in what I do in my job and in life. I don't want what happened on that day in January to happen again and I will do everything to make sure it doesn't.

Right now I am living the good life. I have the opportunity to work for myself, support my family and do what I enjoy. I can't ask for any more.

I am living the American dream.

I just don't want to wake up.

Lady Cats prepare for another state run



Senior Cate Stambaugh sends a shot over the net over the outstretched arms of teammates Anna Dixon (left) and Olivia Bradley during Louisburg volleyball team camp on July 16. Five seniors return to help guide the Lady Cats to what they hope is another state tournament appearance.

Going to the state tournament the last three years, and four of the last five, doesn't just happen overnight.

For the Louisburg High School volleyball team, it takes dedication and a lot of hours in the gym trying to perfect its craft. The Lady Cats have spent those hours participating in summer leagues, going to team camps and working hard in the weight room.

Their busy summer ended with the Louisburg team camp last week as 29 Lady Cats were in the gym for three hours in the afternoon for five days trying to build chemistry and preparing for the start of the season, which begins in mid-August.

“The athletes and the coaching staff are ready to get the season started,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “They have put in a lot of work in the offseason, and this summer, and are ready to see what this upcoming season will bring.



Senior Megan Lemke goes up for a kill attempt on July 16 during the Louisburg volleyball team camp.

“We have discussed goals and expectations, and they know where they want to be at the end of the season. They also understand that nothing will be handed to them. They will need to work harder than everyone else throughout the season in order to put them in a good place at the end of the season. This is a great group of athletes that work very well together, and I am excited to see what can be accomplished.”

Louisburg has put in a lot of preparation this summer as it had three teams participate in summer leagues and were able to compete in numerous matches the last two months.

The Lady Cats also made the trip to Topeka to compete in the Washburn University Team Camp as they played in 12 matches

over the course of two days. According to Compliment, the players have also hit the weight room along with playing club volleyball on their own time.

“There has been some improvement from where the athletes left off at the end of the 2014 season,” she said. “We have quite a few that stay active in the off season which helps them start their summer off well. I am excited to see how the team comes together once we start official practices in August.”

Last year, the Lady Cats ended their season with a fourth-place finish at state and have come home with at least a medal in three of the last four state tournament appearances. They hope the hard work over the summer might help get them back to the state tournament for a fourth straight season.

Louisburg certainly has the experience to do it. Seniors Lauren Dunn, Madison Turner, Makenzie Kallevig, Megan Lemke and Cate Stambaugh have all made numerous trips to the state tournament.

For Dunn, she is aiming for her fourth straight trip to state as she was a part of the Class 4A Division I state runner up team two years ago and has also earned two fourth-place medals as well. Dunn, along with Turner and Kallevig, have started the last two seasons for Louisburg and Compliment hopes that experience will help give them an edge this year.

“We have quite a few returning seniors from last year’s squad,” Compliment said. “Each of the seniors have made either three or two trips to state, and they are setting their goals high again this year. We have three returning who have been starters for the past two seasons. I’ll be looking to them to lead the team this year.

“We lost two dynamic seniors (Sydney Dixon and Bailey Dvorak) from last year, and we’ll need these seniors to step up and play their roles. There is a wealth of experience returning so I am hopeful that we can start the season strong and continue

to develop throughout the season.”