

## Coach hopes to see more improvement, reduction in errors

**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

Chase County opened its volleyball season Saturday with fourth place at the eight-team Lexington tournament.

The Lady Longhorns had a big win in its opener, defeating SPVA conference foe Hershey in a close, three-game match, then dropped its next two matches to St. Paul and McCook for the fourth place finish.

In an overall look at the tournament, Coach Jodie Schuller said Tuesday that it wasn't a bad start to the season with the young team the Lady Longhorns have on the court this year.

However, as with most beginnings of a new season, she also sees a lot of room for improvement.

"For our young team, it wasn't bad, but we made some young mistakes and errors, too," Schuller said.

She said the team's side-out percentage was lower than she wants and the team needs to step up its hitting attacks.

On the bright side, she said her team did well at the serving line for the most part.

Also, she felt her team, without a lot of varsity experience, did a good job with the substituting in and out, something they don't work on at practice.

Opening with a win over Hershey was a good start, she said.

"The girls were really excited," she said.



Schuller said she was still scratching her head, trying to figure out how they beat Hershey, though, when looking at the stats.

The Panthers outhit the Lady Longhorns scoring more kills, and Hershey had fewer errors in all aspects of the game (35 for Hershey and 39 for Chase County). Both teams were about even at the serving line.

"I think we just scored at more crucial times," she said.

Chase County took the first game, 25-23, Hershey won the second 25-20, and Chase County pulled out the third, 26-24.

Sophomore Shannon Liewer led the offense with eight kills. Dee Dee Pursley added six and Lexee Reichert, five.

However, the Lady Longhorns' hitting efficiency was only .067. Hershey's wasn't much better at .086.

Chase County had a total of 25 kills, while Hershey tallied 30.

At the serving line, Chase County was 57 of 67 for 85 percent including eight aces, two apiece from Liewer, Paula Leibbrandt and Shayla Dinnel.

Chase County may have had the edge in defensive back row work, Schuller said. She credited the efforts of Liewer and Karlee Kunnemann, each with 19 digs in the game. Chantal Heathers tallied 18 digs in the back row.

### **St. Paul, McCook matches**

Chase County faced St. Paul in the semi-finals, but lost in two games, 12-25 and 13-25.

Coach Schuller said her team was outmatched by the eventual tournament champions from St. Paul.

The Cats had five seniors in the starting lineup who've played a lot of years together and have several strong servers.

"We couldn't serve receive" against their strong serves, Schuller said.

"If you don't pass well, it's hard to win."

Chase County served its best of the tournament against St. Paul, 24 of 26 for 92 percent. But, the Cats allowed no ace serves on their side.

At the net, Chase County had just four kills, resulting in a hitting efficiency percent of .105. That was matched by 21 St. Paul kills and a .192 percent hitting efficiency.

Schuller said her team should've won the consolation match with McCook. Scores were 25-16, 19-25 and 22-25.

"We gave away too many free balls," she said. "We just had too many mistakes."

The team's inexperience showed up in the final match of the day, she said, and they were tired by this time, as well.

Dropped serves with no one touching the ball happened a couple of times.

"We just can't let that happen. Hopefully, we'll get that fixed," Schuller said.

Chase County had more kills than McCook, 25 to 19, with a .045 percent hitting efficiency. McCook's was .008 percent.

Liewer led the hitters with nine kills, while Dinnel added seven.

At the line, the Lady Longhorns were 55 of 63 for 87 percent and seven aces, three from Dinnel.

### **Home openers Thursday;**

### **Gordon/Rushville tourney Sat.**

Chase County will host a triangular with two Colorado teams, Haxtun and Wray, tonight (Thursday), starting at 4 p.m.

Thursday's matches will be the Lady Longhorns' home openers.

Matches will include varsity, JV and "C" teams played in both the Longhorn and Shorthorn gyms on the following schedule:

Longhorn gym

JV Wray vs. Haxtun

Varsity Wray vs. Haxtun

Varsity Chase Co. vs. Haxtun

Varsity Chase Co. vs. Wray

JV Chase Co. vs. Wray

Shorthorn gym

"C" Wray vs. Chase Co.

"C" Haxtun vs. Chase Co.

“C” Wray vs. Haxtun

JV Chase Co. vs. Haxtun

Chase County will be back on the road Saturday to the Gordon/Rushville tournament.

There are both varsity and JV divisions, with varsity teams playing in Gordon and the JV tourney in Rushville at the middle school.

Both Chase County teams open against Niobrara County Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Next Tuesday, Sept. 15, the Lady Longhorns will be in Holyoke, Colo., for 9th grade, JV and varsity matches starting at 4 p.m.