Chase County still sports 7-3 record entering play this week

By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

Coach Jodie Schuller said it wasn't her team's best week of volleyball.

She was referring to last week, when after picking up straight set wins over Holyoke and Wauneta/Palisade, the Lady Longhorns dropped two of three matches at Saturday's McCook Tournament.

After heading into last week with just one loss, Chase County sat 7-3 early this week with a rematch against Sidney played Tuesday night, a triangular at St. Francis, Kan., today (Thursday) and three matches at this Saturday's Sutherland Tournament.

Although they lost two at the tournament Saturday, the Lady Longhorns finished the week at 3-2.

But, Schuller said the team didn't play its best volleyball. They weren't as efficient at the net, needed to be more aggressive on their serves and cut down the errors.

On hitting efficiency, Schuller likes to see her team above the .200 mark, but that happened in just one of the five matches last week. While their team serving percentages were good for the most part, the coach said they weren't as aggressive at times.

She said they will be tested again this week, with a very busy schedule, and all on the road.

"We'll need to be ready mentally. The schedule only gets tougher," Schuller said.

The triangular at St. Francis, Kan., Thursday will also included a 7-3 Dundy County/Stratton team. Only JV and varsity matches will be played, Schuller said.

Play begins at 3 p.m. MT with the Chase County and St. Francis JV match in the high school gym. That match will be followed immediately by the St. Francis vs. Chase Co. and Dundy Co./Stratton vs. Chase Co. varsity matches. The other JV match with Dundy Co./Stratton will start about 6 p.m. in the grade school gym.

Chase County will meet Dundy County/Stratton again in their first round tournament match Saturday in Sutherland at 10 a.m. MT.

They will play either Broken Bow, 6-5, or Overton, 7-0, in their second match.

Other teams in the tourney are North Platte St. Pat's, 10-0, Wood River, 7-1, Southwest 8-4, and Sutherland, 5-4.

On Tuesday, Sept. 25, Chase County will play in another JV/varsity triangular in Grant that will also include Perkins County, 3-6, and Gothenburg, 5-2. Matches start at 5 p.m.

Holyoke match

In straight sets, Chase County beat Holyoke, Colo., in the Lady Longhorns' home opener Sept. 11 by scores of 25-22, 25-15 and 26-24.

The team amassed 33 kills, offset by 15 errors, for a hitting efficiency of .170. Leaders were Paige Spady and MaKenna Ketter, with 13 and eight, respectively. Bethany Sorensen had 27 assists.

Holyoke managed just a .080 hitting efficiency in the match. The Lady Dragons had a strong scoring spurt in the third game, but Chase County was able to hold them off for the victory.

The Lady Longhorns missed eight serves of 68 tries for 88 percent. Those errors, though, were offset by eight aces as Kaycee Bubak, Ketter, Sorensen and Spady each had a pair. Libero Morgan Fisher had 13 digs and Kristen Jussel picked up 10 on defense.

Wauneta/Palisade match

It was also a straight set win for Chase County at Wauneta last Thursday, 25-20, 25-21 and 25-15.

Chase County had a scare in the first game, as the Lady Broncos went up 15-7 as Chase County hurt itself with errors.

"But, I give our girls credit for the come-back," she said.

Their hitting efficiency of .143 (35 kills, 17 errors) was below Schuller's target again, but she credited Spady and Ketter again for leading the team with 11 each. Mindy Castle added five kills and Jussel tallied four. Sorensen had 24 assists.

Chase County was 69-74 from the line for 93 percent with five ace serves, two from Ketter.

On the other side of the net, the Lady Broncos had 20 kills, with 22 errors, for a minus .017 hitting efficiency.

McCook tournament

It didn't start out well for Chase County in McCook Saturday, as they lost the first two matches to Sidney and Decatur Community (Kan.).

The Chase County loss to Sidney, who eventually won the tournament, came after two games, 25-27 and 11-25.

Schuller said they were challenged with some very good Sidney hitters and jump-servers.

At the net, the Lady Longhorns were late on the blocks a lot of the time, she said. Eleven times they touched the ball, but it dropped on Chase County's side or out-of-bounds.

Chase County had 18 kills, with six errors, for a .194 hitting efficiency. Ketter led with eight kills, while Spady had six. Sorensen was credited with 11 set assists.

Sidney had 31 kills and seven errors for a .381 hitting efficiency at the net.

At the line, CCS served 33-35 for 94 percent. Jussel and Sorensen scored aces.

The Decatur Community match was one Chase County should have won, Schuller said, but they lost in two, 11-25 and 17-25.

"We didn't show up mentally and weren't in rhythm," she said.

It was the first match this season in which Chase County had a negative hitting efficiency, as they tallied 14 kills but had 15 errors for minus .013. Spady led with eight kills. Sorensen had

nine set assists.

Decatur Community had 23 kills, five errors and a hitting efficiency of .273.

Again, the Lady Longhorns missed just two serves (28-30) for 93 percent. Jussel and Spady each had an ace.

Chase County took a 25-18 and 26-24 win over Cambridge in their tournament finale.

The team was nearly perfect on serves (57-58) for 98 percent. Jussel and Bubak each had two ace serves.

At the net, the team had 21 kills, with 13 errors, for a .093 hitting efficiency. Spady and Ketter led on offense with eight and seven kills, respectively. Sorensen had 23 assists.

On defense, Fisher picked up 31 digs and Jussel, 23.

Cambridge tallied 20 kills, with 19 hitting errors in the match.