By Jan Schultz
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A five-game volleyball match against Class B McCook last week proved to be a competitive regular season-ender for the Lady Longhorns.

Chase County Coach Jodie Schuller said the Oct. 23 win was a great way to head into the subdistrict tournament this week. She said it should build her team's confidence heading into Tuesday's do-or-die subdistricts.

It was a match that featured long volleys, some great defense and back-and-forth scoring. A two-point difference separated scores in the last two games.

Scores were 25-21, 25-16, 18-25, 27-29 and 15-13.

In the final, fifth game alone, the score was tied seven times. Chase County trailed 4-6 when they came back to score six straight to lead 10-6.

Not to give up, McCook went on a string of their own, scoring five consecutive points to regain the lead, 11-10.

After ties at 11, 12 and 13, a McCook attempted kill went long. Chase County's winning point was scored on a tip-in from Paige Spady.

Not to be left out, the earlier fourth game when McCook pulled out the 29-27 win was pretty exciting in itself.

After a tie at 14-14, the score was knotted nine more times before McCook sealed it with a kill and then a blocked hit by Chase County fell out-of-bounds for the winning point.

Schuller said her team played their best defense of the season against a scrappy McCook team.

"We dug the balls when we needed to and all contributed at the net," she said.

"Our goal has been to get better defensively at the net and back row, and we did," she said.

It was a great end to the regular season, she added, and "a fun game for the seniors to have" as they played their last match at home.

McCook is one of those teams, Schuller said, that has improved a lot this season and a team that takes advantage when an opponent lets down a little.

"Maybe that's what we did, we relaxed too much" after winning the first two games, she said. McCook won the next two and the match went into that fifth crucial contest.

While the Lady Longhorns had a lower-than-preferred hitting efficiency of .149, Schuller said it was one of their best nights at the serving line.

The team had 16 ace serves, as they connected on 100 of 108 attempts for a 92 percent mark. Kristin Jussel had five of the aces, while Emma Bauerle put across four.

Chase County's .149 at the net (40 kills, 17 errors) was slightly better than McCook's .143 hitting efficiency (60 kills, 33 errors).

Leading Chase County's attack at the net was MaKenna Ketter with 16 kills. Adding to the offense were Paige Spady, nine kills; Bridget Langin, eight; and Jussel with six.

Morgan Fisher had 30 digs to lead the team, while Bethany Sorensen tallied 37 set assists.