

Lady Outlaws take top honors

By Rongi Yost
Correspondent

Sisters' volleyball team went undefeated in their home tournament to make a first-place finish. The 16-team tournament was held in Sisters on Saturday, September 19, and many of the top-ranked 4A teams were in attendance.

The Lady Outlaws swept Henley, Stayton, and Seaside 2-0 in pool play, and were seeded No. 1 as they entered bracket play. The gym was hot and the girls got tired, but they fought through the entire way, kept strong, and played well the entire tourney.

Emma Houck played middle during pool play in place of Brooke Knirk, who was out during the morning play. Emma held strong in the middle, and played the new position like a champ.

In their first match in bracket play, Sisters crushed the Cascade Cougars in two quick sets with scores of 25-8, 25-14. Allie Spear had a great match and went 21/24 on serve-serve, put down eight kills, recorded five digs, and was 15/17 from the service line.

Hawley Harrer led the team with 12 kills, and went a perfect four-for-four from the line. Alex Hartford dished out 17 assists, and had five digs. Libero Jessie Brigham led the defense with 11 digs and was 26/30 on serve-serve.

Sisters advanced to the semi-finals and topped Burns

25-15, 25-12. Spear had eight kills and seven digs in the match and was 9/11 from the service line. Harrer also had eight kills and went 11/12 from the line with three aces. Ashlynn Cantwell recorded seven kills, six digs, and went a perfect four-for-four from the line. Hartford posted 16 assists in the match, and Brigham was a perfect six-for-six from the service line.

In the championship round, the Outlaws had a tougher match against Banks, but still prevailed with scores of 25-22, 25-21. The Braves challenged Sisters and tested their toughness, but the Outlaws rose to the occasion, and kept composure throughout the entire match.

Harrer led the squad with 19 kills, and also helped at the setting position with 12 assists. Spear was credited with 12 kills, 10 digs, and was 8/11 from the line. Hartford recorded 20 assists in the match, and was a perfect eight-for-eight from the line. Brigham had eight digs, went 10/11 from the line, and was 37/45 on serve-serve. Cantwell contributed 10 digs, five kills and was five-for-six from the line.

Coach Jason Myhre told *The Nugget* that at times it appeared as though Harrer was putting on a hitting clinic.

Spear showed that she's one of the smartest players on the court, with her extraordinary play and vision for the court.

"Allie found tight holes, and hit the ball where she needed to hit," said Myhre. "She brought a great combination of power and finesse."

Hartford had soft hands throughout the tourney, and as setter put the ball right where it needed to be for the hitters. Brigham demonstrated what a great libero looks like. Jessie had several momentum-shifting digs and attacked all areas of the court. She was a significant problem for the opposing teams' servers.

Cantwell got into a power groove when she was hitting, and according to Myhre, Ashlynn gets more and more power every match she plays. Peyton Zanck had a strong showing in the middle for the Outlaws. Zanck didn't get the hits she's used to, but she made the opposing hitters struggle as she plugged up the middle and forced hitters to the outside.

Cassidy Ling-Scott brought quickness to the right side, and her strong blocking for the opposing team's left-side hitters was a big contribution to the team's success.

The Outlaws got great bench support from Kendra Sitz and Sydney Head, and when the young freshmen players stepped onto the court, they played well.

Sisters did a good job at the service line, and kept improving throughout the day.

Myhre said, "Coach

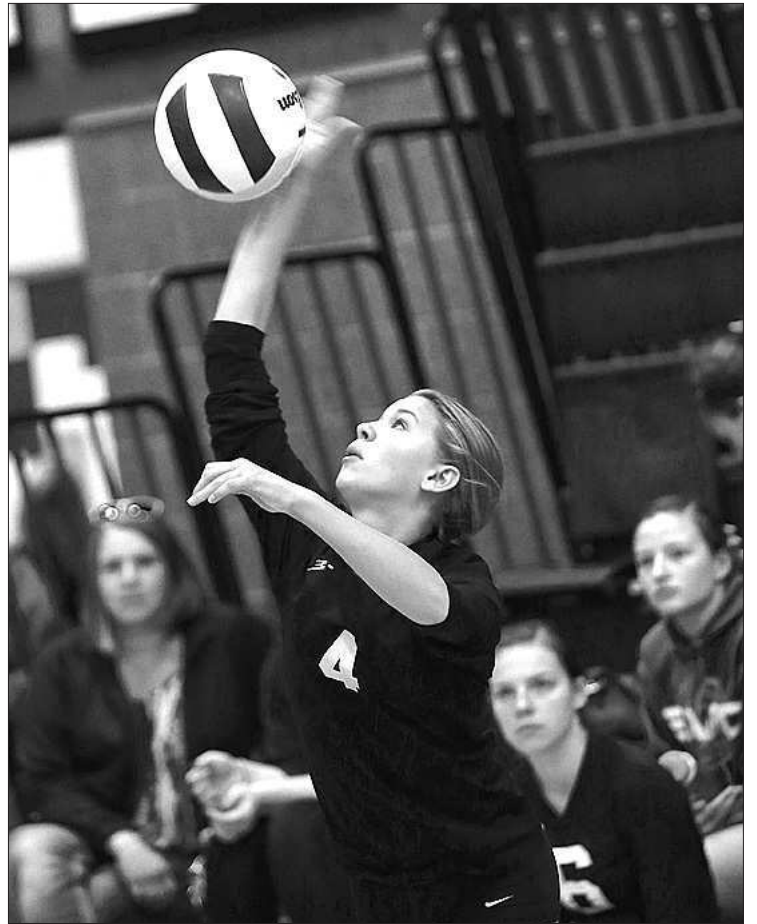


PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Kendra Sitz returns the ball in the Sisters Invitational.

Bulloch just kept making masterful calls for the girls to hit, and they hit them. I have complete trust in his serve-calling. The girls get pushed out of their comfort zone at times, but it ends up working out for them.

"We had tremendous leadership from our team captains (Spear, Zanck, and Brigham), as well as the rest of the team. I'm really proud of these girls, and the way they can get behind at times, and just fight back. They are showing great resilience."

Knirk was in a car wreck the previous evening coming

back from the Sisters/Crook County football game. She wasn't hurt, but the incident gave the team quite a scare. Brook didn't play during the morning matches, but instead, rested and recovered from the trauma of the event.

Myhre said, "When Brook was able to play in bracket, it really completed the team once again. We are blessed that Brooke walked away unharmed, and the girls rallied to make up for her absence in the early morning. Emma Houck stepped in during that time and did a great job."

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