

Viks from 1B

Tupua, as well as two aces. Zoe Alberty had a clutch tip, followed by an ace, after which point Siuslaw held the lead until the set's end.

The Viks clinched the set win with a very sneaky tip from Norton, finishing 25-21.

Time spent in practice on maintaining focus clearly paid off. In addition to working on staying unshakeable, Cole spent a great deal of time in practice with the girls on serving.

According to Cole, "That first set [tonight] was so close because we had six missed serves. And then that second game, we blew them away, and we didn't have any missed serves. We really drilled that into them — in practice, we were running for missed serves."

Cole explained that one player brought the idea up [in practice]. "She said, 'Well, we should do this on game day.' I was like, 'Okay, let's do it,'" said Cole. "They put their own consequences on themselves, and that really pushed them."

That time spent practice serving was fruitful Tuesday, with Hayden Muller starting off the next set serving nine consecutive serves. Norton and Blake were ferocious on the net, and Muller had several kills from the back row.

The Lady Viks were nearly unstoppable, with a block and two aces from Tupua, as well as a kill from Hailee Outlaw, bringing Siuslaw to a 12-point lead near the end of the second set. One more kill from Outlaw, along with two more from the outside corner from Blake, sealed the win at 25-15.

Cole explained that a lot of time in practice was spent on net presence as well, which was clear to see in sets two and three.

"Just after seeing how we did against Marist up at the net, it's 100 percent different today from the Marist game," said Cole. "We were really aware at the net tonight, and that helped us out a lot, too, because we just drilled it back if [Elmira] overpassed it. We were ready for it. And we really worked on that in practice."

Siuslaw smashed it even harder in the third set, with kills from Norton, Blake and Tupua straightaway. Cole noted that making the decision to move freshman Meika Shappell up to varsity full time this week — including an ace from Shappell in the third set.

"She was swinging at Marist [last week] and I only had one set with her,"

said Cole. "I made the decision to bring her up full time, and it's really helped us a lot. She really is aware on the court for being a freshman, she really knows what she's doing. Seeing her grow within the next couple of years is going to be awesome."

Outlaw had one more kill, along with three kills and a pair of aces from Tupua. The Viks also got an ace from Alberty. In the end, Blake proved unstoppable at the net, pulling in three more kills for a final score of 25-10 to complete the sweep over Elmira.

Cole was proud of Blake's performance, saying, "She had 13 kills tonight — a great game! It's funny because all practice she was [struggling with her timing], and then she comes out to-night and has a killer game. She just didn't let that affect her at all."

Blake's time spent on the

net in practice translated into successfully psyching out the Falcons.

"I was telling her she needed to find their holes on the court, and there were a few to tip into. She tipped in one of them, and she got a kill," said Cole. "That next hit, the block was nowhere there; they were so far apart, and they weren't ready for it."

Muller, the team's libero, had a great game as well, proving herself to be one of the key assets to the team's success.

"Hayden had a killer game serving," said Cole, who added that Muller's positive attitude affects the rest of the team. "That's how she is in general. Before we even had our first game, I told her, 'You need to keep that energy because [the team is] going to feed off of that.'"

The team played more cohesively and with more

energy than they did in last week's match with Marist.

"We were just way more aware," said Cole. "I hate to blame the Marist game on us being rusty, but that's a big part of it. Only having seven practices and then coming out here for our first game, it's hard. I'm just really happy with how we did tonight. They took everything we did in practice last week and brought it all out here."

The Lady Vikings played again Thursday night (March 11) at Junction City, with the Tigers winning in three sets, 25-13, 25-21, 25-19.

Tupua led with 11 kills and 8 blocks, Blake had 6 kills and Outlaw had 3.

Siuslaw plays again Tuesday, on the road at Cottage Grove, beginning 6:45 p.m. No spectators are allowed into games without advanced notice.

Soccer from 1B

second goal, again on a breakaway, but this time from a rebound off of the goalie. Lane followed the ball in and finished for the score.

Siuslaw and Junction City remained tied at 2-2 for about a third of the second half.

"We got tired, and we didn't have any subs and [Junction City] did. I think our legs just got tired," Tomaro said. "We still we had chances; it's not that we weren't pushing up the field and taking shots at the end of the game, we were — we just weren't connecting with the net."

Towards the end of the game, Junction City scored three more times, with goalie Derrick Vanduch making two saves on defense.

Tomaro made note of the fact that her team would have to focus a bit more on offense moving forward.

"I think some of the changes we did in the second half with moving the lineup around are things that we're going to start out doing in the future, because it gives us more of a push into the other team's end, and a little bit more pressure on offense," she said, adding that the team's line-up in the first half was heavily defensive. "And as one of our players pointed out rather forcefully at halftime, you can't win games if you don't score," added Tomaro. "You need to get bodies up in front of the goal in order to get those scoring opportunities."

Tomaro also made mention of the fact that she would need to bring more kids over from the JV team in order to have enough subs for her varsity team to play strong for the duration of a game.

"Both teams had no subs, so it's not that I was giving more to the JV, but I think that I need to give less to the JV because they've won both of their games, handily," said Tomaro. "I need some of that play to be able to come in and substitute. There are players on that team who can be varsity subs. It would just let us move things around a little bit more."

Both Tomaro and her players are learning a great deal during their varsity debut this season. And while Tuesday's loss hurt, the Vikings took it in stride heading into Thursday night's match against Elmira.

"We knew going in that it was a big step up from

JV, but just getting out on the field and experiencing that is a different thing altogether," said Tomaro. "So, we're finding our feet a little bit, but we're competitive, so nobody is rolling over us easily."

That was evident two nights later against the Falcons (March 11).

Tomaro's Vikings were able to step up their game even further, with Siuslaw pulling out the win and smashing Elmira 4-0.

Tomaro said she expected her team to perform better against Elmira, explaining, "We knew this was more of our matchup going in, we know sort of where the teams fall out, and the different levels. So, we knew this was going to be a much better matchup for us than some of the other games."

The Viks played strong defense in the first half, which allowed them to spend most of the time pushing up the field on offense. The first goal of the game was actually an own-goal by an Elmira defender, who accidentally nudged

the ball into the net instead of out of the field of play.

Shortly after, senior Jaxson Jensen was able to score a second goal for the Viks.

"[It] was a beautiful cross-goal shot by Jaxson," Tomaro said of Jensen's goal, which he took from the left side of the goal and across to the right side of the goal.

The Vikings had seven total shots in the first half, with Lane making two saves in the first half as well.

Siuslaw came out just as hungry in the second half, scoring two more goals. The first was put in again by Jensen, on a free kick just outside the penalty area near the corner.

"The goalkeeper almost caught it, but the ball popped out of his arms and went into the goal," said Tomaro.

Freshman Dylan Jensen scored the fourth goal, capitalizing off a corner kick from Jaxson Jensen. "It was a beautifully timed shot from the Jensens," Tomaro said, explaining how Dylan connected with the

ball on the outside of his foot, redirecting it into the top right corner of the goal.

The Vikings continued executing strong offense in the second half, taking 11 shots total. Meanwhile, Vanduch held strong on defense, making four saves in the second half — including a beautiful diving block.

"It was really fun to see our team settle in and play a good passing game and give each other the space to make plays while still being in supportive positioning," Tomaro said. "It's always exciting to win, it's exciting to see your kids play, all of it, first home game win!"

While the teams were more evenly matched than in the previous two games, Tomaro also felt that the team performed so well because they are finally starting to sync up.

"Probably part of it was that they weren't having their first night jitters," said the coach. "Part of it was that they really settled into their passing game, and they're really getting used to playing together."

"I think the more game time we have, the more they're going to gel, and the more they're going to trust each other to play their positions and know how their teammates are going to

move the ball around. And we had subs today — That makes a difference."

Above all, Tomaro's team is improving with each game, which is the biggest thing a coach can hope for in the first year of a new program.

The Vikings next take on Marist Catholic at home today (March 13) at 2 p.m.

As Lane County moved into the Moderate Risk category on Friday (March 12), Siuslaw soccer may have up to 150 spectators at the match, provided a health screening is completed on site.



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