

Sailors from 1B

to four sets, with Mapleton succumbing to Triangle Lake in game four.

"We fought hard in the first set," said Mapleton Coach Molly Dooley. "Even though it ended up being a loss, I can't be much happier than [when they play] that hard."

The girls struggled some with communication on the court in the first set, which started to improve in the second set. The Sailors then carried the momentum and interaction into the third set.

According to Dooley, "By the time we got to the third set, the communication was there and we were working really hard together. And we ended up pulling that one out as a win."

Unfortunately, going into the fourth game, the girls were less communicative, and it affected their ability to bring the Lakers into a fifth set. However, Dooley noted that it was the first time the Sailors went to a fourth game, which was a great experience for their fairly young team.

Even with a loss, Dooley was happy with her team's efforts. "I was really proud of that performance [on Tuesday], especially because Triangle Lake's ceiling is so weird.

That really [messed] with us for a little bit. Then once we started figuring out the ceiling, and got talking, it all started coming together and we got some hits."

Mapleton had three standout players for the game, including senior Briena Jensen with 5 aces and 1 dig. In addition, senior Emily Stevens had 1 block, 3 kills, 2 aces and 5 digs. Mapleton junior Summer Flansberg had 2 aces for the Lady Sailors.

The very next day, Mapletin was back on the court with The Lakers, this time for the team's first home game. Dooley had a few areas of focus she discussed with her team.

"Some of our main points were communication and coming together," said Dooley, "because we're a young team playing together. [There are] a lot of new faces and a lot of new people playing positions. This is only our third time actually playing some of these rotations, so I'm really getting to know who is going to be where [on the court]."

Dooley said the lack of experience sometimes translates into hesitancy on the court. Because of that, "We're really working on going full blast into it, and not being afraid to get the ball," added Dooley. "I think we're getting there with some parts of

it. I'm really proud of especially the digging up, because they will go full force to hit the wall. So that's been really exciting."

In Wednesday's rematch with the Lakers, the first set was a nail-biter, with both teams taking the lead at several points. Jensen had 2 aces mid-game, the second of which tied the score.

Stevens and Flansberg also had an ace each that set, as well as senior Heather Wierichs, who also scored kill to the back corner.

The set was close, forcing the game into extra points before the Lakers managed to narrowly seal the win, 27-25.

In the second set, the Sailors struggled to find their rhythm, but Jensen and Stevens' hustle helped keep the team's spirits up. Jensen had another ace to go with a kill resulting from a sneak tip. Stevens' hitting game was aggressive, coming away with a kill.

"I was really proud of the effort, especially of Emily's blocking," Dooley said. "Plus, we got some good hits in there, she's getting some kills in, and we're really getting more aggressive on our offense with that."

In set three, the Sailors struggled a bit with hesitation and commu-

nication. As Dooley explained, "That'll come as we play more games with each other. But that's going to be something that we definitely get done in practice."

Towards the end of the set, two aces from Jensen and a killer block from Stevens breathed new life into the Sailors, who were down 9-24.

"It was important there just to think it's zero-zero," Dooley said. "[I told them], don't even focus on the game score right now, just play as if it's the beginning of the game."

Unfortunately, it was not enough to pull out a win. But Dooley said she is happy her team has the chance to play together and learn for the future.

"It's not like we're playing for a championship or a district tournament right now. So, I feel like it's kind of the perfect time right now to try out new things, to be willing to go for those hits, even if you're a little hesitant," Dooley said of the shortened, six-week season. "You should always have fun; that's the number one rule. But I feel like it's a lot lower pressure right now, which I'm hoping I'm conveying to them — getting to try new things, be more aggressive and try things out, even if we're going to fail."

What is notable about

the Sailors is their positive attitude and genuine camaraderie. It was clear, even when they were down, that the girls care about each other, and they are having a great deal of fun together. Dooley expressed her appreciation for that quality in her team. "That's what I'm really proud of with this team: I've heard so much laughing and encouraging each other, and they're willing to help each other and also learn from each

other," she said.

"It has been great because there's no drama going on. Then, when we're in those games, and we're behind by a bit and we have to come back, they're more willing to come out of it, and are not so much pointing fingers, which is really awesome. And you can't teach that."

The Lady Sailors are scheduled to take on Alsea away next week on Saturday (March 27). First serve goes up at 4 p.m.

Little from 1B

safety and point scoring. Once I played and lost, I was determined to improve. It was an easy game to play and could be safely played by all. Last summer, my daughter, Alaura, and I built our own cornhole platforms. We have since then used them on several backyard gatherings with our children and grandchildren.

When I was lucky enough to throw all four bags into the hole on one turn, my son told me to get a sharpie pen. He said it was to record my four-bag-

ger on the back of the board. So, I wrote my name and date of my four-bagger. Later that same day, he recorded his own four-bagger. I am quite certain the back of his cornhole platform is filled with his name and dates.

My grandson, Miles, also threw a four-bagger. Even though he was throwing from half the distance, he was four years old and we let him sign the board. This past summer, Cooper, my two-year-old grandson, also threw a four-bagger — although his came from standing on the board and dropping them in! The game of cornhole

can be as fun and competitive as you and your family wants it to be.

There are regional, conference and national amateur and professional leagues around the country. Next year, there is even going to be universities competing against one another in cornhole. It is just a matter of time before colleges will be offering scholarships, similar to the online gaming scholarships, to prodigy cornhole players; in the world championships, there was a teenager on each of the final two teams.

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