

Volleyball sets up for new season

Lady Lions improve during pre-season

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With district play now under-way, the Lady Lions are serving up a young team of competitors who are looking for a successful season that extends into the playoffs.

"Everything we are working on this year is wrapped up into the word 'compete,'" head volleyball coach Kimberly Hill said. "We know we will play teams who have more girls, who are bigger, and maybe even more talented. However, our goal is to work hard and out-work every team we face."

The team has played bigger schools this year to prepare for post-season competition.

"We are working hard and playing tough teams right now to prepare for later," Hill said. "We have already had some ups and downs this season, but the girls are improving every week."

Although there are five varsity returners, the team still consists of a wide range of classes.

"Our younger girls have

shown maturity this season," Hill said. "Rylie Scott is very consistent and composed, and she gives us a setter we can lean on."

With a young team, upper-classman play an important role.

"The seniors have really stepped up this season," sophomore Rylie Scott said. "They've continued to improve and encourage the underclassmen and provide a good example."

Despite having girls from three classes on the varsity squad, the team has come together.

"All the girls are really selfless and have a team attitude," senior Tobi Nall said. "We are like a big family, and we really get along well. We love playing together."

Returning several players does give the coach some freedom in changing things up.

"We are running a lot of different sets and hitting schemes this season," Hill said. "It has allow us to extend rallies and attack from all angles."

Even though the team has good chemistry, they seem to struggle sometimes with consistency.

"We have got to find some rhythm and get off this roller coaster we seem to be on," Hill said. "Our serving has got to become more consistent, and we

need to finish a little stronger."

Similar to last season, the girls will have one major opponent in district.

"Hawley is going to be a challenge just like last year," Scott said. "I think we are going

to take this momentum into district and leave with a district championship."

Along with a district title, the girls also aspire to higher goals.

"I believe we have a shot to make a run this year," Nall said.

"Our goal is to make it to the regional tournament, but I know, the seniors want more than that."

The girls played their district opener on Sept. 12 when they defeated Knox City. They have a district record of 2-0.



Junior Rachel Hill goes up for the kill over the hands of Knox City blockers in the first district game on Sat. Sept. 12. The girls won in four sets, and then went on to defeat Woodson in three. Albany is expected to battle Hawley for the district title later in the district 6-2A race.

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NOLAN DAVIS