

At the Game

Competition begins Tuesday in Hoxie

By Betty Jean Winston

Volleyball fans will have to take a road trip if they are anxious to see the high school teams in action early in the campaign. They play in Hoxie, Oberlin, Grinnell, Atwood and Imperial, Neb., before taking to the home court on Sept. 27 against Oberlin and Cheylin.

The only other home match on the schedule is on Oct. 6 when Wray and Holyoke form a triangular with the Lady Indians.

Five letter winners return to lead the team, three of them are seniors and the other two juniors.

McKenzie Grace, Allyson Reichert and Talisa Voorhies are the three seniors while Lauren Ross and Alecia Zimbelman represent the junior class.

“Players have been focusing on doing the drills being taught. They are trying hard.”

—Coach Kent Kechter

Of the returning players, these five had some of the best percentages in areas such as serves, hits, sets and passes during the 2004 campaign. When the final match was played last year, Coach Kent Kechter said the season was successful in developing the girls in many areas of the game.

Reichert, Ross and Voorhies were among the top five in serves attempted with Reichert in the top five in serving percentage and also second on the team in aces.

Grace and Voorhies were used as setters in 2004, giving the team some experience in this area as the new year begins. Three of the top players recording kills last season are also back. They are Reichert, Voorhies and Ross while Reichert and Voorhies led the way in blocks last year.

“All five of these players have starting experience from last season,” Coach Kent Kechter said.

“McKenzie (Grace) will set again. She has very good work ethic, is a good listener and has quickness.

“Ally (Reichert) is a powerful hitter who has good upper-body strength. She hits with authority and her accuracy will be a big key this year.

Talisa (Voorhies) is extremely athletic. She is tiny but a great jumper and powerful. Her pure athletic ability will be another key.

“One of the juniors with experience is Lauren (Ross). She is a great defensive player and is athletic. She is extremely competitive and has a high level of focus.

“At this time Alecia (Zimbelman) will be out two to four weeks as she had surgery on her wrist.”

“This group has great leadership and will set the tone for the year. Some are strong leaders.”

“A key will be if the play is consistent. Also a great start would build confidence.”

Coach Kechter, who is entering his 15th year as head coach, said there are a lot of people out (37) but only the letter winners have much varsity game experience.

The letter winners will need to carry their weight, especially early in the season.

Coach Kechter has reported that the players have been listening at practice, focusing on doing the skills as they are being taught and trying hard.

“They have a great attitude,” he said.

It will be important for a number of players to learn to perform at the varsity level. Evaluation of the players early in the season is on the agenda.

The Lady Indians are coming off a 4-21 season and lost nine seniors through graduation.

“Many girls have attended at least one camp or have played in a summer league,” Coach Kechter said.

One of the camps was held in St. Francis with Pedro Gonzales of Colby Community College as a visiting instructor. Reichert, Voorhies and Ross played with the McCook Junior Olympic Club while some girls attended the Ogallala team camp and two teams of players from the high school were part of the Colby Summer League.

“This additional work should prove beneficial to the Lady Indians in the upcoming season,” Coach Kechter said.

“The girls are showing good skills and a great attitude in practice. It will be interesting to see how this team develops and how successful they will become. The girls are working hard and are excited about the opportunity to play.

“One of the strengths of the St. Francis program is consistency. The girls are familiar with the way things are done.”

“Unfortunately we have few girls with a lot of varsity experience.”

When talking about serving, which is an important part of the game, Coach Kechter mentioned Reichert and Voorhies along with Sam Marin and Schuyler Coates. These girls have different types of serves including power, top spin or floating style.

Reichert and Voorhies, along



DISCUSSING A PLAN OF ACTION— Lauren Ross, Addie Swihart and Danielle Flemming talk about strategy before the action begins.

Herald staff photo by Betty Jean Winston

with Kattie Ford, are counted on to handle some of the blocking. Holly Keller’s height is an advantage.

Ross will be among the leaders in passing. The coach said Talisa (Voorhies) covers a lot of ground and Schuyler (Coates) is accurate.

The setting will have Grace, Voorhies plus Zimbelman when she returns, and possibly Jade

DeGood.

The team will be using a 6-2 or 5-1 offense. In 6-2 all six players are used as hitters with two of them also used to set. In 5-1, five players are used to hit and one girl sets throughout the whole rotation.

Coach Kechter expressed his appreciation for the coaches he has working with him. Jeff Olofson has

been with the program for 12 years and Talley Morrow is beginning her third year.

“Jeff and Talley are such good help,” he said.

He also said the administration is helpful and provides support.

The Northwest Kansas League (Atwood, Colby, Goodland, Hoxie, Oakley, Oberlin, Quinter, St. Francis)

is expected to have some tough volleyball teams again this year.

“St. Francis also plays some very tough non-league opponents, such as Imperial, Neb., which is a highly ranked Nebraska team,” Coach Kechter said.

“We are looking for a good year,” he said. “We have some good kids.”

Roster

Seniors: Sheryl Miller, Angela Van Allen, Samantha Zwegardt, Jade DeGood, Talisa Voorhies, Ashton Rueb, McKenzie Grace, Allyson Reichert, Sawyer White, Maddie Knodel, Schuyler Coates, Samantha Marin, Erin Neitzel

Juniors: Melissa Burton, Danielle Flemming, Lauren Ross, Andrea Blair, Alecia Zimbelman, Janelle Zwegardt, Shaina Gohl, Adrienne Swihart,

Sophomores: Sara Miller, Jenice Hartman, Dara Loyd, Katlin Marin, Terri Walters, Cassie Dankenbring, Kattie Ford, Andrea Born

Freshmen: Joni Pevler, Jami Pevler, Elizabeth Gienger, Andrea Holzwarth, Cara Hunt, Taryn Richard, Ashley Zwegardt

Volleyball schedule

Varsity, junior varsity, C-team or freshman teams may play on these dates.

Tuesday, Aug. 30: St. Francis, Hoxie, Golden Plains, at Hoxie, 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 6: Oberlin, Colby, St. Francis at Oberlin, 4 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 10: Gove County Tournament at Grinnell, 9 a.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 13: St. Francis, Rawlins County, Sharon Springs at Atwood, 4 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 22: St. Francis, Imperial, Dundy County at Imperial, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 27: St. Francis, Oberlin, Cheylin at St. Francis, 3 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 1: Oberlin Tournament, varsity and junior varsity, 9 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 6: Holyoke, St. Francis, Wray at St. Francis, 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 11: St. Francis, Triplains, Sharon Springs at Winona, 3 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 15: Northwest Kansas League Tournament at Quinter

Saturday, Oct. 22: Sub-state Tournament

Friday, Oct. 28 and Saturday, Oct. 29: State Tournament

Junior varsity - additional
Saturday, Sept. 24: junior varsity tournament, Brewster, 10 a.m.

C-team - additional
Saturday, Sept. 10: C-team quad at St. Francis, 9 a.m.

Saturday, Sept. 24: C-team tournament, Oberlin, 9 a.m.

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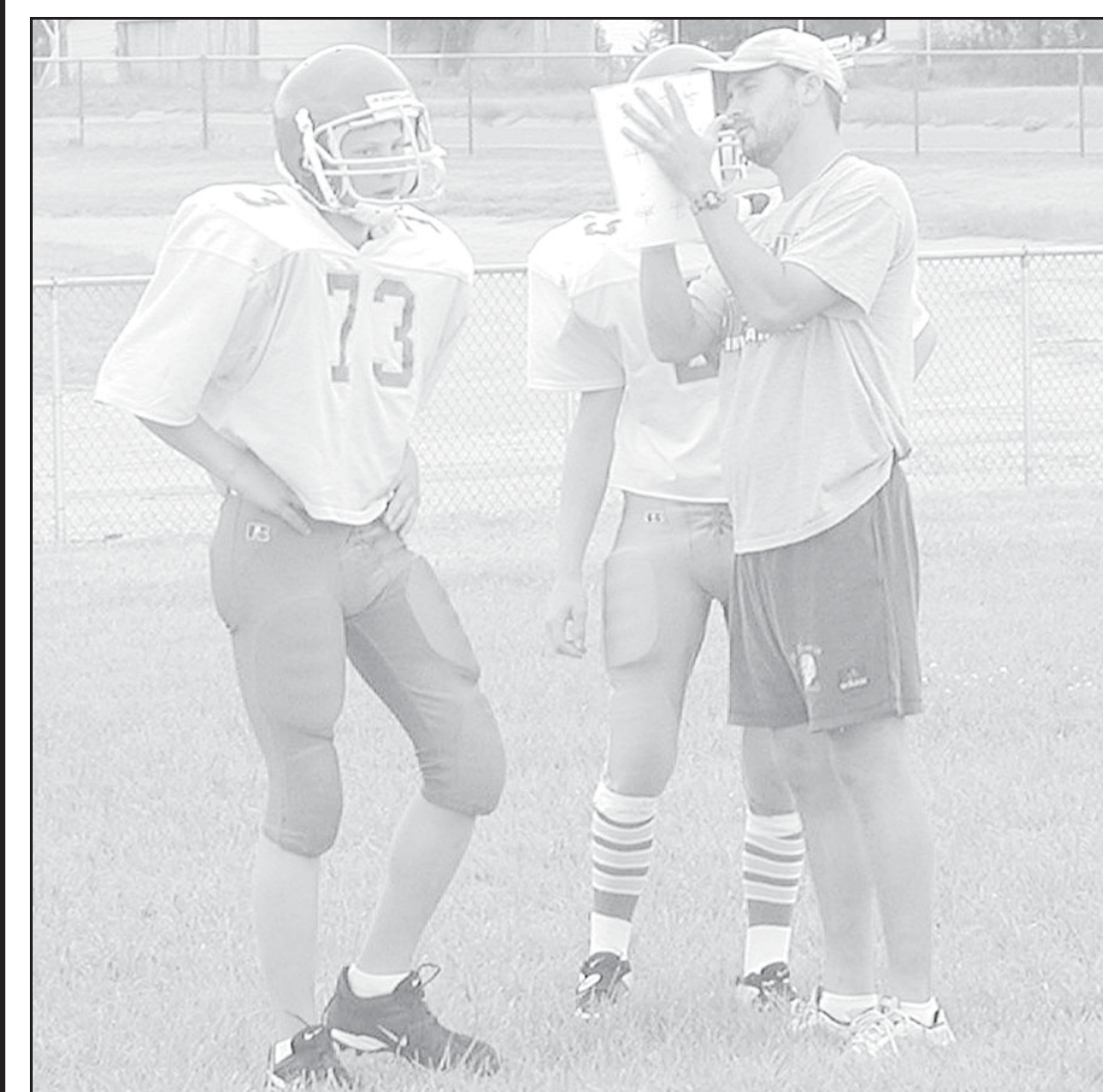


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NOTICE: Those already listed on the Booster list in previous years will continue to be listed this year unless *The Herald* is notified.

For more information contact Casey McCormick at:

The Saint Francis Herald
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COACH TIM LAMBERT explains a play to Tyler Miller while Scott Ford waits for the action to begin.

Herald staff photo by Betty Jean Winston