



Minneota's Haylee Davis spiked the ball at Murray County Central's Abby Van Meveren (13) and Brooklyn Schmitz (1).

By Byron Higgin

Mascot Sports Editor

Unveiled.

The same team with some new pieces, including a jump serve, were shown to the public for the first time Tuesday night when Minneota started their new campaign with a 25-14, 25-22 and 25-13 victory over Murray County Central.

"We were a little rusty," said Kelsey Hennen, one of two all-state players on the Viking squad. "But we'll get better," she added.

She and setter Taya Kockelman were both a little concerned about the second game in which MCC rolled back from a 22-14 deficit, scored eight straight points then lost by just three.

"We have a lot of things to work on," said Kockelman, adding, "We were a little nervous. I guess we had first game-jitters."

They played much like they did last year when they took second in the state, playing even with their opponent before putting them away after the game reached about 13-11 in the first and

third games. It was the second game that concerned everyone the most.

"It was not only the season opener, but a home match. We were a bit nervous and some of our girls hadn't played a lot of varsity ball before. It was a good match, tough," said Coach Steph Hennen.

She, too, was concerned about the second game.

"We just couldn't get it stopped. You can't coast when you're ahead, you've got to stop it right away," she added.

"We've still got to get our timing on our hitting," said Kockelman. "We had so many people filling in, it's hard," she said.

But it felt good to be back on the court Kockelman said.

If there's a pressing need, Kelsey Hennen said it best. "We've got to work on our passing," she said. She reflected back to game No. 2 and said, "We need to finish it. Bad passing got us into that trouble."

It was a great night at the net for Ashlynn Muhl, who had 12 kills, and for Jenna Hennen, who added nine.

Jenna Hennen played one of her best career games and was solid hitting the ball while Muhl showed some versatility with power hits and tips at the net.

Viking statistics

Kills: Ashlynn Muhl 12, Jenna Hennen 9, Taya Kockelman 6, Rachel Cheadle 5, Sara Maeyaert 2, Haylee Davis 2.

Sets: Kockelman 29; Kelsey Hennen 3.

Blocks: Muhl 4, Davis, Jenna Hennen 3 each.

Digs: Kelsey Hennen 10, Kockelman 9, Katelyn Kack 4, Davis, Jenna Hennen 3 each.

Serving: (Serves, good, aces) Kelsey Hennen 22-21-1; Kockelman 16-14-1; Muhl 5-4-0; Jenna Hennen 16-16-2; Davis 4-3-0; Kack 7-6-2.

Minnesota Record 1-0; MCC 0-1.