



### **By Christy Sheets**

#### *Sports Writer*

The Wallace Wildcats began their bid for the state tournament on Monday, Oct. 28 in McCook. The Wildcats were the number three seed in their sub-district. Their opponent was the Raiders of Medicine Valley, who bested the Lady Cats earlier in the season, and were the number two seed in the D1-10 sub-district.

In the first set the Wildcats started out slow, but the ladies were able to pull ahead 10 to 4 on a five-point service run of freshman Abbey Rohde. The Raiders battled back, but the Wildcats continued to lead, slowly strengthening their position. The Cats closed the set 25 to 17.

In the second set, the Raiders were ready to retaliate, taking the lead 17 to 13. Senior Anna Griffiths rallied the Cats, and with a four-point service run, she gave the Cats the lead, 19 to 18. The Raiders were scrappy and refused to go away quietly, but the Cats maintained the momentum. Junior Alexandria Lundvall served two to close the set 25 to 23.

In the third set both teams came out strong, exchanging rally point to 11. Again it was a Griffiths service run to give the Cats their first real lead 13 to 11. The Raiders were tired, but they refused to give up, unfortunately for them the Cats were too tough, closing the set 25 to 22.

When asked about the game, Coach Strand said, "We did what we came to do, win, and play again tomorrow."

Leading the team offensively against Medicine Valley was Griffiths with eight points (one ace), followed closely by Lundvall (three aces), junior Sara Hubbard (two aces), and Rohde each with six points. Senior Chelsea Sowle had five points, and sophomore Christina Daniels had four points (two aces).

Leading the team with set assists was Lundvall with 13, followed by Griffiths with 11, senior Katelyn Melton with five, and senior Rachel Marquardt with three.

Defensively, Daniels led the team with 12 kills and three blocks, followed closely by Sowle with

eight kills and four blocks. Hubbard had eight kills, Melton had two kills and three blocks, and Rohde had three kills.

### **Wallace vs. Wau/Pal.**

The Wallace Wildcats were then set to play Tuesday night against the hard-hitting Broncos of Wauneta-Palisade. Again the Cats played in McCook. The Lady Cats had faced the Broncos three times before this season, losing each one of the prior three in extra sets, and to say they wanted another chance to play them was an understatement. Primed for a battle, both teams took the court with high expectations.

The Cats started the match determined to win. They seemed to have springs in their feet. They picked up everything, and blocked everything else. They took the early lead 18 to 8 on a 13-point service run by senior Chelsea Sowle, and simply refused to relinquish it. The Broncos battled back, but the Cats took the first set 25 to 15.

In the second set, the Broncos seemed determined to rally, taking the early lead 13 to 3. The Wildcats struggled to find the spark they had in the first set, and the Broncos took the first set 10 to 25.

In the third set, the Broncos again took the early-determined lead 9 to 2. The Lady Cats rallied late in the set on a Griffiths service run 15 to 23, but it was too little too late. The Broncos won the third set 16 to 25.

In the fourth set, the Cats seemed to build on the momentum they found late in the third set. They took the early lead on a five-point service run by Daniels 10 to 2. The Broncos had a four-point service run late in the set to pull within one of the Cats 15 to 16, but the Cats answered right back with a three-point run by Hubbard. The set was a battle, but in the end the Lady Cats won the set 25 to 21.

In the fifth set the Broncos seemed to sense the end of their season getting far too close as they battled to keep up with a talented Wallace team, tying the Cats at 14. It was then that the Cats decided to make their move, gaining momentum with every point, determined to end the match with a win. The Broncos never gave up the fight, but the Cats were just too strong. The Cats won the fifth set, and the match, 19 to 17.

When asked about the game, Coach Strand said, "The girls played a good game. It got a little scary in the second and third set, but the girls stepped up, and beat the Broncos when it mattered most." She added, "The crowd really gave the girls the boost they needed to get the win."

Leading the team offensively against Wauneta-Palisade was Sowle with 17 points (three aces), followed by Hubbard with nine points (three aces). Daniels (one ace) and Griffiths each had six points, Rohde had four points, and Lundvall had two points.

Leading the team with set assists was Griffiths with 19, followed by Lundvall with 15, Melton with three, Marquardt and Rohde each with two, and Hubbard and Sowle each with one.

Defensively, Daniels led the team with 14 kills and one block, followed by Melton with nine kills and two blocks, and Sowle with six kills and five blocks. Rohde had eight kills, and Hubbard had five kills and two blocks.

### **Wallace vs. Brady**

Because the Cats won their sub-districts, they won the right to play in the district finals game. The Lady Cats traveled to North Platte to face the Eagles of Brady, on Thursday night. The Lady Cats packed their side of the gym, as did the Eagles, and the noise was electric.

Our girls tried hard to show what they were made of in this match, taking the early lead in the first set, but the Eagles battled back to win the first set 22 to 25. In the second set the Cats

seemed shell shocked after having a significant lead in the first, and then falling short. The Eagles took the second set 10 to 25.

In the third set the Cats regained their footing, and were able to battle back from an Eagle lead to take the third set 25 to 23. In the fifth set the teams stayed fairly even early, but the Eagles dug in and pulled away.

The Eagles won the set and the match 15 to 25. The disappointed Wildcats fell just short of a state tournament bid.

Leading the team offensively against Brady was Hubbard with 12 points (three aces), followed by Griffiths with 11 points (two aces). Sowle had five points, Rohde had three, and Daniels (one ace) and Lundvall each had one point.

Leading the team with set assists were Griffiths with 16, Lundvall with seven, and Sowle and Marquardt each with one.

Defensively, Daniels led the team with 10 kills and three blocks. Hubbard had six kills and one block, Rohde had five kills and two blocks, Melton had three kills and one block, and Sowle had one kill.

When asked about the match, Coach Strand said, "I was really proud of the girls for coming out and getting off to such a great start in the first set. Our serve receive broke down, and the second set didn't go well. I was even more proud of the effort it took to come back and win the third set." She added, "The girls didn't give up."

The Lady Cats had many changes this year, from their offense and the addition of a libero to their coaching staff. They had some amazing victories over some tough teams, and had a wonderful sub-district run. The Lady Cats should not hang their heads, but rather be proud of their fight.

When asked about the season, Coach Strand said, "Our team showed so much progress from the first game to the last. I am very proud of them and am looking forward to next year!"