The Lady Bronco volleyball team opened the season Thursday at home. Above, Tailor Lee goes low for a dig.

By Diane Stamm

The Wauneta Breeze

The Lady Broncos opened the season with a five set win over Wallace.

Senior Emma Skelton opened the match with an ace, but four service errors were costly in the 25-23 opening set loss. Wallace gained a 16-10 advantage in the set before a five-point run with Abbie Fanning serving tied the game at 22. The Lady Broncos couldn't gain the advantage and fell behind 1-0 in the match.

Wauneta-Palisade left nothing to chance in the second game. The home team blew out the Wildcats 25-9. Skelton and Sydnee Harchelroad each scored five points and Brianna Einspahr added four.

Head coach Michelle Harchelroad said it would have been easy for her team to get down after the first set, but she was pleased with how they settled in and stuck with it.

The match swung back to Wallace with another 25-23 win in the third set. The Wildcats opened up two four-point leads only to watch Wauneta-Palisade scramble back into the match behind the serving of Einspahr and Tailor Lee. The Lady Broncos gained a 21-17 lead, but watched Wallace pull even with Mickayla Sheets serving and take the set.

Just like the third set mimicked the first set, set four mirrored set two. Wauneta-Palisade never trailed in the set. Harchelroad closed out the game with five straight serves that the Wildcats couldn't return.

The Lady Broncos left little drama in set five. With the game tied at seven Wauneta-Palisade went on an 8-1 run to end the match. Two ace serves by Lee helped seal the match.

Lee finished the night with five aces. Harchelroad led the team with 10 ace serves. Einspahr and Skelton each added four aces. "Our serving was key," said coach Harchelroad.

Lee paced the Lady Broncos with 13 kills. Harchelroad and Fanning also finished in double figures with 10 each.

Coach Harchelroad said it was a good gauge of her team's conditioning to go five sets in a hot gym.

JV Action

Wauneta-Palisade also won the JV match, 25-18, 25-19. Hannah Nordhausen led the JVs with 10 points and five aces. Cameo Rector had nine points and three aces; Nicole Strand, three points and two aces; Christi Christner, two points and two aces; Ellie Lee, five points and one ace; and Tayler Nordhausen, three points and two aces.

Sweep Minatare

Following the long match Thursday, the Lady Broncos swept undermanned Minatare, 25-10, 25-12, 25-9 Friday night.

Coach Harchelroad said all 15 played for Wauneta-Palisade played while Minatare had seven total players on the roster.

“I was really pleased with the level we played at,” said coach Harchelroad. “We could have easily played down to Minatare’s level, but the girls put forth a good effort.”

Lee led the Lady Broncos with six kills, Fanning added five.

The hot serving continued with Cassidy Rathe notching nine aces. Skelton added seven as the team served at an 86 percent clip.

Following the Hitchcock County Invitational Saturday the Lady Broncos will travel to Southwest Tuesday, Sept. 11.

Hitchcock County Invite

Saturday the varsity will be at Trenton and the JV at Culbertson for the Hitchcock County Invitational.

The varsity will open the day at 9:15 a.m. MT/10:15 CT against Arapahoe. At 11:45 a.m. MT/12:45 CT it will face Hitchcock County. At 1:00 p.m. MT/2:00 CT the Lady Broncos will take on Hayes Center.

The JV first plays Hitchcock County at 9:15 a.m. MT/10:15 CT then at 10:30 a.m. MT/11:30 CT it will face Arapahoe.

All matches will be best two out of three.