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Growing pains Young Clawson High volleyball team adjusting to new league

By Jon Malavolti
 C & G Sports Writer

The Clawson High volleyball team has experienced its share of growing pains this season.

The Trojans, like the rest of the school's sports squads, moved out of the Metro Conference and into the Macomb Area Conference and were 1-5 in the MAC Silver Division at press time.

Yet Clawson should only improve the rest of this season and into the next, as the young team adjusts to its new opponents and gains experience.

Making the transition to the new league a little tougher was losing six players, including five starters, to graduation.

"We're working on rebuilding some of the fundamental spots on our team," Clawson coach Jenny Brown said. "We're just kind of coming into our own."

"We're progressively getting better, but we just keep coming up short in the end."

The Trojans routinely hung with their opponents during their first slate of action against division foes, usually forcing matches to at least four games.

"We're hanging in there; they're close games," Brown said. "I'm hoping the second time around we kind of know what to expect and we can play our game, instead of worrying about what's happening on the other side of the net."

Brianna Berwind is one of just two seniors on the Clawson team.

"We will improve," she said. "It's just these new teams. ... I think the more we see people, the better we do, because we are a very good team."

Caity Costine, the Trojans' other senior, noted that the squad has solid chemistry.

"We work well together," Costine said. "We know how each other play. We read each other well."

The rest of the Clawson varsity roster is made up of seven juniors and one sophomore, making depth an issue this season with just 10 players. Yet the youth of the team means improvement is likely in the picture.



Photo by Scott Dreslinski
 Clawson High junior Brianna Anglemier bumps a serve back up to her teammates during a tournament earlier this season. The Trojans are hoping to turn things around in the final stretch of the season as they become more accustomed to their new league.

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"I'm going to graduate two very important seniors, but I think that I have girls that will step in more smoothly than the transition I had this year," Brown said.

A talented JV team, which also lists just 10 players on its roster, should also help the program improve in the future.

"The JV is pretty good, too," Costine said. "Next year, I think we'll be good." Her classmate agreed.

"In the future, I believe they'll be very good," Berwind said. "We're leaving behind good players, so they're going to do pretty well."

But before looking ahead too far to next season, the Trojans will attempt to secure some momentum at the end of the regular season before heading into the postseason. Clawson will compete in a district hosted by defending Division 3 state champion Pontiac Notre Dame Prep — but that's not deterring the Trojans.

"Our goal is to go to the (district) finals and be strong," Brown said.

You can reach Sports Writer Jon Malavolti at jmalavolti@candgnews.com or at (586) 498-1040.

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