

candgnews.com The Online Home of C & G Newspapers
 13650 11 Mile Road | Warren, MI 48089 | Main: (586) 498-8000

Home Page | Macomb/Wayne | Oakland | Sports | Classifieds | Auto | Jobs | Dining | Real Estate | Apartments | Retail

Dragons on fire

Clintondale volleyball cruising thanks to seniors, chemistry

By Jon Malavolti
 C & G Sports Writer

CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Halfway through division play, and Clinton Township Clintondale’s volleyball team is where it wants to be.

Almost.

At press time, the Dragons had not been pressed into a fourth game in any of their first five matches against Macomb Area Conference Gold Division foes.

Clintondale (4-1 MAC Gold at press time) swept Warren Fitzgerald, Mount Clemens, New Haven High and Madison Heights Madison, yet fell in three to defending division champion and archrival Madison Heights Lamphere.

The team is happy with its place in the standings, lurking close to the division title, but it won’t be content until it reaches the pinnacle it’s been searching for the past few seasons.

Last year, the Dragons finished tied for second, four games behind Lamphere. In 2007, they took fourth, and they finished tied for third the season before that.

“We’re shooting for first,” Clintondale coach Michelle Van Camp said. “Beyond that, we’re shooting to go through districts.”

Before reaching the postseason, though, the Dragons know they’ll be in for a tough second half in division play, including a second meeting with Lamphere — played Oct. 13, after press time.

The consistent success this season is largely based on the chemistry and hard work of the team, which stems from strong senior leadership.

“We’ve just been working hard on conditioning, movement ... and mental toughness,” Van Camp said. “Just keeping it going and not giving up, no matter what.”

The coach said the squad of two sophomores, three juniors and five seniors has meshed “very well” and improved “immensely” throughout the season.

“They have very good team chemistry; they get along extremely well,” she said. “They compliment one another and they trust each other. And that’s one of the biggest things to teach on the court is to trust each other, to know that they’re going to be there and not be in the way. And they do trust each other immensely.

“They hang out together; they do a lot of stuff together as a team. They’re a team not just on the court, but off the court.”

The senior trio of captains Brittany McLaughlin, Nicole Geatches and Kelly Crawford



Photo by Tracy Dreslinski
 Clinton Township Clintondale senior Kelly Crawford sets the ball during a game earlier this season. The Dragons have relied on their seniors to lead them to success.

Lasik & Cataract Surgery
 Shanbom Eye Lasik Eye Surgeon Lasik Eye Surgery, Michigan
www.shanbomeyespecialist.cc

Wow Them at your Party
 Save Money with "Drop Off Special" Affordable quality. Great Food.
www.sopranocatering.com

Lakeside Urgent Care
 586-412-0890 Walk-in Clinic Open 7days a week 10am-10pm
www.greatlakesurgentcare.co

Michigan Movers
 FREE Online Quotes - Licensed Save up to \$100.00 OFF
www.MetroDetroitMovers.com

Pediatric Dentist
 Caring Hands for Future Smiles Children, Adolescent & Special Need
www.pdconline.com

set the tone.

“They’ve been working really hard,” Van Camp said. “They play all the way around. The team feeds off them.”

The coach is happy to have that senior leadership this season, noting that “without it, you usually will fail.” She also said it’s had a ripple effect throughout the entire program.

“It’s a good foundation,” Van Camp said. “There’s that camaraderie all the way through in all three programs.

“They love the game, and that makes a difference.”

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

Photo by Tracy Dreslinski
Clinton Township Clintondale senior Kelly Crawford sets the ball during a game earlier this season. The Dragons have relied on their seniors to lead them to success.



Copyright © 2008 C & G Publishing

Advertiser Times • Birmingham-Bloomfield Eagle • Eastsider • Farmington Press • Fraser-Clinton Chronicle • Grosse Pointe Times • Journal • Macomb Chronicle • Madison-Park News • Rochester Post • Royal Oak Review • St. Clair Shores Sentinel • Shelby-Utica News • Southfield Sun • Sterling Heights Sentry • Troy Times • Warren Weekly • West Bloomfield Beacon • Woodward Talk