JC VOLLEYBALL

Seahawks overpowering in conference opener, despite missing two of their top players

By JULIE JAG

APTS — Whenever she faces an unfamiliar team, Cabrillo College middle blocker Madison Borch shows the first game to study her opponent and the ensuing ones applying what she has learned to shut them down. "That sometimes I just wing it, I'm not going to lie," said Borch, a freshman out of Los Angeles High in Walnut Creek. "I just go.

Whatever approach Borch was taking in the third and final game of the Seahawks volleyball team's 25-11, 25-18, 25-9 win over Gavilan on Wednesday night, it was working. Borch was more effective than an electric fence at the net, gathering most of her team's high five blocks by learning the Rams if they ever got close to her outstretched arms. "On the third game, we couldn't put a ball past their block," admitted Kevin Kramer, the coach at Gavilan for the past seven years.

Borch didn't win the match on her own — Harbor graduate Kelsey Shafer made 17 kills and 10 digs and Sequoia alumna Brianna Morgan added nine kills and three aces. Libero Kailyn Connolly dug 18 balls and setter Tyler Gosa won 54 assists. Still, the Seahawks (14-9) needed efforts like Borch's if they were going to get their campaign for a seventh straight Coast Conference South championship off to a good start.

That was especially true with returning middle Darla Boree out with a concussion and right side Alex Flores, a UC Santa Barbara transfer, sitting with a knee injury.

"To play like that with two main players out is huge for the team," said fourth-year Cabrillo coach Gabby Houston-Nash. "We can't complain.

SEE VOLLEYBALL ON B2

VOLEYBALL

Continued from B1

We've never had to play without our main girls.

As should probably be expected from the top-ranked team in Northern California and the No. 1 team in the state, as determined by the California Community College Women's Volleyball Coaches Association, the Seahawks have talent to spare. That was evident in the first and third sets. Gavilan gave chase in the second set, however, using a roster even more检查数据 of girls from the Gilroy-school's area than the eight Santa Cruz County athletes on Cabrillo's roster. Ultimately, the Seahawks broke open a 16-16 tie with a Shafer kill, a Rams error and a Borch kill and used the momentum to reel the win.

The Seahawks didn't kick off conference play with a poulterer. Gavilan (10-5, 2-4), a crossover opponent, won the Coast Conference North title last year and has already bested Monterey Peninsula College and De Anza — Cabrillo's next two South Division opponents. Plus, there was the chance Cabrillo might be tired or rattled after coming off a five-game win over state No. 10 Fresno City in the Seahawks' home-opening tournament last weekend.

That apparently wasn't the case. As Kramer said, "When you're as deep and solid as they are, when you're that good of a team, those things don't matter".

Cabrillo returns to the court Saturday, when it hosts a cluster match with Feather River and College of the Sequoias.