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Small freshman big impact on

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Chandler Chapman leads the Zionsville Community High School volleyball team in kills and is second in aces and digs. Not bad for a player who turned 14 years old on June 28.

The freshman was expected to make an instant impact at ZCHS after helping her Team Indiana Evil Pop Tarts 14-and-under team to third place in the Open Division at the USA Junior Olympics this summer. First-year Zionsville coach **Emily Hawthorne**, who saw Chapman play eighth-grade ball and during the club season, has been impressed with her maturity and skill level.

"She takes playing volleyball very seriously and her training very seriously," Hawthorne said.

It didn't take long for Chapman to make an impact at the high school level. In the Eagles' second match, Chapman had 17 kills, 10 digs and three aces on Aug. 16 as Zionsville defeated Lafayette Jeff 17-25, 21-25, 26-24, 25-23, 15-12.

Chandler said her favorite part of the game is "ripping a kill." But at 5-foot-6 1/2 inches, she's one of the shortest hitters on the team. To compensate, Chapman is working on hitting the ball off the outside blocker's hand out of bounds, and on her line shots.

Her role as a hitter "probably won't be in the long run because I'm not tall enough," said Chapman, whose father is 5-9 and mother 5-7.

According to Hawthorne, Chapman's most significant contribution to the team is her ball control on defense. Chapman and team libero **Laura Chappell** split the court in the Eagles' serve receive pattern.

"She has great court awareness," Hawthorne said of Chapman. "She's very competitive and brings a lot of energy."

With three seniors on the varsity roster, Chandler hasn't needed to shoulder leadership responsibilities.

"It's just really cool because we all work as a team," Chapman said. "All the seniors -- if I need help or am not playing too hot -- I can always count on them to pick me up. That's what I want to do for them, too."

Heading into Tuesday's match, Chapman had 136 kills, 150 digs and 25 aces.

In addition to Chapman, middle hitter **Lindsey Barber** and defensive specialist **Caitlyn Farris** are freshmen in the varsity starting rotation.

Said Chapman: "We've all worked really hard during club season to get to this point and in practice we all want to get better."

Freshmen **Courtney Lauber**, **Jenna Mitchell** and **Claire Wiley** also have seen varsity action, and freshman **Sarah Hasewinkel** is the starting middle hitter for a promising junior varsity player. Add in the players on the freshman team, and half the players in the program are in their first year of high school.

Hawthorne said Chandler is a good role model for her fellow freshmen.

"Chandler leads that class with her dedication and intensity toward the sport," she said.