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Reaching milestones in various categories during a high school volleyball career is impressive enough, but when that player is someone the coach looks to for leadership on and off the court, that player becomes even more special.

Wheatmore High School's Carson Elliott is really special.

The senior outside hitter collected a milestone Tuesday night with her 1,000th career kill in the Warriors' Piedmont Athletic Conference win over Trinity and the 5-foot-8, four-year varsity performer will more than likely record her 1,000th dig tonight when WHS closes the regular season against High Point Andrews. She needs just two digs to break the 1,000-mark barrier in that category as well.

"She has a good demeanor about her, she is a leader for sure," WHS coach Sarah Beth Campbell said. "She is smart, really smart. She sees the court well and reads everything really well."

Elliott, who has experienced great success at the net against bigger opponents, began playing beach volleyball with her dad as coach and her cousin - Trinity High School's Gracie Ballard - as her partner at age 11. That definitely has strengthened her lower body and allows her to jump as high as girls much taller than her.

"She has done so much jumping and running and moving in the sand, she can just jump," Campbell said. "She doesn't have that big body, so she doesn't have much to carry up. She accelerates her whole body."

Beach volleyball has helped Elliott in many areas.

"Ever since I started playing beach volleyball, my ball control has been good and it has made me stronger," said Elliott, a three-time all-conference performer, the 2018 The Courier-Tribune Randolph County player of the year and the 2019 co-player of the year in the PAC 7. "It has made me see the court better when I hit the ball. I don't know what my vertical is, but I know



Wheatmore senior Carson Elliott.

when I jump now my whole elbow is over the net. It has helped a lot."



Elliott has been a solid leader, especially since becoming an upperclassman.

"She is confident and she will speak up when she needs to speak up and she knows when to lay low," Campbell said. "She carries herself very well."

Elliott said she didn't always feel like a leader, especially during her freshman season.

"My freshman year, I was scared of the seniors because I didn't know them," Elliott said. "As the season got on, it was easier to talk to them. That has helped me understand how (the two current freshmen) feel. I try my best to include them in everything we do. If we go out to eat, I make sure they are invited. We have had such a close team."

Elliott gives plenty of credit to her setters during her four-year career as Krista Tuggle, Kaleigh Craft and Kara Moore have obviously played a huge role in her breaking the 1,000-kill milestone.

"I have had great setters to work with," Elliott said. "Krista was so good and it was easy hitting her sets. Kaleigh really stepped up and then Kara has really stepped up."

That team has finished undefeated in league play in every match Elliott has played in. Overall, the Warriors are 89-9 in her four seasons. This one, because of Covid-19, has been very different.

"It's been pretty hard," Elliott said. "Normally, we have a student section full of guys and with all the parents, there is a lot of energy. It makes things 10 times more exciting. With them not being there, it is hard to keep the energy up."

After tonight's regular-season finale, the Warriors will wait and see where they will be playing Tuesday night in the first round of the state 2-A playoffs.

"If we can make it to where we were last year, it would be amazing," Elliott said of the regional finals berth. "I think we can."

With Elliott leading the way, a lot of people would agree.