

# Louisburg soccer ready for battle with McPherson



Louisburg junior Brock Bila is one of several Wildcats who hope to find success against McPherson tonight in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal game in Louisburg.

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team has found itself in a familiar spot.

For the second straight season, the Wildcats will have a chance to qualify for the state semifinals on their home field at Wildcat Sports Complex.

Last season, Louisburg won a wild overtime contest against Wichita-Trinity and the Wildcats hope for the same result this time around. Louisburg (13-5) will host McPherson (13-5) at 5 p.m., today as the Wildcats will try and make their second trip to the state semifinals.

"I still have a lot of nerves," Louisburg senior Grant Ryals said. "We have a lot of seniors on this team and we know we want to make it out to state again. We are pumped, but we are still a little nervous too. We watched film all day (Monday) to see how we can attack them."

Following the Wildcats' 1-0 overtime victory over Independence in the regional championship game Thursday, they were still riding high into the weekend, especially after they found out

late Friday night they would be hosting the state quarterfinals.

Due to the fact both Louisburg and McPherson had the same records, the Kansas State High School Activities Association performed a coin flip to determine who would host, and Louisburg coach Kyle Conley received a call later informing him of the result.

"I am not sure how it all worked, I was just super excited that we didn't have to get on a bus for three hours one way," Conley said. "The boys will truly get one last home game. If we show up, we have a chance to play another game at state and I think that is motivation enough. We will be sleeping in our own bed, eating our same pregame meal and don't have to worry about traveling. That is definitely a benefit for us."

Louisburg will face a McPherson team that plays mainly on a turf surface and the Wildcats hope to use that as an advantage against an aggressive Bullpup team.

"Anytime you change your surroundings, the environment, or conditions, I think it is an advantage for the team that has those things," Conley said. "McPherson is a turf team and they are going to be playing on grass and they are going to have to be on a bus for three hours and that helps us."

However, the one thing that has caught Conley's attention is McPherson's style of play as the Bullpups will look to pressure the Louisburg back line.

"They are going to be the most pressuring team offensively that we have seen all year and we have seen some good teams too," Conley said. "The way they push, and the way they get their backs in the attack, they are going to pressure more than any team we saw this year or last year. Wichita Trinity might be the closest example to them. They are a mixture of Baldwin, Spring Hill and Tonganoxie with how they play. They just push, push, push and they are a really good team and are

well-coached.”



**Team captain Scott Murphy and the rest of the Wildcat defense hopes to keep the McPherson attack at bay tonight.**

With that, the Wildcat back four of Kris Light, Scott Murphy, Will Frank and Eli Minster, along with midfielder Ryan Haight, will have to be alert to keep McPherson off the scoreboard.

“They are turf team and they like to play a lot of through balls, so we are going to have to watch that,” Light said. “They are good team, obviously. We just have to work it around outside and want it more than them. Communication will be key for us and just outworking them in the back.”

Although McPherson’s style might be unique to what the Wildcats have seen in recent years, they also realize the Bullpups will have to prepare for them and what they bring to

the table.

"We just have to be ready," Conley said. "Half of it is they have to defend against our style too. Quite honest, I think our styles are so conflicting and it will be interesting to see whose style wins out. We want to attack the flanks, they want to hit the overlap and go down the middle and try to play the second ball through. We do that too, but we have a little different shape. It should be a really good match."

If the Wildcats advance, they will compete in the Class 4-1A state semifinals on Friday and Saturday in Olathe. Still, they know they have a big challenge ahead of them in order to get there.

"We definitely enjoyed it Thursday and winning another regional title," Ryals said. "We know that coming back Monday, it is a new week and we have more competition ahead of us. We know what we have to do. If we just play our game, we have a chance to play out state again."