

Wildcats earn sweep of Spring Hill, fall to De Soto



Louisburg defender Will Frank heads the ball away last Tuesday during the Wildcats' match with Spring Hill in Louisburg. The Wildcats earned their second win over Spring Hill on the season with a 5-1 victory.

Last week was a mixed bag for the Louisburg High School boys soccer team, but it couldn't have gotten off to a better start.

For the first time in several years, the Wildcats earned a sweep of Spring Hill and did so in dominating fashion as it rolled to a 5-1 victory Tuesday at Wildcat Soccer Stadium.

Unfortunately, Louisburg found itself on the other side Thursday as it fell to De Soto for the second time this season, 2-0, at De Soto High School.

Still, the win against Spring Hill is something the Wildcats (8-4 overall, 7-2 league) can build on as there is just a couple weeks left in the regular season.

"We came out ready to go," Louisburg boys coach Kyle Conley said of the Spring Hill win. "The boys team has not swept Spring Hill in a season in an extremely long time and that was one of our goals. The boys played determined and focused. I couldn't be prouder of our effort. It was a great all-around

team win.”

The Wildcats’ match with Spring Hill was unique as both teams were forced to play down a man. Early in the first half, the Bronco goalie grabbed Louisburg forward Chris Williams in the box and was awarded a red card.

Then about five minutes later, Wildcat forward Brock Bila was given two yellow cards, which turned into a red and he was also forced to sit the rest of the game. So instead of each teams having 11 players, it turned into a 10-on-10 matchup.

“The game was pretty wild,” Conley said. “I have never been a part of a game that had both sides playing 10v10 before. It was an interesting element. Losing our leading goal scorer and their goalkeeper isn’t ideal by any means. I think our replacements stepped up a little more than theirs. The goalkeeper for Spring Hill is a fantastic player and losing him hurt them greatly.”



Louisburg sophomore Ryan Haight (4) celebrates with his teammates after scoring the match's first goal last Tuesday against Spring Hill. Haight ended the night with a hat trick.

Louisburg also got some offensive production from an unexpected source. Sophomore Ryan Haight, who normally plays as a defensive midfielder, scored his first goal of the season to give Louisburg an early lead.

It wouldn't stop there as Haight would eventually finish with three goals and record his first hat trick. Senior Grant Ryals also performed well with a pair of goals to wrap up the Louisburg scoring, while sophomore Landon Johnson had two assists for the Wildcats.

"Ryan did a great job for us," Conley said. "To start the game he was a holding midfielder and for the first time in a while he didn't have an individual defensive assignment. This

allowed him to be a little more free. He pushed through and got us started with a very nice goal early.

“When we got our double yellow card, we needed another player up top. So with his confidence high, we took a chance letting him run up top and he made the most of it.”

After Haight’s first goal, the Wildcats kept on the attack. Williams sprinted toward the box on a through ball and had a good path to the goal, but the Spring Hill goalie grabbed Williams in the box, which resulted in a red card.

Louisburg was awarded the penalty kick and Ryals put the attempt away to give the Wildcats a 2-0 lead early in the first half.

Williams provided a lot of pressure up top in Bila’s absence and caused problems for the Spring Hill defense.

“I felt Chris did a fantastic job,” Conley said. “His speed caused havoc on them defensively. His work ethic is second to none and that was very apparent.”

With both teams down a man for most of the game, they had to play in different formations and Spring Hill caught the Wildcats off guard for a goal late in the first half.

The Wildcats took a 2-1 lead at halftime and they continued the attack. Haight scored his second goal seven minutes into the second half and completed the hat trick with another goal a few minutes later.

Ryals sealed the win with his second goal late in the second half.

Against De Soto, the Wildcats had their chances in the two goal loss on the road, but unlike in their match with Spring Hill, they couldn’t convert.

“We played well enough to win, but unfortunately we were

unable to execute," Conley said. "We had four or five really, really good opportunities but we were unable to capitalize. I felt they did a nice job of making the most of their limited opportunities.

"It was a tough game all-around and had multiple questionable whistles. Our inability to execute though was the problem in the game for us. We will learn from this game and it will make us better."

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track tonight when it hosts Baldwin. The varsity match is set to begin at 6 p.m.