

Wildcats help open new Fort Scott ballpark



Louisburg's Matt Risenhoover throws a pitch during the Wildcats' season opener last week. The Wildcats traveled to Fort Scott on Tuesday and played in the new Dave Regan Stadium at the LaRoche Baseball Complex.

FORT SCOTT – When the Louisburg baseball team entered the newly-constructed Dave Regan Stadium at the LaRoche Baseball Complex on Tuesday at Fort Scott, the Wildcats couldn't believe their eyes.

Louisburg was about to play in a stadium that not only seated more than 500 fans in chairback seats, but it was also a state of the art facility that featured a bullpen, indoor batting cages, a clubhouse and artificial turf.

It was a welcoming experience for the Wildcats, at least until the game started anyway.

Fort Scott made sure the debut game on its new field was a good one as it downed Louisburg 10-0 in the first game of the doubleheader and followed it up with a 15-0 victory in the nightcap.

"To be honest, we didn't play real well down there," Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. "It was an incredible atmosphere and

the field is one of the best that I have ever been on, but for some reason we just didn't execute in any phase of the game."

The LaRoche complex was funded by 11-year Major League Baseball veteran Adam LaRoche, who is currently a first baseman for the Chicago White Sox. LaRoche, a Fort Scott High School graduate, put down more than \$2 million of his own money for the project.

LaRoche was also in attendance for the stadium unveiling along with famous friend Willie Robertson, from the television show "Duck Dynasty." LaRoche even met with the Louisburg squad.

"Willie kind of stayed down the left field line, but Adam LaRoche came over and talked to us after the game," Lohse said. "He is a real class act and what he did for that school/community is absolutely amazing. I am happy for our guys that they got to be the first team to play on that field and be a part of their opening ceremonies."

In fact it was a Louisburg player who recorded the first ever hit at Dave Regan Stadium. Junior Austin Henderson smacked a single in the first inning against Fort Scott starter Mason Knopp.

The base runners would be few and far between, however.

Louisburg (1-3) scattered just five hits off Knopp who pitched a complete game with seven strikeouts. Junior Alex Dunn led the charge with a pair of base hits, while Mitchell Caldwell and Matt Risenhoover also added singles.

The nightcap was even rougher for Louisburg as Fort Scott scored 10 runs in the first inning. Cole Kramer, Caldwell and Dalton Stone all had base hits.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track today when it hosts Prairie View in its home opener at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.