

Wildcats split with Spring Hill



Louisburg's Colton Smith slides safely into third base during Monday's doubleheader with Spring Hill at Spring Hill High School. The Wildcats won the nightcap 3-2 after losing the opener 7-4.

SPRING HILL – It may have been just one win, but it sent the Louisburg baseball team heading in the right direction for its most important part of the season.

The Wildcats salvaged a doubleheader with the Broncos on Monday at Spring Hill High School. Louisburg held on for a 3-2 win in the nightcap that also brought its record to 10-10 on the season after losing the opener 7-4.

The win gave Louisburg a little momentum heading into the Class 4A-Division I regional tournament this coming Monday, where they will return to play the same team at the same place. The Wildcats earned the No. 2 seed and will play No. 3 Spring Hill (9-9) at 4 p.m. in Spring Hill.

No. 1 Paola (12-7) and No. 4 Bishop Miege (8-11) will open the tournament at 2 p.m.

“The guys are ready to go back to Spring Hill and try to win a regional championship,” Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. “It

just so happens that we play them again, but our focus is to go over there and play good baseball while giving ourselves a chance to be successful.

“Winning game two was huge from a momentum standpoint. Our guys are feeling pretty good and ready to go compete on Monday.”

Sophomore starting pitcher Sam Guetterman provided a consistent presence on the mound as he held the Spring Hill offense in check for most of the nightcap. Guetterman pitched six innings and gave up just one earned run on four hits and struck out three.

The Wildcat offense jumped out to a 3-0 lead early to give Guetterman a little cushion to work with as he gave up single runs in the first and third inning.

“Sam has done an outstanding job this year for us,” Lohse said. “We can always count on him to compete and throw strikes.”

Louisburg got those three runs in the first when Cole Kramer led off with a walk, Austin Henderson singled and both came around to score following singles from Colton Smith and Lucas Smith. The Wildcat offense went quiet after that as they had just one hit in the final six innings.

In the seventh, Kramer came in to close the game out. After giving up a leadoff walk, Kramer got an out on a sacrifice bunt and then recorded two fly outs to secure the save.

“Cole has accepted the closer role,” Lohse said. “He is a kid who can come in at any time and in any situation and feel comfortable. He has been in a couple difficult spots (De Soto and Spring Hill) and was able to secure the win for us.”

Walks hurt Louisburg in the opener as it issued 10 free passes to Spring Hill that led to three runs in the first two innings

for the Broncos. Louisburg held a 4-3 lead into the fifth inning, but the Wildcats walked five batters in the fifth and sixth, and those eventually led to four runs and a victory for Spring Hill.

“You can’t give good baseball teams free passes,” Lohse said. “We are pretty good when we make the other team put the ball in play to beat us.”

Louisburg tied the game at 1-all in the second inning when Colton Smith led off with a double and scored on a Lucas Smith single.

Down 3-1 in the fourth inning, the Wildcats took the lead with three runs in the frame. Colton and Lucas Smith started the inning with singles and Colton scored on a sacrifice fly from Alex Dunn.

Blake Ruder followed with a walk and later came around to score with Lucas on a Spring Hill error.

Lucas and Colton led the Louisburg offense with two hits apiece and Grant Harding added a double in the loss.