

# **Eighth-grade football snaps losing skid**



**Louisburg's Madden Rutherford intercepts a pass during Tuesday's home contest with Ottawa at Wildcat Stadium. The Wildcats ended a two-game losing streak with a 24-6 win over Ottawa.**

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The Louisburg Middle School eighth-grade football team broke its two-game losing skid Tuesday and did so with strong performances on both sides of the ball.

The Wildcats were able to force turnovers and they turned those into scores as they downed Ottawa 24-6 at Wildcat Stadium thanks to a big second half. Louisburg scored 24 unanswered points to even its record to 2-2 on the season.

Louisburg forced three second-half turnovers, which gave the Wildcats a spark after watching long drives in the first half come up empty.

Madden Rutherford came up with two second-half interceptions, and Kaden Oehlert recovered a fumble for the Wildcats. The Wildcat defensive line of Brayden White, Garrett Harding, Hunter Millbern and Drake Varns put pressure on the Ottawa quarterback.

"They dominated the line of scrimmage," Louisburg coach Brian

Keegan said of his defense. "They worked hard all week on pursuing the ball and pressuring the quarterback. The defense won this game."

Down 6-0, the Wildcats opened the third quarter with the fumble recovery and turned that into an 8-yard touchdown run from Charlie Koontz. Rutherford, the Wildcat quarterback, ran it in for the 2-point conversion to give Louisburg an 8-6 lead.

On Ottawa's next drive, Rutherford intercepted the Cyclone pass. Then a couple of plays later, Koontz rumbled for a 38-yard touchdown run and Dallas Newberry recorded the 2-point conversion to put the Wildcats up 16-6.



**Louisburg eighth-graders Charlie Koontz (left) and Kaden Oehlert bring down an Ottawa running back Tuesday at Wildcat Stadium.**

The Wildcats put the game away late in the third quarter when Rutherford intercepted his second pass of the half and returned it 50 yards for a touchdown. Koontz followed with the 2-point conversion run to seal the win.

Rutherford got the interception thanks to the defensive line

pressure as White hit the Ottawa quarterback as he threw and Rutherford was there to pick off the floater.

It was nice win for the Wildcats after they suffered a 42-22 loss to Wheatridge on Sept. 15. Louisburg held a 2-point halftime lead in the contest, but Wheatridge recovered an onside kick to start the second half, and later scored to take the momentum and the game.

Koontz, Newberry and Michael Waldron scored the Louisburg touchdowns.

“They outplayed us in the second half,” Keegan said. “They had a pretty impressive running back who became just too strong as the game went on. The kids were in the right positions to make a play but we could not bring down their big back.”

### **Seventh-grade remains undefeated**

The Louisburg Middle School seventh-grade football team continued its stretch of strong play Tuesday when it traveled to Ottawa and ran away with its fourth win of the season.

The Wildcats downed Ottawa 30-8 as they shut down the Whirlwinds in the second half and put together some drives of their own.

Elijah Johnson led Louisburg with two rushing touchdowns. Quarterback Andy Hupp and running back Ben Wiedenmann also found the endzone. Johnson and Wiedenmann also had 2-point conversion runs as well.

Louisburg also had a strong defensive performance against the Cyclones despite allowing an early first half touchdown. Cornerback Trestan Carlson led the way with an interception and a fumble recovery for the Wildcats.

“Before the game we challenged the offensive line to step

their level of play up, do all the fundamentals right and control the line of scrimmage and they responded with their best game of the year," Louisburg coach Kyle Wright said. "Ottawa came out and fired up and their first drive they looked sharp and we looked a little slow defensively.

"At halftime I challenged the defense to play more physical and faster and they certainly answered by shutting them out the rest of the night. The one thing we talked about as a team at practice that we need to improve on now is playing a littler crisper and cleaner as we were penalized over 100 yards last game. Overall, it was the best game we've played on the year. It's great to see the improvement from game to game as we keep taking steps forward and getting better."

On Sept. 15, the Wildcats hosted Wheatridge and came away with a 14-0 victory that saw all the scoring come in the second half.

To start the game, Louisburg kicker Luke Dudzik executed an onside kick and was recovered by teammate Justin Collins. The Wildcats used the momentum when Wiedenmann scored a touchdown and Johnson added the 2-point conversion to put Louisburg up early.

Johnson added another touchdown in the second quarter and the Wildcats led 14-0 at halftime.

Louisburg's defense held strong most of the night as it recorded its second straight shutout. Trevin Lohse had a second quarter interception that stopped a Wheatridge drive.

The Wildcats also got good play from Braden Aiken on both lines, along with Ethan Shaffer at wide receiver and cornerback.

"Wheatridge is a good team with some talented players but I was very pleased with how hard our kids played," Wright said. "The effort was outstanding and this is a group that when they

play hard and stick together, the result is a positive one.”