

LHS football to use last year as motivation



Louisburg quarterback Austin Terry will look to lead the Wildcats this upcoming season as they return 15 starters from a year ago. The Wildcats open their season Friday night when they host Ottawa at Wildcat Stadium.

It has been almost 10 months since the Louisburg High School football team saw its season come to an end on a Friday night in Spring Hill.

The Wildcats were on the wrong side of a 29-6 score in a must win game and finished their season with only three wins. Instead of dwelling on what happened last October, the Wildcats are using it as motivation for the upcoming season.

“My message to the players is to go play with a chip on your shoulder,” Louisburg coach Kyle Littrell said. “Last year was an embarrassment and there really isn’t any way around it. As the head coach, I take full responsibility with what happened since it was under my watch. But I think all the coaches and players don’t want it to happen again and we have to make sure that it doesn’t.”

Louisburg features an experienced group as the Wildcats return 15 starters from a season ago and has some depth on a team

that only has 57 players on the roster. Some of that depth is at the quarterback spot.

Senior Austin Terry (6-foot, 155 pounds) won the quarterback spot after what Littrell saw over the course of the summer workouts and practices. Junior Grant Harding will serve as the backup, but will still see the field a great deal as the team's starting tight end.

"That allows us to put the best 11 players on the field, but Terry flat out won the quarterback spot," Littrell said. "I really saw a lot of growth from him and he has done all the right things. We will probably have Grant back there at times, maybe for a series or two a game just to get some work, but it will all depend.

"Terry is our quarterback and we are looking forward to seeing what he can do. I think Grant is really going to help at tight end because he is a real student of the game and he just wants to go out there and compete no matter what position he is at. He has really good hands and I really think he can help our offense that way."



The Louisburg offensive and defensive lines look to be two of the team's strengths

this season.

Terry should get time to throw the ball as he is working behind one of the larger offensive lines in recent school history.

Senior Anders Vance (6-0, 280) returns to lead the offensive line as the team's center. Jarod Woodward (6-2, 270), Dustyn Rizzo (6-0, 215), Garrett Lowry (6-4, 295) and T.J. Dover (6-3, 250) will try and pave the way for the Wildcat rushing attack.

The line weighs an average of 262 pounds and should present some problems to opposing defenses.

"We are big up front and I am confident that we will be able to move some people around, especially straight ahead," Littrell said. "Since we are bigger, we do lose some speed, but they have a chance to be good.

"Potential is a scary word. The line has looked pretty good in practice recently but they have to keep getting better as does everyone else. We need all 11 guys pulling in the same direction, and if they can do that, then we can do something pretty special. It just all boils down if we can play for each other."

There should be holes for the Wildcat backs to run through. Junior Thomas San Agustin is the team's starting tailback and senior Alex Dunn returns as the fullback after missing part of last season with a knee injury.

Fellow senior Cole Kramer is making the move from tailback to wide receiver alongside senior Mitchell McLellan.

On defensive, the line appears to be just as big. Vance, Dover, Rizzo and Mason Koechner (6-1, 250) will provide the push, while linebackers Jake Hill, Dunn and San Agustin hope to also provide a presence.

In the secondary, McLellan and Kramer will play at corner, while Terry and Harding will man the safety spots.

“Defensively we are looking pretty good,” Littrell said. “We need to get a little better in the secondary on making reads. We just need to get better instincts and we have to want to tackle and put guys on the ground. I know we can get there though.”

The Wildcats also have a tough schedule as they try to make their way through the Frontier League and will also play defending Class 4A Division I state champion Bishop Miege in late October.

Louisburg’s journey back to the playoffs begins Friday when the Wildcats host Ottawa. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

“Ottawa is a really improved program and I think they have gone to the playoffs the last two years so I know they will be ready to play,” Littrell said. “I have no doubt that our guys will be fired up and ready to go themselves and they are really looking forward to the opener and hitting someone else for a change.”

2015 LOUISBURG HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Sept. 4			
Ottawa		7 p.m.	
Sept. 11			@
Eudora		7 p.m.	
Sept. 18			@
Piper		7 p.m.	
Sept. 25			Paola
(Homecoming)	7 p.m.		

Oct. 2 Baldwin			@ 7 p.m.
Oct. 9 Soto			De 7 p.m.
Oct. 16 Academy		7 p.m.	Sumner
Oct. 24 Miege	7 p.m.		@ Bishop
Oct. 30 Hill			Spring 7 p.m.