

Louisburg hangs with top-ranked Miego



Louisburg running back Thomas San Agustin leans toward the goal line while getting some blocks from Dustyn Rizzo (60), Garrett Lowry (68) and Alex Dunn (21) during Friday's district playoff game at Bishop Miego High School.

SHAWNEE MISSION – The task wasn't going to be easy – in fact – the obstacle seemed mountainous.

To get the chance at a district title, the Louisburg football team had to go through the No. 1 team, and defending state champion in Class 4A, Division I – Bishop Miego. All the Stags have done is beat up on a lot of Class 5A and 6A teams.

The Wildcats didn't back down from Friday's road contest. They embraced it.

Louisburg held the Stags to just 14 first-half points and trailed by only eight at halftime. Eventually the sheer number of players wore the Wildcats down in a 42-6 loss at Bishop Miego.

The loss was certainly nothing to be ashamed about as the Wildcats slowed down a Miego team that has put up points all season.

“At the end of the day, their platooning wore us down,” Louisburg coach Kyle Littrell said. “We just don’t have that luxury here and I understand that. The product that we put out on the field are the toughest kids in the state of Kansas and I think they proved that.”

For most of the night, the Wildcat offense was able to move the ball against a big Miego front line, but two interceptions and a partially blocked punt in the first half kept the Wildcats out of the endzone and gave Miego a short field.

In its first drive, Louisburg picked up three first downs, including a pass from Austin Terry to Grant Harding on fourth down that put the ball near midfield. The Wildcats eventually had to punt, but Louisburg’s defense rose to the occasion.

Juniors T.J. Dover and Dustyn Rizzo teamed for a sack that forced a third-and-long and an eventual Miego punt. Louisburg’s next drive also resulted in a punt that was partially blocked and set up Miego’s first score to put it up 7-0.



Louisburg juniors Dustyn Rizzo (left) and T.J. Dover team up for a sack on Bishop Miego quarterback Carter Putz on Friday at Bishop

Miege High School.

The Wildcats (6-2) didn't back down as they answered on their next possession. Running back Thomas San Agustin broke free for a 19-yard run to midfield, then Terry found Harding for a 15-yard pass to put the Wildcats in scoring position.

Louisburg faced another fourth down, but Terry converted the quarterback sneak to set up a first-and-goal. San Agustin eventually scored on a 3-yard touchdown run, and after a missed extra point, trailed just 7-6.

Miege was forced to punt once again on its next possession and the Wildcat offense appeared ready to take the lead right before halftime. Terry found receiver Cole Kramer on a 44-yard pass, and after a run from San Agustin and a pass play to Alex Dunn, the Wildcats had the ball in the redzone.

However, the Stags picked off a Louisburg pass with just more than a minute remaining. Miege didn't waste any time as they moved the ball quickly up the field that ended with a 27-yard touchdown pass as time expired.

"Our kids did a great job on defense," Littrell said. "They have some good pass blockers on their line, but we got some holding penalties to go our way and that helped. The kids executed our game plan well and we were there to make tackles. There is a reason why they are the No. 1 ranked team in the state."

For the game, the Wildcats racked up 227 yards on the ground and 338 yards of total offense for the game, that included 15 first downs.

"We did a great job of running the football," Littrell said. "They have a kid on the (defensive) line that is going to North Carolina State for a reason and he is good. It took us awhile to figure out what their defensive ends were going to do and we struggled on our sweep play a little bit, but I

thought our iso was good, our traps were good, our powers were good and even at times our passing was good.”

Defensively, the Wildcats were strong as they forced a turnover and had four tackles for a loss. Senior Mitchell McLellan led the way with a team-high nine tackles and linebacker Jake Hill finished with seven.

Rizzo added six tackles, including two for a loss. Terry also had an interception for Louisburg.

Bishop Miege opened the second half with a big play and used that final score at the end of the first as some momentum. The Stags struck for a 75-yard touchdown pass to make it a two touchdown lead and the Wildcats were unable to get any closer.

“They just wore us down in the second half,” Littrell said. “When you hold a team that averages 60 points a game to 28 in the first three quarters, you are doing something. I think those last two drives our kids were just completely exhausted and for good reason. They left everything they had out on the field and as a coach that is what you want to see. I am happy with how our kids represented their school and community with how tough they were.”

Louisburg will now try to make its way back to the state playoffs after falling short last season. The Wildcats will host Spring Hill on senior night Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

The Wildcats were the same situation a year ago when they traveled to Spring Hill and needed a win to get into the playoffs, but left with a rough loss.

“I am looking forward to it and I know the kids are looking forward to it because we walked off the field with a sour taste in our mouth,” Littrell said. “We knew it wasn’t our best football game and it wasn’t our best effort and I think everyone was ashamed of that. That is not going to happen this time around. It is a chance to get into the playoffs and beat

a team that ended your season last year, and if you can't get up for that, then don't bother showing up."

LOUISBURG		0	6
0	0 - 6		
MIEGE		7	7
14	14 - 42		

First quarter

M: Dawson Downing 3 run (Jake Heyen kick)

Second quarter

L: Thomas San Agustin 3 run (kick failed)

M: Jafar Armstrong 27 pass from Carter Putz (kick good)

Third quarter

M: Armstrong 75 pass from Putz (kick good)

M: Cameron Clark 14 pass from Putz (kick good)

Fourth quarter

M: Downing 3 run (kick good)

M: Downing 19 run (kick good)

STATISTICS

RUSHING: Thomas San Agustin 14-66; Will Ridley 18-65; Austin Terry 9-46; Austin Moore 7-23; Alex Dunn 4-22; Jake Hill 1-5

PASSING: Austin Terry 9-16-111-0-2

RECEIVING: Cole Kramer 1-44; Grant Harding 2-29; Mitchell

McLellan 2-21; Alex Dunn 2-12; Thomas San Agustin 1-5