

Wildcats end losing streak against Baldwin



Louisburg linebacker Alex Dunn (21) brings down a Baldwin runner while Anders Vance looks to clean up the play Friday in Baldwin City. The Wildcats defeated Baldwin 24-7 to go to 4-1 on the season.

BALDWIN CITY – It had been a while since the Louisburg football team had left Baldwin City with a smile on its face.

After Friday's game with the Bulldogs, the Wildcats couldn't help but flash a few grins.

For the first time since 2006, Louisburg defeated Baldwin on the road with a 24-7 win at Baker University. It was also the first time since 2010 since the Wildcats had defeated Baldwin at all.

"Now we have that monkey off our back," Louisburg coach Kyle Littrell said.

It was a big win for the Wildcats after coming off a heartbreaking one-point loss to rival Paola the week before. Facing another physical team in Baldwin gave the Wildcats another tough test, but this time they walked away with a crucial win.

“We preached all week that we didn’t want Paola to beat us twice,” Littrell said. “Last year I think they beat us two or three times. We were determined to get back to our physical style of football.

”I got away from what I thought we could do last week against Paola. I think the kids responded and appreciated the honesty on my part, but I also think they take responsibility. That is what family does when they screw up – they admit it, move on and try to get better.”



Mitchell McLellan looks to haul in a pass Friday in Baldwin. McLellan made the 37-yard pass that helped set up a touchdown.

The Wildcats (4-1) seemed to get better as they were able to move the ball against the Bulldogs thanks to several different options. Louisburg had five different players carry the ball, while quarterback Austin Terry carved up the Bulldog defense on a lot of screen passes to Cole Kramer and Mitchell McLellan.

Terry completed 12 of 16 passes for 155 yards and a

touchdown. McLellan led the way 84 yards receiving, while Kramer was responsible for one of the Wildcats' four touchdowns.

"Their corners were seven yards out and backpedaling before the snap, and if they are going to do that, I trust our quarterback to throw it, I trust our receivers to catch it and get an outside shoulder and make a play," Littrell said. "Kramer did a good job on that first touchdown. We ask our receivers that when we run any hitch is to get five yards or make a move and be an athlete. I thought our kids were athletic tonight and made plays."

Louisburg started the game off with a 14-play drive and were able move the ball at will, but Baldwin intercepted a pass at the goal line to stall the drive. The Wildcats defense responded as they forced the Bulldogs to turn the ball over on downs on their first possession.

On the Wildcats' next drive, they didn't make any mistakes as they used a 13-play drive that ended with a 3-yard touchdown run from Thomas San Agustin to put Louisburg up 6-0 after the missed extra point.

It looked like the Wildcat defense was going to have a stop again as they had Baldwin on a fourth-and-1, but the Bulldogs' Justin Howard was able to break free for a 38-yard touchdown run to put Baldwin up 7-6.

Terry and the Wildcats responded right before halftime as the Louisburg quarterback hit McLellan on two big gains, including a 37-yard pass to the Baldwin 13-yard line. It was there Terry hit Kramer on a screen pass and he ran for the 13-yard score to give Louisburg a 12-7 lead at the break.



Anders Vance (above) and Grant Harding bring down a Baldwin running back Friday.

Despite the late score, Littrell didn't like what he was seeing from his team.

"At halftime we had a nice, pleasant talk and I thought we responded well with the way we tackled and played defense," Littrell said.

The Wildcat defense shut out Baldwin in the second half and didn't let the Bulldogs cross the 50-yard line until late in the fourth quarter. Mason Koechner led the Wildcats with nine tackles on the night and Terry finished with eight.

Linemen Dustyn Rizzo and Anders Vance each added a sack, while Terry forced a fumble and Kramer got the fumble recovery in the win.

After the Wildcats gave a bulk of their carries to San Agustin and Alex Dunn in the first half, Littrell decided to put some new faces in the backfield – most notably Will Ridley. The Louisburg sophomore rushed for a team-high 70-yards in the second half to go along with his first touchdown of the season.

The line of Vance, Rizzo, Koechner, Garrett Lowry and T.J. Dover gave the Wildcats holes to run through as they racked up 205 yards on the ground.

“Thomas does some really nice things for us,” Littrell said. “He had 38 carries in the Piper game and I didn’t want to get up there close again to that. We have been repping Ridley and (Austin) Moore in practice so I just wanted to get some fresh eyes and legs in there.

“Will Ridley has paid his dues, and while he is a sophomore and has more dues to pay, he has had a positive attitude about the whole thing. He gave us a shot in the arm, fresh legs and ran tough. Hopefully we will get Hank (Korbin Hankinson) back next week, and if we can keep a fresh stable of backs, we can wear teams out throughout the season.”

The Wildcats seem to wear the Bulldogs out a little bit as they put together two fourth-quarter drives to put the game away. Louisburg used an 11-play drive that ended on a 1-yard touchdown run from Terry to put the Wildcats up 18-7 after several big runs from Ridley.

Ridley found the endzone a few minutes later as he scored on an 8-yard touchdown run that was set up thanks to a Baldwin fumble.

“Anytime you can go on the road and win in this league it is extra special,” Littrell said. “The way that we physically did it makes it even better because that is a physical ball team with some good-size kids and tough hard-nosed kids. I respect Coach (Mike) Berg and his program, always have. He is one of the best coaches in the state and he always has his team ready to play.”

Louisburg will try for another win Friday when it hosts De Soto. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

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BALDWIN 0 7

0 0 - 7

Second quarter

L: Thomas San Agustin 3 run (kick failed)

B: Justin Howard 38 run (kick good)

L: Cole Kramer 13 pass from Austin Terry (pass failed)

Fourth quarter

L: Austin Terry 1 run (kick failed)

L: Will Ridley 8 run (run failed)

STATISTICS

RUSHING: Will Ridley 10-70; Thomas San Agustin 17-53; Alex Dunn 9-38; Austin Terry 9-27; Austin Moore 4-14

PASSING: Austin Terry 12-16-155-1

RECEIVING: Mitchell McLellan 5-84; Cole Kramer 4-38; Grant Harding 1-21