

Louisburg brings home hardware from Fort Scott



Louisburg's Ben Hupp works to get some back points during his 170-pound match in Osawatomie on Thursday. The Wildcats defeated Osawatomie 53-18 in their season opener and then finished second overall Saturday at the Fort Scott Dual Tournament.

FORT SCOTT – For the first time since 2009, the Louisburg High School wrestling team brought home some hardware from the Fort Scott Dual Tournament.

Despite a rough start against Blue Valley Southwest, the Wildcats rattled off four consecutive wins to finish second overall and record their highest finish at the tournament in six years. After their season opening dual win against Osawatomie on Thursday, the Wildcats are now 5-1 to start the season.

“I was happy to have the team get second place, and it's nice bringing home some team hardware,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “I just wish we could have been a little more competitive with Blue Valley Southwest. That dual was not a pleasant one. It's a great thing to start the season with a solid dual victory and then a solid team performance at the tournament.”

Senior heavyweight Anders Vance led the Wildcats with a 5-0 mark on the day and three others finished with just one loss. Freshman Hunter Bindi (106 pounds), junior Kyle Allen (120) and junior Austin Raetzel (182) each had 4-1 marks, while Bindi and Raetzel recorded three pins each.

"Anders is doing great," Bovaird said. "I love his work ethic and his desire to improve. He's always asking questions and looking for ways to get better on the mat. I just wish he'd had more challenges last weekend.

"Hunter is a solid freshman, and I think he's going to have a pretty good season. He's got lots of experience, and he's got a competitive attitude. I thought Kyle filled in on varsity for Nathan Keegan at the last minute, and his one loss was the first match of the day, and it looked like he ran out of gas. Austin is filling in at 182 and he also did a nice job."



Louisburg's Alec Maler works for a pin during the 138-pound match during Thursday's season opening dual in Osawatomie.

Louisburg opened tournament action against Blue Valley Southwest and struggled from the start. The Wildcats fell 56-18 and didn't get their first victory until Raetzel pinned a Timberwolves opponent at 182 pounds.

"Talk about a wake-up call," Bovaird said. "We just didn't match up with them well at all. From the very start of the dual, they were getting us at every turn. We didn't win a match until Raetzel got his first pin of the day. They were open at 220 and 285, so that was really our only head-to-head win.

"I didn't like the feeling I got from that dual; we didn't seem ready and we looked too timid and rusty. It is best to get that out of the way early and we can use that dual as a great diagnostic for the season."

The Wildcats bounced back well as it came away with a 48-21 victory over Fort Scott and a 60-15 win over Anderson County. Louisburg didn't have much of a problem in its 51-16 win over Shawnee Mission West and would also defeat rival Paola 62-9.

Louisburg also had seven wrestlers finish the day with winning records. David Bindi (126), Tucker Batten (132), Blue Caplinger (145), Austin Moore (160), Ben Hupp (170) and Lyndon Smith (195) all left Fort Scott with three wins each.

Zach Jones (152) and Chris Turner (138) also ended their day with a pair of victories.

"I knew we'd have some depth this season, and I'm very proud of the guys who stepped in to fill our line-up," Bovaird said. "I'm especially proud of the competitiveness I saw come out of several kids."

The Wildcats return to the mat Friday and Saturday when they compete in the Eudora Tournament of Champions. Matches are set to begin at 1:30 p.m. on Friday and continue into Saturday.

Louisburg rolls Osawatomie in opener

Louisburg hit the road to start its season Thursday when it traveled to Osawatomie for a dual and it became evident early

that the Wildcats wouldn't have much of a problem.

The Wildcats won the first four matches by either pin or forfeit to take a 24-point lead and they never looked back in a 53-18 victory over the Trojans.

Thad Hendrix (106), Hunter Bindi (113), Nathan Keegan (120) and David Bindi (126) all won their first matches before the Wildcats lost four out of the next five.

"We had some guys who probably weren't in the condition that they needed to be in, but it is the start of the season and it is hard to tell at this point where you need to be," Bovaird said. "You just have to go out there and compete, figure out how out of shape you are and work with it."

"We have a good handful of guys on our team that are just all heart. They have an incredible work ethic and very strong wrestlers. If they are down by a few points in the third period, I am not really concerned because they are like the Royals were – you can never count them out."

A couple of those guys were freshman Austin Moore and junior Ben Hupp.

Moore, who wrestled at 160 pounds, found himself in the middle of a back-and-forth match with Osawatomie's John Diediker as Moore recorded several escapes to keep himself in the match. Moore came up just short in the 11-9 loss, but his attitude carried over into the next match with Hupp.

Hupp was also down to Nathan Hodges at 170 pounds, but he recorded a takedown and got some back points to win the 13-9 match and got the Wildcats back on the winning track.

Louisburg won the next two by forfeit before Mason Koechner won by an 8-3 decision at 220 pounds and heavyweight Anders Vance pinned Osawatomie's Tim Duncan in 37 seconds to end the dual.

Kyle Allen (126), Bria Jensen (132), Dustyn Rizzo (220) and Bradley Trageser (285) also won junior varsity matches for the Wildcats and all their victories came by pin.