

Louisburg girls soccer impresses in home opener



Louisburg sophomore Isabella Ford tries to cut past a Tonganoxie defender during Thursday's home opener. The Lady Cats defeated the Chieftains 2-0 to win their second straight game to start the year.

This wasn't just any home opener.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team, already with an emotional-filled victory over Harmon on the road last Tuesday in the program's first-ever game, tackled another milestone Thursday.

Louisburg played host to Tonganoxie for the Lady Cats' first game on their home field and they didn't disappoint their fans one bit.

A big second half gave Louisburg a 2-0 victory over the Chieftains and gave itself, ironically, a 2-0 record to start the year. In between the varsity and junior varsity game, those who helped with fundraising efforts to fund the team for three years were honored, many of whom were members of the Louisburg Soccer Club.

It was a start the players and coaches were hoping for.



Members of the Louisburg High School girls soccer team pose for a picture with the fundraising committee that helped raise money to fund the program for three years.

“It is fantastic,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “They have put in a lot of work to get here. Honoring everyone who made this possible between the games was a great thing as well and was deserving. It was a great start to the season for sure.”

The nerves didn’t seem to bother Louisburg too much as it was the aggressor early. Senior Lilly Scott nearly scored a goal in the first 10 minutes as her shot from just outside the box sailed just wide of the post as a cold, blustery wind pushed it away.

Louisburg’s next-best opportunity was thwarted on a nice save from the Tonganoxie goalie with nine minutes left as she jumped to knock a shot from senior Maddie McDaniel away. Sophomore Bailey Belcher also had two shots on goal that were just offline.

“In the first half, (Tonganoxie) just really crammed the

middle on us and we struggled to get the ball wide and play the ball a little quicker,” Conley said. “We did well possessing the ball for two-thirds of the field, but that other third we just tried to go 1-on-1 and that wasn’t successful for us. So we talked about that at halftime, then we finally started ping-pong some passes together and it worked out.”

It certainly did as sophomore Isabella Ford facilitated the offense. Ford crossed the ball to Belcher from the right side and Belcher put the shot away for the game’s first goal. It was the team’s first-ever goal at home.



Louisburg goalie Shay Whiting slides on the ground for a save in front of a Tonganoxie player Thursday in Louisburg.

“I missed a lot early like I did (against Harmon), but to finally get that shot to go in made me really happy because it

gave us a boost,” Belcher said. “It just gave us a little more umph to play on.”

About 10 minutes later, the Lady Cats used that “umph” to all but seal the win. For the second time, Ford crossed the ball into the box and sophomore Lily Cook headed the ball in for the 2-0 advantage.

It was the second assist on the day for Ford, who was more than happy to set up her teammates.

“Honestly I think it feels better to give assists than it does scoring goals,” Ford said. “I don’t like to play very selfish. I do like to cut and stuff, but it felt really good to be a part of those plays. Lilly Cook’s was an amazing header and I am really proud of her.”



Lily Cook (right) celebrates with teammates (from left) Lilly Scott, Hayli Detherage and Savannah Reinhart following her

header goal.

The match was also the second straight shutout for sophomore goalie Shay Whiting as she handled three shots on goal, but Tonganoxie didn't threaten otherwise as the Lady Cats controlled the possession most of the game.

Louisburg will face its toughest challenge to date as it will travel to De Soto for a 6 p.m. game on Tuesday. De Soto is considered one of the toughest teams in the Frontier League and Conley knows his team has to be ready.

"De Soto is the cream of the crop," Conley said. "They are the best team in our league in my opinion and we will see how we measure up. It will be exciting."

JV wins second in a row

The Louisburg girls junior varsity team didn't have any problems scoring against Tonganoxie in its home opener Thursday.

The Lady Cats scored two goals in each half on their way to a 4-1 victory to give them a 2-0 record on the season as well.

Early on in the first half, Leia Shaffer opened the game with a goal to put Louisburg up early and then Quincy Rice added another goal on an assist from Hayli Detherage to give the Lady Cats a 2-0 lead at halftime.

Isabella Ford gave Louisburg a 3-0 advantage early in the second half with a goal, and then after a Tonganoxie score, Lily Cook sealed the win with a goal on an assist from Shaffer.