

Wildcats use big plays to get win over Eudora



Louisburg junior Grant Harding reaches back for a pitch during the second game of the Wildcats' doubleheader with Eudora on Tuesday in Eudora. The Wildcats won opener 7-5, but fell in the nightcap 7-4.

EUDORA – The Louisburg baseball team had a flair for the dramatic during Tuesday's doubleheader opener in Eudora.

Whether it was a dazzling defensive play, a strong pitching performance or a timely hit – the Wildcats seemed to have all their bases covered. It all came together for a 7-5 victory over Eudora to start a night of back-to-back games.

The nightcap didn't go quite as well for Louisburg as the Wildcats couldn't get that big hit in a 7-4 loss to the Cardinals after Eudora scored three runs in the second and fourth innings to pull away.

Louisburg (4-4) started off well as it scored two runs in the first inning to take an early lead and then used a highlight-reel defensive play to get out of a jam in the bottom of the inning.

Eudora had the bases loaded and no one out and Louisburg starter Sam Guetterman coaxed a ground ball. It was the perfect setup as shortstop Matt Risenhoover started the double

play with second baseman Cale Schneider who finished it with a strong throw to first baseman Austin Henderson and allowed just one runner to score.

The Cardinals tried to make it two runs, but Henderson made a strong throw to catcher Alex Dunn, who tagged out the Eudora runner trying to score, and the Wildcats turned a rare triple play to keep the 2-1 lead.

“The triple play was a collective effort and a great heads up play by our infield,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “It got us out of a jam and provided energy when we could have gotten down on ourselves. It started with a groundball to Risenhoover, which allowed us to turn a double play. After turning the double play Henderson made a great throw home to Dunn, where we caught the third runner coming home.”

The Wildcats added another run in the second when Risenhoover singled and scored on a Cole Kramer double.



Senior second baseman Cale Schneider leaps into the air to snag a line drive Tuesday in Eudora.

Eudora was able to get those runs back and then some in the

second inning as it scored three times and added another run in the third to take a 5-3 advantage. Risenhoover added a RBI single in the fifth, but the Wildcats still trailed going into the final two innings.

With two outs and no one on in the sixth, Louisburg rallied to take the lead back. Blake Ruder and Henderson started off with back-to-back singles and both runners scored on double from Dunn to make it 6-5.

Korbin Hankinson scored on a passed ball in the seventh to give the Wildcats a little insurance but they didn't need it thanks to the relief effort of Risenhoover. The Louisburg senior pitched four innings of scoreless relief, gave up one hit and struck out four.

"Matt came in and threw strikes," McGhee said. "He was hitting spots and was throwing quality stuff. He was able to get ground balls, fly balls, allowing his teammates to support him defensively, and was able to strikeout batters as well. Matt threw a great mix of pitches and filled the zone."

Louisburg's offense was on base nearly every inning as it pounded out 17 hits, including three from Grant Harding. Dunn finished with a team-high 3 RBIs, while Kramer, Ruder, Henderson, Colton Smith, Risenhoover and Hankinson each added two hits each.

It was a little bit of the opposite in the second game as Eudora jumped out to the three-run lead and didn't give it up as it out-hit the Wildcats 13-6.

Eudora struck for three runs in the second and fourth innings off Harding as he pitched six innings and gave up the seven runs, but just three were earned. He also struck out five on the night.

Louisburg trailed 6-1 going into the top of the fifth, but cut into the Eudora as it scored a pair of runs on an RBI grounder

by Ruder and a sacrifice fly from Henderson.

The Cardinals scored a run in their half of the fifth and the Wildcats weren't able to get much closer.

Smith, Risenhoover and Hankinson each had a pair of hits to lead Louisburg, while Kramer, Ruder, Henderson and Schneider each notched an RBI.

"The second game we were slow to get started," McGhee said. "We had a couple of 1-2-3 innings in a row which can be challenging to overcome. After the first couple innings we started to be a bit more patient at the plate and began getting more runners on base. We built some momentum late in the game, but were unable to carry it over in the seventh.

"Overall we were glad to come away with the split. Eudora had a well-pitched second game and strung together a lot of singles. Our guys fought hard to keep the game within reach."

Louisburg returns to the diamond Tuesday when it hosts Baldwin at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.