

Wildcats use big second half to beat Sumner



Louisburg senior Lilly Scott reaches out with her leg to knock the ball down during the Wildcats' 3-2 victory over Sumner Academy on Thursday in Louisburg. Scott her first goal of the season in the second half.

On one night, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team put together a strong performance against one of the state's best teams, but unfortunately left with its first loss on the season.

Two days later, the Wildcats didn't have their best game but came away with a victory.

Go figure.

Although it was a wacky week, it marked a step forward in the progress of the Louisburg program as it defeated Sumner Academy 3-2 on Thursday in Louisburg. The Wildcats were able to put a team away despite not having their best performance.

"We struggled to play our game and I think some of that could be because of such an emotional game on Tuesday (against De Soto)," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I was worried there might be a little let down. We showed in that second half how much heart and energy can play with. The girls showed their

true character and responded very well after a lackluster first half.

“The girls do a fantastic job of picking each other up and being a great support system for one another. I am very proud of how this team is growing each and every game.”



Sophomore Savannah Reinhart (right) battles for a 50-50 ball Thursday against Sumner Academy.

The Wildcats (3-1) had their backs against the wall in the first half after Sumner Academy scored the game's first goal and the Sabres eventually took a 1-0 lead into halftime.

Louisburg had its chances early as Maddie McDaniel, Isabella Ford and Bailey Belcher all had shots on goal, but their chances just missed. The Wildcats didn't miss many opportunities in the second half.

Those shots started to find the back of the net as the Wildcats scored three goals in the final 40 minutes to secure the win.

Early in the second half, Ford found herself 1-on-1 with the goalie and put the shot away to tie the match. Ford then found herself on the other end of the Wildcats' second score.

Ford crossed the ball into the box and senior Lilly Scott knocked it in to give Louisburg the lead, and in the process, Scott scored her first goal on the year.

“Lilly’s goal was awesome,” Conley said. “She got a great ball served to her and she attacked it and scored it. It was a big time goal and a goal we needed. She has played incredibly well the past two games and I couldn’t be happier for her.”

The scoring continued a few minutes later when Belcher attacked the middle of the field and put a shot away for the Wildcats’ third goal. It was an important one as Sumner would score a second time, but Louisburg was able to hold on for the win.



Sophomore Bailey Belcher (left) knocks the ball up the field at home Thursday. Belcher scored one of the three goals in the win.

“It was clearly not our best game but they dug deep to find a way to win,” Conley said. “I was proud of how we responded at halftime. They are learning on the fly. We have a goal to never get out-worked in a game and I feel that we did in the first half, but they knew they were not out of the game.

“They increased their pressure and energy level and worked

their tails off. I was worried because we did expend a massive amount of energy to come back, but we were able to hold on. We talk a lot about bending but not breaking and I think that fit how that game went for us.”

Louisburg will try for its fourth win of the year Tuesday when it hosts Piper. The game was originally scheduled to be played at Piper High School, but the game has been moved to Louisburg. Varsity is set to begin at 4 p.m. and junior varsity at 5:30 p.m.

JV rolls Sumner for third win

The Louisburg junior varsity had no problems scoring against Sumner Academy in its contest Thursday in Louisburg.

The Wildcats scored six goals in the first half to pull away for a 6-0 victory over the Sabres. The win improves their record to 3-1 on the season, with their lone loss coming to De Soto last Tuesday.

Five different players scored goals for Louisburg. Madisen Simpson led the way with a pair of goals, while Peyton Shaffer, Savannah Reinhart, Quincy Rice and Hayli Detherage added one each.

Wildcats fall to state-ranked De Soto

On paper, it might have been a mismatch with a first-year program in Louisburg going up against the No. 3 team in Class 4-1A in De Soto.

In fact, it wasn't a mismatch at all.

Louisburg held its own against De Soto before eventually falling 2-0 last Thursday in De Soto. Ashley Panagakis scored

a goal in each half for De Soto to hand the Wildcats their first loss on the season.

The Wildcats trailed 1-0 for much of the contest and had a few chances of their own to tie the match. Louisburg had four shots on goal, while De Soto had 11.

Sophomore goalie Shay Whiting turned several shots away, while senior Rylee Bergh led the Wildcat defense to limit De Soto's chances.

"The girls played a very good game against a very good De Soto team," Conley said. "I am proud of how hard we played and how we didn't give up. We were focused and dedicated towards the game plan and playing such a good team. I feel that we all played a very solid game.

"We limited their quality chances and had several nice opportunities ourselves. We faced more shots from them than we did the first two games combined, but we did not break. Our back four and goalkeeper did a fantastic job. Rylee and Shay were especially good."