

REGIONAL CHAMPS! Wildcats knock off Basehor-Linwood



Louisburg senior Maddie McDaniel holds up the Class 4-1A regional championship trophy following Thursday's 3-1 victory over Basehor-Linwood at Wildcat Sports Complex. The Wildcats will play De Soto at 4 p.m. Tuesday in Louisburg during the state quarterfinal match.

As the final buzzer sounded, members of the Louisburg girls soccer team rushed to each other in the middle of the field at the Wildcat Sports Complex. It was a sense of euphoria.

The Wildcats had every reason to be excited.

Louisburg – a program that has been in existence for all of two months – won its first regional title in program history Thursday after it ousted Basehor-Linwood in a 3-1 victory during the regional championship game. Needless to say those type of accomplishments for a first-year program don't happen every day.

In fact, it rarely happens.

"It is like we won everything," sophomore goalie Shay Whiting said. "This is our first year and it has never been done before. Even if we have been playing for years and years, it is still a big accomplishment. I couldn't be happier right now."



The Louisburg girls soccer team poses with their regional championship trophy Thursday following its 3-1 victory over Basehor-Linwood.

The Wildcats (14-3-1) seemed to have the contest in control from the start as they scored a pair of goals in the first 30 minutes to take a two-goal lead. Just like in several other games this season, sophomore Bailey Belcher got things going for Louisburg.

Two minutes into the contest, Belcher dribbled past the Basehor defense and took a shot at the corner of the net to put it past the Bobcat goalie.

With 13 minutes left in the first half, it was a freshman who gave Louisburg a little breathing room. Hayli Detherage had an opportunity in the box and took advantage with a goal to put the Wildcats up 2-0. It was the perfect time for Detherage to get her first varsity goal.

“For her to get her first goal in such a big game like this was so awesome to see,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “I couldn’t be happier for her and all her hard work has paid off.”



Louisburg freshman Hayli Detherage gets some congratulations from her teammates following her first varsity goal in the first half.

From there, it was Basehor that started to increase the pressure on the Wildcat defense. The Bobcats, who outshot the Wildcats 9-8 on shots on goal, started putting some heat on Whiting.

It didn’t work early as Whiting made two diving saves on a

flurry of shots to turn away what appeared was going to be a Basehor goal.

Basehor eventually cracked the Wildcat defense with five minutes left in the first to cut the lead in half, but Louisburg still clung to a 2-1 lead at halftime.

Early in the second half, Basehor continued to be on the offensive as it put together two corner kick opportunities and Whiting turned away both. Even when the Bobcats were able to get a ball past the Whiting, the Wildcat defense was there.

The Bobcats took a shot on Whiting, who was coming out of the goal, and it hit off the Louisburg goalie and rolled to the goal. However, senior Rylee Bergh charged toward the goal and kicked it away just before it crossed the line.

Louisburg's back line of Bergh, Georgia Wilde, Camdyn Clark, Madisen Simpson, Kaitlyn Lewer and Lilly Scott bent, but didn't break.



Louisburg senior Rylee Bergh heads the ball away Thursday against Basehor-Linwood.

“Defensively, we were sound enough,” Conley said. “We had some moments where we had some lapses, but that is going to happen. The kids just played so freaking hard and it is awesome. We are just playing with house money right now. No one, not even us, expected to be in this spot. Everyone said we wouldn’t be here, so why not see what happens and keep playing with passion and keep playing with heart and we will just sort it out later.”

Although the Wildcat defense didn’t break, it was Belcher who shattered the Bobcats’ spirit with 20 minutes left in the game. Belcher received a pass from Simpson as she took it around the right side and shot it when she was almost even

with the goal and hit it in the far corner of the net.

“I was just trying to get it over the goalie, but to be honest I don’t know how I did it,” Belcher said. “I am just so happy. I was hoping for this but I can’t say that I expected it. Everyone kind of came into this game saying it is going to be really close, which it was. I was worried for a little bit there but it turned out OK.”

Louisburg could have had more than three goals as sophomores Savannah Reinhart and Isabella Ford, along with junior Lily Cook and senior Maddie McDaniel all had decent looks at different points throughout the game.



Louisburg sophomore Isabella Ford tries to head the ball into the goal before the Basehor goalie can stop it.

However, it was Belcher’s final goal that left the Louisburg

sideline in a frenzy.

"There was not a lot of angle there," Conley said. "I try to preach to all of them, but especially her, which is to aim at the far post. With girls soccer, goalies unfortunately they don't have the explosion that a boys team will have, so if you chip it to the back side anything can happen. We like to go to that back stick a lot. Dadgum if that thing didn't just go in. I am sure I looked like an idiot jumping up and down on the sideline, but it is worth it."

The Wildcat sideline will be in more of a frenzy if they get another win Tuesday. Louisburg will host De Soto in a state quarterfinal match at 4 p.m.

Louisburg upset De Soto earlier this month as it scored two goals in the final 20 minutes to get a 2-1 win, and the two teams have split on the year. Conley knows De Soto will want to avenge its loss as both teams will have a lot to play for.

"(De Soto) is the program you want to emulate," Conley said. "They play the right way, they have the right attitude and have the right tenacity. From 1 to 11, they are just quality players. It is going to have to be our work ethic against their skill and use our skill and just play hard. Anything can happen. We have proven that once so I think that gives us a little confidence that it can happen again.

"At the same time, they are going to have a little chip on their shoulder and they are going to come out fired up. It is on us to do our job and execute and anything can happen. I expect a well-played and physical game. I guarantee you that they think we stole it from them, so we just have to go earn it and show them that we are here. It is going to be a really good game."

Louisburg rolls Ottawa

To get to the regional championship game, Louisburg first had to get past Ottawa and it did so in impressive fashion last Tuesday.

The Wildcats scored six first half goals on their way to a 9-0 victory over the Cyclones in Louisburg on what was a rain-soaked field.

The conditions didn't seem to slow Bailey Belcher as she recorded a hat trick in the first half and finished with a season-high five goals for the game. Belcher was just one of several players to rack up stats.

Savannah Reinhart scored a pair of goals and also had a pair of assists. Isabella Ford finished with two goals and Maddie McDaniel recorded three assists on the day. Lily Cook also added an assist, while goalie Shay Whiting recorded her eighth shutout of the season.