

Wildcats get work done during team camp



Louisburg running back Brayden Gage looks for a hole while lineman Matt Rison (right) tries to block Dalton Frazier during the Wildcat team camp last week. The Wildcats will hold two scrimmages later this month against Blue Valley Southwest and Blue Valley Northwest.

Ever since last November, the sting has stayed with several members of the Louisburg football team and its coaching staff.

That feeling has been hard to shake, but they are out to use that as motivation. Close to 60 players hit the Louisburg High School football practice field every evening last week hoping to erase the memory of the way last season ended.

Louisburg went through the regular season winning seven of its nine games before getting upset in the first round of the playoffs to Basehor-Linwood. The Wildcats are out to make another run at the state playoffs and they started that journey during last week's team camp.

The Wildcat players took the field for two-and-half-hour sessions during the five-day camp that ended Friday.

"I really liked everything about the camp, except for maybe Friday," Louisburg coach Kyle Littrell said. "Monday through Thursday I thought we did some really nice things. I thought

we executed well and saw improvement. But Friday was just a rough day. I am not sure if it was because we started a couple hours earlier or what it was, but it just wasn't a good day. We just weren't as crisp as I would like us to be."



Korbin Hankinson hauls in a catch during the Wildcat team camp last week.

Littrell said he used a majority of the camp to install 80 to 90 percent of the team's offense, along with portions of the team defense. The camp was also used to see who would be able to fill the holes left by the 12 Wildcat seniors from a year ago.

The Wildcats have to replace their starting quarterback, center, wide receivers, fullback, middle linebacker, two defensive linemen and several parts of the secondary. Littrell believes the team took a step forward.

He really liked what he saw out of the running back group at camp, including seniors Thomas San Agustin, Korbin Hankinson and Jake Hill. Returning starters T.J. Dover, Garrett Lowry, Mason Koechner and Dustyn Rizzo provided some lanes to run through on the line.

"I think we were able to get all the basics down and I think we showed that we are going to be a good running team," Littrell said. "On the offensive line, we have four guys that are 2 to 3 year starters for us and then whoever wins the center battle. We just need to fix some little things there, but I feel that is going to be a strength for us.

"We just need to develop some more offensive lineman and backups to give us a little more depth there. I was definitely happy with the running back group this past week. I thought they did a really good job."

As good as the running game was for the Wildcats, Littrell knows his team has to show more balance if they want to be successful this season. Senior Grant Harding returns to take over the quarterback spot for Austin Terry and Littrell said his team needs to improve its aerial attack.

"We are going to have to be able to throw the ball some," Littrell said. "We might be a running team, but if we don't show that we can throw the ball and be successful at that, teams are going to stack nine or 10 guys in the box and we won't be able to do much. If we can become a balanced offensive team then I think we have a chance to be pretty successful."

Although the Wildcats didn't have the best final day of camp, it did end on a good note as approximately 40 moms took the field with their sons to take part in a simulated practice.

Each mother played their son's position and the coaches walked them through what a day of practice is like.

"It was a lot of fun," Littrell said. "I am surprised at how many moms actually showed up, but it was good to see that many out there. It gave the coaches a chance to put some names with faces and it let the moms become a little more familiar with us and what we are trying to do."

Even though camp may be over, team activities are just beginning.

Along with the normal summer weight sessions, the Wildcats will travel to Paola the next two Mondays for 7-on-7 workouts to go up against several area teams.



Quarterback Grant Harding releases a pass during a drill last week.

Something new for the Wildcats this season is they will get the opportunity to scrimmage against two different teams.

Louisburg will host Blue Valley Southwest for a scrimmage from 9 to 11 a.m. on Wednesday. The Wildcats will host their second scrimmage a week later when Blue Valley Northwest comes to town from 10 a.m. to noon on June 29.

Both scrimmages will be held on the school's practice field.

"It will be nice to go up against defenses that don't necessarily know what we run," Littrell said. "That is the problem with camp is we know what the other is going to do. Plus, it will give us a chance to go up against different

formations, that maybe we wouldn't normally do until two-a-days start so this will give us a little jump start. Plus, I know the players look forward to going up against someone different."