

Delay doesn't stop Wildcats in win over Piper



Louisburg running back Thomas San Agustin (right) gets a big hole to run through thanks to a block from teammate Jake Hill (24) on Saturday at Wildcat Stadium. Weather forced Louisburg High School officials to suspend Friday's home opener and move it to Saturday. The Wildcats rolled Piper 39-6.

It took almost an entire day for the Louisburg football team to finish its home opener with Piper – but for the Wildcats – it was well worth the wait.

Rain and lightning postponed the game Friday late in the first half and the contest was finished up Saturday afternoon. All the waiting around didn't seem to bother Louisburg much as it scored 25 unanswered points Saturday as the Wildcats rolled Piper 39-6 at Wildcat Stadium.

Playing in the bright afternoon sunshine, rather than the Friday night lights, seemed to suit the Wildcats.

"It was a huge win," Louisburg co-head coach Jeff Lohse said. "Piper is a good football team. It was a tale of two different days, really. (Friday) night both teams were winded, humidity was taking its affect and we had to have kids come out. But (Saturday), with fresh legs, coach (Gary) Griffin challenged the offensive line and they got after it today. That really was the difference in the game."

The Wildcats (2-0) marched up and down the field on the Piper defense Saturday as they tallied 313 yards of total offense and scored four touchdowns in just more than two quarters of play behind the offensive line of T.J. Dover, Garrett Lowry, Mason Koechner, Dalton Frazier and Dustyn Rizzo.

Before the rain came Friday, the Wildcats got off to a strong start against Piper as quarterback Grant Harding scrambled for a 12-yard touchdown run and then Harding found Korbin Hankinson for a 27-yard touchdown on a screen pass. The Wildcats ran the same play to Hankinson to get the 2-point conversion and held a 14-0 lead into the second quarter.

Late in the second quarter, with its offense stalling, the Pirates pulled out a trick play as they scored on an 80-yard touchdown run on a hook and ladder play to cut Louisburg's lead to 14-6 with 2 minutes and 54 seconds left before halftime.



Senior Ben Hupp brings down a Piper running back Saturday at Wildcat Stadium.

It was then the lightning showed up and forced the postponement till Saturday. All the momentum Piper had was quickly halted by Mother Nature.

"It was great call by them," Lohse said. "For the most part on

Friday we shut down their rushing attack and for them to have to score on that trick play, you have to tip your hat to them. It was a good play and there wasn't much we could do about it."

As the Wildcats sat in the locker room Friday waiting out the delay, they wanted to come out and make a statement and get a good kickoff return. They had to wait to Saturday to do it, but Louisburg got the boost it was looking for.

When the game resumed, Hankinson received the kickoff and returned it 73 yards for a touchdown and put Louisburg up 20-6 and the Wildcats stole the momentum right back.

"It set the tone for us," Lohse said. "We preached that Friday and we preached that when we brought them in (Saturday) afternoon. If we could run that one back and give us good field position right before halftime that was something we knew could break their back. Coach (Robert) Ebenstein does a great job with special teams and that was definitely a big kickoff return for us."

Piper had a chance to score before halftime as it drove the ball down the field, but the Wildcat defense held firm and kept the Pirates out of the endzone. Piper had a fourth-and-goal, but Lowry sacked the Piper quarterback to end the threat.

In the third quarter, special teams then came into play again for Louisburg as a host of Wildcats sacked the Piper punter and they took possession at Piper's 19-yard line. Senior running back Thomas San Agustin, who led the Wildcats in rushing with 104 yards on the ground, scored his first touchdown on a 3-yard run to extend the lead to 26-6.

With 3:28 left in the third, Harding found Hankinson for the second time in the game, this time for a 22-yard touchdown and Louisburg led 32-6 going into the fourth quarter. Harding had a big game for the Wildcats as he passed for two touchdowns

and rushed for another after he racked up 101 yards on the ground.

"It was different because it felt like playing a JV game, coming back and playing in the daytime," Harding said. "It was definitely weird, but it was a huge win for us. We had a good first quarter offensively on Friday, but (Saturday) it seemed like it was almost perfect. It was pretty good."

San Agustin capped off the Wildcats' scoring in the fourth quarter when he found a big hole and ran for a 25-yard touchdown.

Louisburg's defense caused Piper fits as it held the Pirates to 248 yards of total offense, with 80 of it coming on their big scoring play Friday.

Senior linebacker Nick Hull was all over the field as he finished with a team-high 10 tackles, while Koechner and Connor Green each added five. San Agustin, Jake Hill and Lowry each added a sack.

Junior Dalton Ribordy had three tackles for a loss and senior Ben Hupp added two.

"I thought the guys flew around a little bit today," Lohse said. "They played with a lot more emotion. We did some good things on Friday, but they showed up as the team we thought we had (Saturday). We were running sideline to sideline and playing with a lot more emotion."

Louisburg will try for its third consecutive win Friday when it travels to De Soto for a 7 p.m. kickoff. De Soto is also 2-0 on the season and the Wildcats are looking forward to the challenge.

"When we see Piper beat a good Paola team the week before, our kids knew what type of challenge we were in for," Lohse said. "Now we have to focus our attention to a very good 2-0 De Soto

team and it doesn't get any easier. We will learn from this and see what happens."

To view a photo gallery from the game, make sure to click [here](#).

LOU	14	6	12	7 – 39
PIP	0	6	0	0 – 6

First quarter

L: Grant Harding 12 run (run failed)

L: Korbin Hankinson 27 pass from Harding (Harding pass)

Second quarter

P: 80 run (kick failed)

L: Hankinson 73 kickoff return (kick failed)

Third quarter

L: Thomas San Agustin 3 run (run failed)

L: Hankinson 22 pass from Harding (kick failed)

Fourth quarter

L: San Agustin 25 run (Nick Hull kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Thomas San Agustin 12-104; Grant Harding 11-101; Austin Moore 5-29; Will Ridley 5-16, Jake Hill 4-13, Korbin Hankinson 3-7.

PASSING – Grant Harding 3-5-56

RECEIVING – Korbin Hankinson 2-49; Jake Hill 1-7