

Wildcat soccer perfect to start season



Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan slides in for a save during Thursday's home opener against Ottawa. Stefan and the Wildcats started the season with back to back wins over Ottawa and Fort Scott.

There was a little anxiousness and excitement heading into the home opener for the Louisburg High School boys soccer team.

The Wildcats were about to have their first true test of the season Thursday against a team they haven't been able to beat in the last two years. A little anxiousness is to be expected, but one kick seemed to change all that.

Senior Noah Juarez nailed a penalty kick eight minutes into the contest, and from there, the Wildcats settled down and dominated the Cyclones in the 3-1 victory. After a win against Fort Scott earlier in the week, the Wildcats are now off to a 2-0 start.

"That definitely eased the nerves," Louisburg head coach Kyle Conley said. "The first five minutes we were all over the place. We were a little too amped up and running around like crazy. It looked like little kid soccer there for a while. We calmed down a little bit, had a couple great balls through and Herman (Knipp) had a great run. Noah then knocked home the penalty kick. It was a good result for us definitely."

It was all set up by good through ball to senior Herman Knipp, who was then fouled in the box and the Wildcats were awarded the penalty kick. That play seemed to give the Wildcats all the momentum as they added another goal two minutes later.

Junior Scott Murphy usually spends most of his time on defense, but Murphy got an opportunity to score as he dribbled through the Ottawa defense in the box and his shot went past the diving Cyclone for the goal on an assist from Knipp. Murphy nearly added another goal later in the half, but his shot was just wide of the net.



Defender Kris Light heads the ball away Thursday against Ottawa.

“He probably won’t get a lot of opportunities on goal, but Scott should have had a second goal too which would have been awesome,” Conley said. “He is just a workhorse and that goal he had was just a work goal. That was a great time to get his first varsity goal.”

The score gave the Wildcats a little cushion to work with as they took a two-goal lead at halftime. The Louisburg defense, on the other hand, made things difficult for the Cyclones as well.

Conley shifted several players in and out of the backfield and

Ottawa didn't many good attempts on goal. When there were shots, Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan turned them away.

Kolten Ragan, Curran Conklin, Jacob Benne, Kris Light, Ty Martin, Calvin Cassida and Murphy all provided crucial minutes on defense.

"Ambrose did a good job in goal and we limited their chances," Conley said. "We gave them shots from 25 to 30 yards out and he has more than enough time to react and save those. Defensively we were a little shaky at first, but we did OK and there are going to be growing pains. When we played Fort Scott we didn't get a lot of work, so that was good to see them bend but don't break."

Louisburg made it even more difficult for Ottawa as it added another goal early in the second half. Juarez received a pass from teammate Grant Ryals and Juarez took a shot from 18 yards out and put it in the upper right corner of the net to all but seal the win for the Wildcats.

Ottawa added a goal with 23 minutes left in the contest, but could get no closer.

The Wildcats will try to make it three wins in a row today when they host Paola. The varsity match is set for 4 p.m.

"With this league being so good we just have to take it one game at a time," Conley said. "I don't think Paola is going to come and lay down for us. It is a rivalry game again and kids have to get hyped up and get after it in practice. It doesn't get any easier with Spring Hill and De Soto coming up soon and then the gauntlet begins."

To view a photo gallery from the contest, feel free to click [here](#).

Wildcats rout Fort Scott

Once its season opener got underway against Fort Scott, there was little doubt on who was going to win the contest.

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team opened its season in Fort Scott on Aug. 30 and put together an offensive show. The Wildcats pummeled the Tigers with seven first half goals and Louisburg came away with the 10-0 win.

For the game, the Wildcats had 18 corner kicks and never let the Tigers have much of an opportunity on goal.

"I never saw in 18 corners in a game before, but we had tons and tons of pressure," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Our finishing was atrocious. I was really worried about it and we were trying to make that perfect hit instead of just slotting it where it needed to go. Fort Scott is rebuilding with a new coach and he is trying to institute new things. I thought the kids played well though."

Four different Wildcats had two goals on the night. Herman Knipp, Landon Johnson, Jonathan Ventre and Noah Juarez each had a pair of scores, while Christian Scholtz and David Holiday each had a goal.

Juarez added three assists in the victory, while Curran Conklin, Knipp, Scholtz and Grant Ryals each finished with an assist as well.