

Big plays hurt Louisburg in loss to Ottawa



Louisburg senior Grant Harding tries to knock down a pass in front of Ottawa's Cooper Diel last Friday in Louisburg. The Wildcats lost their district game against Ottawa, 48-28 and will try to earn a spot into the playoffs this Friday against Paola.

Halloween was still more than a week away, but big plays haunted the Louisburg football team Friday in its final regular season home contest.

Ottawa came into Louisburg on Friday and scored seven touchdowns of 40 yards or more and left with a 48-28 district win and spoiled senior night for the Wildcats. The Cyclones scored three unanswered touchdowns to start the game and forced the Wildcats to play from behind early.

Louisburg didn't help itself with penalties and the Wildcats also turned the ball over four times as they suffered their second loss of the season. Any more losses and their season is over as the Wildcats will travel to Paola this Friday for the final district game of the season, with the winner grabbing a playoff spot.

"There is a lot riding on it now," Louisburg co-head coach Jeff Lohse said of the game. "It is an even bigger game than it was before and Paola is always a big game. We are going to

have a great week of practice and I think our kids are going to bounce back.”

In a game that featured a combined 76 points, Friday’s contest actually started slow for both teams. Louisburg threw an interception on its first possession, the Wildcat defense then forced Ottawa to punt on a three-and-out, before turning the ball over on downs themselves in the redzone.

Ottawa then found a hole in the Wildcat defense as running back Devion Bethea scooted toward the endzone on a 42-yard run to take an early lead. The Cyclones expanded their lead in the second quarter on a 74-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Isaac McCullough and a 79-yard run from Bethea to go up by three touchdowns.



Junior Garrett Lowry brings down Ottawa’s Devion Bethea during

Friday's game in Louisburg.

Louisburg (6-2 overall, 1-1 district) finally got on the board late in the first half when Thomas San Agustin scored the first of his three touchdowns on a 2-yard run to cut the lead to 21-7 at halftime.

Going into the second half the Wildcats were still in the game, but it took just a few seconds to change all that. Ottawa's Perry Carroll fielded the opening kickoff off a bounce and returned it 90 yards for a touchdown.

"We knew their offense was going to be really good and their quarterback (McCullough) is a really good player," Lohse said. "Big plays just killed us. The kickoff return right after halftime was a huge play in the game."

The Wildcats marched down the field later in the quarter and scored on a 1-yard run from San Agustin to cut the Ottawa lead to two touchdowns.

Two minutes later, Ottawa answered again and this time it was on the arm of McCullough who found Cooper Diel for a 51-yard score and all but put the game out of reach for Louisburg.

Louisburg didn't stop fighting as it used a little trickery to try and get back in it. San Agustin hit Desmond Doles for a 37-yard halfback pass that set up a 3-yard touchdown run for San Agustin.

McCullough threw his third touchdown of the game in the fourth quarter and Diel intercepted a Wildcat pass and returned it for another score to seal it for the Cyclones. Louisburg running back Austin Moore tacked on a 13-yard touchdown run for the Wildcats' final score late in the game.

"Even though we were down early, it didn't change a whole lot of what we were trying to do," Lohse said. "We knew we're still in it for a while, but we hurt ourselves. We hurt

ourselves with penalties and we turned it over a couple times. We can't do that against good teams."

The Wildcats were able to move the ball against the Cyclones as they racked up 412 total yards of offense, including 305 yards on the ground. Quarterback Grant Harding led the Wildcats with 123 yards rushing and San Agustin added 81 yards on 15 carries.

The final game of district play is now on tap for Louisburg as it tries to forget about this game and prepare for rival Paola. A win against the Panthers would give Louisburg a spot in the Class 4A state playoffs for the second straight season.

"We are a pretty resilient team," Lohse said. "If we win our next game we are in and that is what we have to focus on."

OTT	7	14	13	14 – 48
LOU	0	7	13	8 – 28

First quarter

O: Devion Bethea 42 run (kick good)

Second quarter

O: Blaine Ray 74 pass from Isaac McCullough (kick good)

O: Bethea 79 run (kick good)

L: Thomas San Agustin 2 run (Nick Hull kick)

Third quarter

O: Perry Carroll 90 kickoff return (kick failed)

L: San Agustin 1 run (Hull kick)

O: Cooper Diel 51 pass from McCullough (kick good)

L: San Agustin 3 run (kick failed)

Fourth quarter

O: Ray 30 pass from McCullough (kick failed)

O: Diel 30 interception return (McCullough run)

L: Austin Moore 13 run (Moore run)

STATISTICS

OFFENSE

RUSHING – Grant Harding 15-123, Thomas San Agustin 15-81, Jake Hill 9-34, Austin Moore 7-34, Korbin Hankinson 7-33

PASSING – Grant Harding 9-25-70; Thomas San Agustin 1-1-37

RECEIVING – Desmond Doles 3-58, Thomas San Agustin 4-26, Korbin Hankinson 3-23

DEFENSE

TACKLES – Austin Moore 6, Mason Koechner 6, Jake Hill 5, T.J. Dover 5, Dustyn Rizzo 4, Thomas San Agustin 3, Nick Hull 3, Garrett Lowry 3, Matt Rison 2, Lyndon Smith 1, Connor Green 1, Grant Harding 1, Ben Hupp 1, Kiefer Tucker 1.

FOOTBALL, CHEER AND CROSS COUNTRY SENIOR NIGHT

PHOTO GALLERY



Abby Reedy



Austin Raetzel



Ava Littrell



Avery Aust



Hanna and Lauren Becker



Ben Hupp



Bryn O'Meara



Claire Houchen



Connor Green



Dalton Frazer



Dustyn Rizzo



Grace Rolofson



Gracie Key



Grant Harding



Jackson Ewalt



Jake Hill



Kaitlyn Gaza



Korbin Hankinson



Lily Cook



Liz Hildreth



Lyndon Smith



Madelynn Yalowitz



Mason Koechner



Matt Rison



Megan Eberhart



Nick Hull



Rachael Bellinger



Thomas San Agustin





Tommy Dalton

T.J. Dover