

Wildcats bounce back in district opener



Louisburg senior T.J. Dover stops a Fort Scott running back behind the line of scrimmage Friday during the Wildcats' district opener against the Tigers at Wildcat Stadium. The Wildcats defeated Fort Scott 35-6.

Louisburg wanted to make a statement following its one-point loss in its last game, and unfortunately for Fort Scott, the Tigers were next on the Wildcats' schedule.

The Wildcats began district play against Fort Scott on Friday at Wildcat Stadium and took their aggression out on the Tigers as they rolled to a 35-6 victory. Louisburg scored 28 unanswered points in in the first half as it took control of the game from the opening kickoff.

The win allowed Louisburg to quickly forget its first loss of the season the week before against Spring Hill where the Wildcats fell in the final seconds. One more win and the Wildcats would more than likely secure a spot in the state playoffs.

"It was really big," senior T.J. Dover said of the win. "We were preaching all week that we couldn't let Spring Hill beat us twice and I thought we came out in the first half and showed what we can do. I think we came out and made a statement and it was fun. It was good that everyone played

well together and it is time to build off of it.”

Dover was a part of an offensive line that included Dalton Frazier, Garrett Lowry, Dustyn Rizzo and Mason Koechner, which paved the way for the Wildcats’ 435 yards of total offense. Along with tight ends Ben Hupp and Dalton Ribordy, Louisburg opened up several holes in its running game as the Wildcat tallied 304 yards on the ground.



Korbin Hankinson hauls in a touchdown pass from Grant Harding on Friday in the Wildcats’ district opener with Fort Scott.

Senior running back Thomas San Agustin took advantage of the blocking as he tallied 109 yards rushing on just 10 carries to go along with two touchdowns. Sophomore Austin Moore also had 15 carries for 92 yards and a touchdown.

The Wildcats (6-1 overall, 1-0 district) were also dangerous

through the air as senior quarterback Grant Harding threw for 135 yards, and 112 of those yards went to senior Korbin Hankinson.

Louisburg made a statement early on the game's opening drive. The Wildcats drove the field in nine plays that ended on a 3-yard touchdown run from Harding. Louisburg's first play from scrimmage was a 23-yard run from San Agustin.

"There were holes there to run through and the backs did a good job running through them," Louisburg co-head coach Gary Griffin said. "I thought Grant threw the ball pretty decent in the first half and we were able to make some big plays in the passing game. That helps with the running game. We started the game really physical and we got a nice crack block on a sweep on our first drive and that set the tone. That was a nice first drive for us."

Late in the first half, the Wildcats got their passing attack going as Harding hit Hankinson for a 37-yard pass, which eventually resulted in a 3-yard touchdown run from Moore. Harding ran in the 2-point conversion to put Louisburg up 14-0 going into the second quarter.

Louisburg's defense came through next as Fort Scott turned the ball over on downs in the redzone. Then the Harding-Hankinson combo struck again and this time it was for six points.

Following a 30-yard run from Jake Hill, Harding hit Hankinson in stride for a 68-yard touchdown pass to give the Wildcats a three-score lead.

On Fort Scott's next possession, Dover forced a fumble and Moore recovered to give the Louisburg offense one last chance in the first half. The Wildcats took full advantage as San Agustin scored on a 19-yard touchdown run with 54 seconds left in the quarter.

"I think the first half was the best we have played

offensively,” Griffin said. “We made some big plays in the passing game and we were consistently able to run the football. I was happy with the way our kids bounced back. We had a good week of practice and I thought we showed it. We were a lot more physical.”

Fort Scott responded in the second half with a 13-play drive that took seven minutes off the clock and scored a touchdown to cut the Wildcat lead to 28-6.

It took less than a minute for the Wildcats to answer.



Austin Moore (21) leads a host of Wildcats tacklers as they bring down a Fort Scott player Friday in Louisburg

San Agustin went 75 yards in just two plays. He took the kickoff 40 yards and then scored on a 35-yard touchdown run on the first play of the drive to put the Wildcats up 35-6 and

sealed the win.

"It was real nice to see us bounce back there," Griffin said. "That is a part of growing up too. I think that kind of demoralized them a little bit. They were able to get a little momentum, but then we were able to get a nice kickoff return and we scored on the very next play. We have done that a few times this year and it was big for us to answer."

The Wildcats got a good performance from their defense as Hill led Louisburg with nine tackles on the night and Moore was right behind him with eight. Louisburg was able to limit Fort Scott to 181 yards of total offense with three injured cornerbacks, but reserves Desmond Doles and Brayden Gage filled in well.

Louisburg will need to get healthier this Friday when it hosts Ottawa on senior night. The Cyclones defeated Paola 38-7 in their opener.

"We just have to get better," Griffin said. "We have struggled with spread teams this year and Ottawa is going to spread you out. They will just pick you apart so we are going to have to get to work at practice. We are going to have to get some kids healthy. Our top three corners are banged up and didn't play much. I thought Desmond and Brayden played well for being first time starters."

FS	0	0	6	0 – 6
LOU	14	14	7	0 – 35

First quarter

L: Grant Harding 3 run (kick failed)

L: Austin Moore 3 run (Harding run)

Second quarter

L: Korbin Hankinson 68 pass from Harding (kick failed)

L: Thomas San Agustin 19 run (Dalton Ribordy from Harding)

Third quarter

F: Brady Tourtillott 13 pass from Jesse Jones (kick failed)

L: San Agustin 35 run (Nick Hull kick)

STATISTICS

OFFENSE

RUSHING – Thomas San Agustin 10-109; Austin Moore 15-92; Jake Hill 4-39; Will Ridley 5-34; Grant Harding 4-25; Owen Staver 1-5; Blue Caplinger 1-3.

PASSING – Grant Harding 4-16-131

RECEIVING – Korbin Hankinson 3-112; Thomas San Agustin 1-19

DEFENSE

TACKLES – Jake Hill 9, Austin Moore 8, Mason Koechner 5, Nick Hull 4, Will Ridley 2, Dustyn Rizzo 2, T.J. Dover 2, Desmond Doles 2, Grant Harding 1, Thomas San Agustin 1, Kiefer Tucker 1.

FORCED FUMBLE – T.J. Dover

FUMBLE RECOVERY – Austin Moore