

Wildcats down Eudora on senior night



Louisburg senior Noah Juarez dribbles past a Eudora defender Thursday in Louisburg. Juarez scored one of the Wildcats' two goals in their 2-1 win over the Cardinals to move their record to 10-4 on the year.

One by one, the eight Louisburg seniors were introduced in front of the crowd Thursday before the Wildcats' match with Eudora.

Jacob Benne, Calvin Cassida, Curran Conklin, Noah Juarez, Herman Knipp, Ty Martin, Kolten Ragan and manager Madisen Simpson were all recognized with their parents during senior night activities. It was night four years in the making.

As special as the pregame festivities were for the players, the result from the match made the night even better.

Louisburg jumped on Eudora early and was able to hold on for a 2-1 victory to run the Wildcats' record to 10-4 on the season. Senior Noah Juarez scored the first goal on a penalty kick, while junior Raistlin Brewer added a goal early in the second half to help give the Wildcats the win.



The Louisburg soccer seniors are (front row, from left) manager Madisen Simpson, Ty Martin, Curran Conklin, Jacob Benne; (back row) Calvin Cassida, Kolten Ragan, Herman Knipp and Noah Juarez.

"It was big and we needed the win," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I think we played better than the 2-1 score, we just had a tough time finishing and we couldn't get the ball in the net. Eudora's goalie made some big saves too. We had countless breakaways and he always seemed to be in the right place.

"At the same time we need to find the back of the net. It keeps the team in it, they start believing then they get a goal with 14 minutes to go and it is anyone's game. It is one of the games that was tighter than it needed to be."

The positive result made for a good night for all involved, including the seven senior players as they know their time playing in their home stadium is coming to an end.

"This was definitely special," Juarez said. "Playing on varsity since my freshman year, I didn't get to play with some of my classmates right away, but this year playing with all of them has really meant a lot to me and has been fun. We are all talking together, making decisions and I think it is good to not have one set leader. I think the whole team looks up to us and that is how it should be."

Junior midfielder Grant Ryals nearly gave the Wildcats a two-goal lead early in the contest, but his first shot sailed just wide of the goal. The second shot he took from 25 yards away, hit off a Eudora defender and then off the crossbar midway through the first half.

In the 28th minute, it was a pair of Wildcat seniors who teamed up to help give them a lead on senior night. Cassida received a pass in the box, and as he made a move toward the goal, he was fouled.

The foul set up a penalty kick for Juarez and he connected for a 1-0 lead for Louisburg and it stayed that way at halftime.

It didn't take long after halftime for the Wildcats to find the back of the net again. Brewer got a pass from sophomore Jonathan Ventre and shot it past the Eudora goalie for a 2-0 lead.

Eudora managed to get back in it as the Cardinals continue to pressure Louisburg as it got a couple shots on goal and converted one with a goal with 13 minutes left. Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan also turned away a couple shots to keep the Wildcats in front.



Ty Martin looks up field on a breakaway opportunity at home Thursday against Eudora.

"We couldn't find feet and do anything right it seemed in that second half, but we were able to stick together," Juarez said. "Our biggest problem is we couldn't feet and we stopped talking, but we got the win and that is important."

Conley was also happy to see his senior class go out with a win on senior night.

"It is a special group," he said. "They all have a great attitudes and work ethics for the most part and they came ready to go. They keep it light, even when I get mad, they do a good job of cutting it up a little bit and taking the stress off. At the same time, when it is time to work they are ready to work. They are accountable, good young men, honest and you

can't ask for a better group."

Louisburg will play its final regular season home match tonight when it hosts Spring Hill at 6 p.m., in a makeup contest. The Wildcats will finish the regular season Thursday in Ottawa.

"We are still fighting for a 2 or 3 seed in the region and some wins will help us get there," Conley said. "We have to get the win and get to 11 or 12 wins and see what happen. Eleven or 12 wins is a really good regular season and that was our goal at the beginning of the year."

Wildcats fall in Baldwin

The Louisburg boys soccer team was hoping for a sweep of Baldwin on Oct. 11 when the Wildcats traveled to Baldwin City.

Unfortunately, the Wildcats were unable to dig themselves out of an early hole in a 2-1 loss to Baldwin. The Bulldogs scored a first half goal to grab a 1-0 lead at halftime and then scored on an own goal on a corner kick early in the second half.

Senior Noah Juarez broke up the shutout late in the second half with a goal, but the Wildcats couldn't get closer. The Wildcat defense played well as they limited the Bulldogs to three shots on goal

"It was frustrating, but the boys did play well," Conley said. "We just didn't finish. We possessed the ball well, had lots of chances, but unfortunately we couldn't finish our chances. We had three to four breakaway opportunities that we could not capitalize on. The conditions were extremely wet and it was difficult for both teams to use the width of the field. The boys worked hard though."