

Eight Wildcats selected to all-league soccer team



Louisburg senior Noah Juarez (left) and junior Grant Ryals were both named to the all-Frontier League first team recently as they were two of eight Wildcats selected to the squad when the list was released last week.

Fresh off a run to its first state semifinal appearance in program history, the Louisburg High School boys soccer team is starting to reap rewards from what was a successful season.

The Wildcats finished near the top of the Frontier League standings this year after winning only four games in the regular season a year ago. That turnaround caught the eye of the rest of their opponents and the league coaches rewarded them for it.

Louisburg earned eight spots on the all-Frontier League team that was released last week following the Wildcats' run in the state tournament that left them with a fourth place finish in Class 4-1A.

The Wildcats had the most all-league selections in the Frontier League and league champion Spring Hill was second with seven.

Midfielders Noah Juarez and Grant Ryals garnered first team honors, while defenders Jacob Benne, Kristopher Light and

goalie Ambrose Stefan were named to the second team. Forward Herman Knipp, midfielder Landon Johnson and defender Curran Conklin were selected as honorable mentions.

“It was extremely gratifying to see this,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “This was kind of icing on the cake for the boys. They all worked so hard and to be acknowledged by the other league coaches was impressive. The boys did a lot of great things this year and it was really nice to get the credit they so deserved.”

Juarez was one of the top scorers in the Frontier League as he finished the season with 18 goals and seven assists and filled up the stat sheet on a lot nights. Ryals was the opposite of Juarez as he had five goals and four assists on the season, but was invaluable to what the Wildcats were trying to accomplish.

“Noah had his best season statistically in his career,” Conley said. “He fit the system I put in place perfectly and he excelled at attacking midfielder. He has had a great attitude and was a leader for us this year.

“Grant played defensive midfielder for us and did a lot of the ugly jobs. At defensive midfielder your stats aren’t always going to stand out, but he did the dirty jobs. He had a great work ethic and provided a lot of structure for our team. He was also one who did a great job starting our possession.”



Junior Kristopher Light (left), junior Ambrose Stefan (center) and senior Jacob Benne were named to the all-league second team.

Louisburg's defense was a big part of the Wildcats' success this season and many of them were rewarded for their efforts. Benne and Conklin turned away several opportunities from the outside back spot, while Light cleaned up the middle of the field. In goal, Stefan provided the Wildcats with many big saves on the season.

"It was great to see the progress that Jacob, Curran, Ambrose and Kris made this year and their focus to improve," Conley said. "I was extremely pleased with how much they improved and the leadership they provided to our team. They had great and positive attitudes and were a major asset to our success. The defense did a great job holding our team together and keeping us in the game. They exceeded our expectations and were excellent in the back for us. It was really nice that the league took notice."



Senior Curran Conklin (left), freshman Landon Johnson (center) and senior Herman Knipp were named as all-league honorable mentions.

Knipp, a senior, was second on the Wildcat team with 10 goals to go along with three assists on the year from the forward position to earn the honorable mention honor. As a freshman, Johnson also made a big impression on the coaches with four goals and two assists at the midfield spot.

Knipp scored the game's lone goal in the Wildcats' 1-0 state quarterfinal win over Trinity Academy, while Johnson also had a goal that tied eventual league champion Spring Hill late in the regular season.

"With as talented as our league is offensively, it was fantastic to see them acknowledge Herman and Landon," Conley said. "They both had really good years and scored some big goals for us. I think Herman's goal could be the most important goal in the history of our program. Landon's goal against Spring Hill could also be one of the top five of our program's history as well. Both kids were talented and excelled in their own ways.

"I could not be happier for this group. These individual awards could not be possible without their teammates. I feel that our team finishing fourth in state just proves this. It was a fantastic season and I could not be happier for a group

of young men.”

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOCCER

FIRST TEAM

Noah Juarez, Louisburg, senior

Lucas Moore, Spring Hill, senior

Keegan Finch, Ottawa, senior

Ethan Rodriguez, De Soto, junior

Grant Ryals, Louisburg, junior

Daniel Hidalgo, Spring Hill, senior

Lorenzo Noguiera, Spring Hill, senior

Andrew Dowdy, De Soto, senior

Carson Brier, De Soto, sophomore

Blayne Chapman, Baldwin, junior

GOALIE – Killian Beck, Spring Hill, senior

SECOND TEAM

Ellis Baughan, Baldwin, senior

Sam Campbell, Eudora, senior

Daniel Apple, De Soto, sophomore

Andrew Soph, Ottawa, senior

Ryan Wokutch, Paola, freshman

Jacob Benne, Louisburg, senior

Bryce Towles, Spring Hill, junior

Kristopher Light, Louisburg, junior

Keenan Powell, Spring Hill, senior

Noah Buckley, Baldwin, senior

GOALIE – Ambrose Stefan, Louisburg, junior

HONORABLE MENTION

Caleb Othick, Spring Hill, senior

Curran Conklin, Louisburg, senior

Jon Bock, Eudora, junior

Dylan Jamison, Baldwin, sophomore

Andrew Goodman, De Soto, junior

Zane Muhl, Ottawa, senior

Herman Knipp, Louisburg, senior

Byron Fangman, Ottawa, senior

Landon Johnson, Louisburg, freshman

GOALIE – Bret Folks, Eudora, senior