

Louisburg hopes to slow high-powered Bishop Miege



Running back Austin Moore gets a handoff from quarterback Grant Harding and waits to get blocks from teammates Jake Hill (24) and Thomas San Agustin (12) last week in Independence. The Wildcats will host Bishop Miege tonight in the Class 4A Division I sectional round of the state playoffs.

On paper, tonight's game with Bishop Miege might seem like a daunting task – but the Louisburg football team isn't looking at it that way.

Sure, the Stags are the No. 1 team in Class 4A-Division I and are considered one of the best teams in the state. They have rolled through the district and regional playoffs, and despite the odds, the Wildcats are excited for the matchup.

“We are looking forward to it,” Louisburg senior Korbin Hankinson said. “They are a tough team and everyone knows they are going to come in ready to go. We will see what happens and we have to come ready to play.”

The Wildcats will host Bishop Miege at 7 p.m., tonight at Wildcat Stadium in the sectional round of the Class 4A Division I state playoffs. Louisburg has turned in its best season in four years as it won its first playoff game since 2012 last week in a 20-0 victory over Independence.

The Stags will be a handful for Louisburg as the Wildcats will try and contain their high-powered offense. Miego quarterback Carter Putz, who has committed to play baseball at Notre Dame, has thrown for more than 2,000 yards on the season and close to 40 touchdowns.

Many of those scores have been to receivers Jafar Armstrong, a Missouri commitment, and Landry Weber. The two Stag receivers each have more than 900 yards receiving on the season and both have 15 touchdowns.

Miego (9-1) also features a freshman running back in Brison Collins, who has more than 600 yards on the ground and has seven touchdowns.

Throughout the playoffs, Miego has outscored its four opponents 222-19, including three shutouts.

"They are very explosive on offense," Louisburg co-head coach Gary Griffin said. "We need to try to limit those big plays and make them drive the ball. It is great to play at home and we have done well there this year, outside of one game. We need to play our best game and hope for some breaks."



Linebacker Nick Hull holds an Independence running back by the jersey as lineman Mason Koechner looks to clean up the play during a game last week in Independence.

For the Wildcats offensively, they will try and do their part to keep the Miego offense off the field. Louisburg hopes to put together some long drives and limit the Stags' chances at the endzone.

The Wildcats (8-2) are hoping to get a push from their offensive line of Dalton Frazier, Mason Koechner, T.J. Dover, Dustyn Rizzo and Garrett Lowry, and have their four running backs – Thomas San Agustin, Austin Moore, Jake Hill and Korbin Hankinson – chip away at the Stag defense.

Louisburg also hopes to get some big plays from quarterback Grant Harding, who has connected with Hankinson on several big

pass plays this season.

“Miege is solid everywhere,” Griffin said. “We are hoping that our power game is something that they have not seen a lot of this year. We have more size than they do on their defensive line so we are hoping that we can move them around a little bit, and try to move the chains. We are going to have to make some explosive plays on offense or on special teams and hopefully create some turnovers.”