

Koechner leads Wildcats with heavyweight title



Louisburg senior Mason Koechner works for a pin during the Baldwin Invitational Tournament on Saturday at Baldwin High School. Koechner won the 285-pound title with a 4-0 record on the day.

BALDWIN CITY – It didn't matter where his opponents were ranked, Mason Koechner treated them all the same – he threw them to the mat and handed them a loss.

Koechner, the No. 2 ranked heavyweight in Class 4A, rolled through two ranked opponents on his way to the 285-pound championship Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational. The Louisburg High School senior was one of eight wrestlers to finish in the top eight in what was a difficult tournament.

The Wildcats had their best finish at the tournament in recent history as they finished seventh in the team standings with 115 points. The Baldwin Invitational featured three ranked teams in Class 4A, along with several state-ranked individuals.

"The Baldwin Invitational has become one of the toughest tournaments in the state in many ways," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Coach (Kit) Harris of Baldwin designed it to be a Class 4A showcase leading up to regionals and state. Each year, he adds some of the toughest 4A schools he can find.

This year they added Buhler and Clay Center. Last year they added Burlington. There are state-ranked wrestlers in each weight, and some of the finals are definitely sneak previews of the state championships.

"Each year we go there, we do better. Our seventh place finish there this year is the highest we've ever finished in the six years we've been going to it. Throw in the fact that our starting 138 was out with the flu and our 132 defaulted to 6th place with a broken nose, we could have done even better. That's what's been exciting about this year. We haven't truly been at full strength, and without our full squad, we're having some great weekends."

Koechner improved his record to 27-1 on the season as he pinned Eudora's Tristen Brecheisen and Basehor-Linwood's Victor Bejarano in a combined 1 minute and 44 seconds. He then squared off with Holton's Kyler Tannahill in the semifinals, who was ranked in the all-class rankings at 285, and Koechner pinned him in a minute.

The Louisburg senior faced off with Santa Fe Trail's Jake Hastings for the second time in a week and again Koechner came out on top. He defeated the No. 5 heavyweight in Class 4A by a 5-0 decision after winning by a 6-1 decision the week earlier.

"I see Mason moving forward each week with more and more confidence," Bovaird said. "This weekend he saw a Holton kid who was in the all-class rankings and then he had a rematch with Hastings of Santa Fe Trail. Both of those matches were great for Mason. He showed a lot of great positioning on his feet in that match, and he was dominant on top through the second and third periods."



Junior Thad Hendrix tries to put an opponent on his back Saturday in Baldwin.

Junior Thad Hendrix also found his way to the medal stand as he finished third at 106 pounds. Hendrix went 3-1 on the day and improved his record to 21-6 on the year.

Hendrix opened up with a pin of Osawatomie's Amanda Newcomb and then advanced to the semifinals against Santa Fe Trail's Aaron Buterakos, where he lost an 8-4 decision.

He bounced back with a pin of Tonganoxie's Caleb Allen to advance to the third place match and then pinned Osawatomie's Jacob Hollman in 22 seconds to take third. His victory against Hollman avenged a loss from earlier in the season.

"Thad had three rematches this weekend," Bovaird said. "He'd lost to the Santa Fe Trail kid at Parsons. It was a close match until that kid got on top. He's just a strong top

wrestler. This time around, it still didn't end up good for Thad. He got caught on bottom and gave up some crucial back points. The Tonganoxie kid is just a scrappy wrestler who doesn't quit moving. He gave Thad fits at the Louisburg meet, but this time around, Thad kept a slow tempo and wrestled the match at his own pace.

"In the consolation finals, he got to see the Osawatomie kid again – the same kid who had beaten him 11-10 in the first match of the year. Thad had been cutting weight at that point, and you could tell when he ran out of gas. In the rematch, it was a totally different story."

Senior Nathan Keegan (120 pounds), junior Kyle Allen (126), sophomore Austin Moore (170) and senior Austin Raetzel each came in fifth, just one spot shy of reaching the medal stand.

Junior Tucker Batten (132) had to default to sixth place with a broken nose and sophomore Blue Caplinger (160) also took sixth. Senior Ben Hupp (182) finished in eighth.

Each wrestler picked up big victories that will benefit them later in the season.

"Lots of guys came up with crucial wins against regional opponents this weekend," Bovaird said. "What that means down the road is that when we get to the regional seeding meeting, we'll be able to have criteria over some key opponents and that will help us get higher seeds in the brackets."

"Thad got a key revenge win against Osawatomie, and Kyle got two wins against a Burlington opponent who is a pretty solid wrestler. Blue got a key win against Burlington, and Austin Moore got a big win against his Osawatomie opponent."

Due to the fact the Wildcats have had two tournaments canceled this season due to weather, they were able to add an event to their schedule. Louisburg will host Doniphan West, Harmon, Lawrence and Ottawa in a dual format Friday.

The Wildcats will open the duals against Doniphan West at 5 p.m., will take a break and then dual Harmon in the third round.

Today, the Wildcats travel to Lawrence for a dual with Lawrence High School.

"I'm feeling pretty good about how everyone is doing," Bovaird said. "We just need to stay healthy. We have three non-league duals coming up against Lawrence, Doniphan West, and JC Harmon, and then we have the Frontier League Duals. Paola is the only league school in our regional, too, so we've set the tone for how we'll match up at regionals."

BIT TEAM SCORES

1. Clay Center 186.5, 2. Santa Fe Trail 176.0, 3. Basehor Linwood 159.5, 4. Burlington 131.0, 5. Tonganoxie 128.0, 6. Holton 124.5, 7. Louisburg 115.0, 8. Buhler 112.0, 9. Goodland 102.0, 10. Prairie View 94.0, 11. Spring Hill 90.5, 12. Smoky Valley 80.0, 13. De Soto 73.0, 14. Baldwin 56.0, 15. Osawatomie 35.0, 16. Wamego 19.0, 17. Eudora 17.0, 18. Rock Creek 6.0

LOUISBURG RESULTS

106 – Thad Hendrix (21-6) placed 3rd and scored 20.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Thad Hendrix (Louisburg) 21-6 received a bye
() (Bye)

Quarterfinal – Thad Hendrix (Louisburg) 21-6 won by fall over Amanda Newcomb (Osawatomie) 7-6 (Fall 0:41)

Semifinal – Aaron Buterakos (Santa Fe Trail) 18-3 won by decision over Thad Hendrix (Louisburg) 21-6 (Dec 8-4)

Cons. Round 3 – Thad Hendrix (Louisburg) 21-6 won by fall over

Caleb Allen (Tonganoxie) 10-10 (Fall 2:14)

3rd Place Match – Thad Hendrix (Louisburg) 21-6 won by fall over Jacob Hollman (Osawatomie) 14-8 (Fall 0:22)

120 – Nathan Keegan (10-4) placed 5th and scored 13.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Nathan Keegan (Louisburg) 10-4 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal – Nathan Keegan (Louisburg) 10-4 won by fall over Parker Johnson (Spring Hill) 5-17 (Fall 0:36)

Semifinal – Kasey Stramel (Goodland) 22-10 won by decision over Nathan Keegan (Louisburg) 10-4 (Dec 2-1)

Cons. Round 3 – Kolby Roush (Holton) 12-8 won by fall over Nathan Keegan (Louisburg) 10-4 (Fall 3:31)

5th Place Match – Nathan Keegan (Louisburg) 10-4 won by fall over Gus Buterakos (Santa Fe Trail) 3-7 (Fall 1:53)

126 – Kyle Allen (14-9) placed 5th and scored 9.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Kyle Allen (Louisburg) 14-9 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal – Kyle Allen (Louisburg) 14-9 won by decision over T.T. Totty (Burlington) 21-8 (Dec 5-3)

Semifinal – Tate Withington (Goodland) 29-0 won by fall over Kyle Allen (Louisburg) 14-9 (Fall 0:33)

Cons. Round 3 – Ty Judd (Basehor-Linwood) 16-15 won by fall over Kyle Allen (Louisburg) 14-9 (Fall 0:56)

5th Place Match – Kyle Allen (Louisburg) 14-9 won by decision over T.T. Totty (Burlington) 21-8 (Dec 2-0)

132 – Tucker Batten (16-9) placed 6th and scored 6.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Tucker Batten (Louisburg) 16-9 won by decision over Jimmy Mauch (Smoky Valley) 2-5 (Dec 8-4)

Quarterfinal – Cael Johnson (Burlington) 28-4 won by decision over Tucker Batten (Louisburg) 16-9 (Dec 5-0)

Cons. Round 2 – Tucker Batten (Louisburg) 16-9 won by decision over Trajan McCormick (Spring Hill) 18-13 (Dec 11-6)

Cons. Round 3 – Korbin Riedel (Tonganoxie) 25-4 won by injury default over Tucker Batten (Louisburg) 16-9 (Inj. 0:00)

5th Place Match – Reed Knitter (Clay Center) 17-12 won by injury default over Tucker Batten (Louisburg) 16-9 (Inj. 0:00)

138 – Dillon Keegan (3-8) place is unknown and scored 0.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Adler Pierson (Wamego) 19-11 won by major decision over Dillon Keegan (Louisburg) 3-8 (MD 18-4)

Cons. Round 1 – Wyatt Dickie (Spring Hill) 7-14 won by fall over Dillon Keegan (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 5:00)

145 – Dylan Meyer (13-14) place is unknown and scored 3.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Christian Norton (Spring Hill) 22-10 won by decision over Dylan Meyer (Louisburg) 13-14 (Dec 11-6)

Cons. Round 1 – Dylan Meyer (Louisburg) 13-14 won by fall over Michael Lynn (De Soto) 9-17 (Fall 4:58)

Cons. Round 2 – Cameron Osborne (Clay Center) 11-12 won by fall over Dylan Meyer (Louisburg) 13-14 (Fall 3:50)

152 – Alec Maler (2-11) place is unknown and scored 0.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Colton Rice (Prairie View) 14-10 won by fall over Alec Maler (Louisburg) 2-11 (Fall 1:17)

Cons. Round 1 – Alec Maler (Louisburg) 2-11 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 2 – Keaton Rudolph (Goodland) 14-9 won by decision over Alec Maler (Louisburg) 2-11 (Dec 3-2)

160 – Blue Caplinger (13-14) placed 6th and scored 10.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Blue Caplinger (Louisburg) 13-14 won by fall over Josh Willcutt (Basehor-Linwood) 18-16 (Fall 0:49)

Quarterfinal – Hunter Mullin (Clay Center) 26-1 won by major decision over Blue Caplinger (Louisburg) 13-14 (MD 17-4)

Cons. Round 2 – Blue Caplinger (Louisburg) 13-14 won by fall over Nik Alfors (Burlington) 22-11 (Fall 4:13)

Cons. Round 3 – Trey Isenhower (Prairie View) 26-5 won by decision over Blue Caplinger (Louisburg) 13-14 (Dec 10-5)
5th Place Match – Scott Harman (Baldwin) 19-11 won by tech fall over Blue Caplinger (Louisburg) 13-14 (TF-1.5 0:00 (16-1))

170 – Austin Moore (23-5) placed 5th and scored 10.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Austin Moore (Louisburg) 23-5 won by decision over Jake Wynn (Clay Center) 8-11 (Dec 7-0)

Quarterfinal – Nate Panagakis (De Soto) 33-4 won by fall over Austin Moore (Louisburg) 23-5 (Fall 4:32)

Cons. Round 2 – Austin Moore (Louisburg) 23-5 won by decision over Devin Duncan (Tonganoxie) 21-6 (Dec 9-6)

Cons. Round 3 – TJ Williams (Basehor-Linwood) 10-6 won by fall over Austin Moore (Louisburg) 23-5 (Fall 2:04)

5th Place Match – Austin Moore (Louisburg) 23-5 won by fall over Cody Hazlett (Osawatomie) 13-6 (Fall 2:47)

182 – Owen Staver (5-5) place is unknown.

Champ. Round 1 – Dylan Voigts (Baldwin) 19-10 won by decision over Owen Staver (Louisburg) 5-5 (Dec 8-2)

Cons. Round 1 – Owen Staver (Louisburg) 5-5 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 2 – Owen Staver (Louisburg) 5-5 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 3 – Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 won by decision over Owen Staver (Louisburg) 5-5 (Dec 6-4)

182 – Ben Hupp (15-13) placed 8th and scored 6.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 won by fall over Hunter Parish (Basehor-Linwood) 1-8 (Fall 3:08)

Quarterfinal – Beck Elliott (Smoky Valley) 20-4 won by fall over Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 (Fall 5:35)

Cons. Round 2 – Zach Norton (Spring Hill) 7-4 won by major decision over Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 (MD 12-3)

Cons. Round 3 – Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 won by decision over Owen Staver (Louisburg) 5-5 (Dec 6-4)

7th Place Match – Dylan Voigts (Baldwin) 19-10 won by decision over Ben Hupp (Louisburg) 15-13 (Dec 6-2)

195 – Austin Raetzel (19-9) placed 5th and scored 10.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Austin Raetzel (Louisburg) 19-9 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal – Cameron Gray (Goodland) 23-7 won by fall over Austin Raetzel (Louisburg) 19-9 (Fall 5:28)

Cons. Round 2 – Austin Raetzel (Louisburg) 19-9 won by fall over Kolton McCrary (Tonganoxie) 6-20 (Fall 0:52)

Cons. Round 3 – Allan Wampler (Smoky Valley) 16-8 won by fall over Austin Raetzel (Louisburg) 19-9 (Fall 3:15)

5th Place Match – Austin Raetzel (Louisburg) 19-9 won by fall over Connor Searcy (Tonganoxie) 6-6 (Fall 4:03)

220 – Terry Allen (8-13) place is unknown and scored 0.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Thomas Garcia (Basehor-Linwood) 21-14 won by fall over Terry Allen (Louisburg) 8-13 (Fall 0:47)

Cons. Round 1 – Jacob Miller (Tonganoxie) 4-14 won by decision over Terry Allen (Louisburg) 8-13 (Dec 9-2)

285 – Mason Koechner (27-1) placed 1st and scored 28.00 team points.

Champ. Round 1 – Mason Koechner (Louisburg) 27-1 won by fall over Tristen Brecheisen (Eudora) 1-10 (Fall 0:29)

Quarterfinal – Mason Koechner (Louisburg) 27-1 won by fall over Victor Bejarano (Basehor-Linwood) 19-13 (Fall 1:15)

Semifinal – Mason Koechner (Louisburg) 27-1 won by fall over Kyler Tannahill (Holton) 23-5 (Fall 1:00)

1st Place Match – Mason Koechner (Louisburg) 27-1 won by decision over Jake Hastings (Santa Fe Trail) 26-2 (Dec 5-0)