

Wildcat wrestling racks up more dual wins



Louisburg junior Tucker Batten works for a pin against a Doniphan West opponent Friday at Louisburg High School. The Wildcats defeated Doniphan West and Harmon to improve their record to 14-1 on the season.

It may not totally replace two lost tournaments, but Friday's duals with Doniphan West and Harmon were just what the Louisburg High School wrestling team wanted.

The Wildcats had no problems in the 69-3 victory over Doniphan West and 69-9 win over Harmon at Louisburg High School. The duals gave the Wildcat wrestlers some mat time and extra matches that were lost from canceled tournaments earlier in the year.

The wins also pushed the Wildcats' dual record to 14-1 on the season, the second-most victories since the program started during the 1969-70 season.

"It has been a phenomenal season so far," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "I'd hoped to get more teams involved for Friday night's event. As it was, the only takers right off the bat were Ottawa, Lawrence, Doniphan West and Harmon. We'd just recently seen both Lawrence and Ottawa, but we didn't want to turn them away, so we worked out a rotation where we each got two duals for the night. Our guys looked good against

Doniphan West and Harmon. Both are young teams, but I was glad how most of the team approached the duals. They wrestled tough and smart."

Against Doniphan West, junior Thad Hendrix opened the dual at 106 pounds with a 6-5 decision to get the Wildcats started. Nathan Keegan (120), Kyle Allen (126), Tucker Batten (132) and Ryan Adams (138) followed with pins.

After a pair of forfeits from Doniphan West, Austin Moore (170), Ben Hupp (195) and Mason Koechner (285) recorded pins of their own to complete the victory.

The Wildcats once again started strong, this time against Harmon. Hendrix opened the dual with a pin and Keegan followed up with a pin of his own. Allen recorded a 9-2 decision for a win at 126, while Batten and Alec Maler (145) added a pin to give Louisburg a 33-0 lead.

Blue Caplinger (160) and Hupp recorded pins to go along with a slew of forfeits to secure the team's second win of the night.

Earlier in the week, Louisburg traveled to Lawrence High School for a dual on Feb. 1 and left with a 42-30 win over the Class 6A program.

The Wildcats found themselves down early when Hendrix was pinned in the 113-pound match, but Keegan won by forfeit to tie it up and Allen responded to win 8-6 in overtime. The lead changed hands a couple different times, but the Wildcats crept back in it after Adams won a wild 18-17 decision at 138 pounds.



Louisburg junior Kyle Allen picks up the leg of an opponent and drives him backward Friday in a 126-pound match.

Senior Dylan Meyer won by pin at 152 pounds and Caplinger did the same at 160 to put the Wildcats in front 24-18. Lawrence responded with a pair of pins to go up six, but Hupp and Austin Raetzel (220) each won by pin to take the lead back and Koechner won by forfeit to seal the win.

The season gets much more difficult for the Wildcats coming up as they will compete in postseason tournaments the next three weeks.

Louisburg gets it started Friday when it travels to the Frontier League Dual Tournament at De Soto High School, which

will also run into Saturday. The Wildcats won the league crown last season for the first time in 19 years and hope to do the same this time around.

“I’m excited for the first step of the ‘Championship Series,’ with the Frontier League Duals,” Bovaird said. “Only one of our league schools is in our regional, so it’s good that we’re not having to wrestle all these teams one week and then turning around and having to wrestle them again the next week. We’ll have a chance to defend our league title and continue to come together as a team before heading into regionals.”

The Wildcats will travel to Frontenac on Feb. 17 and 18 for the Class 4A regional tournament. If all goes well there, several could wrestle in the Class 4A state tournament in Salina on Feb. 24 and 25.