

Big innings hurt Wildcat baseball against Eudora



Louisburg pitcher Grant Harding fields a ground ball and prepares to make a throw to first base while teammate Ben LaJoie backs up the play Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park.

The Louisburg High School baseball team had its best offensive performance of the season in its doubleheader Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, Eudora had an even better one.

Eudora scored 12 runs in each game and pulled away for a 12-9 and 12-6 win to sweep the Wildcats. Louisburg gave up one big inning in each contest, which proved to be the difference.

“We struggled to get outs in several innings and it cost us big,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “We lost focus on the little things and those little mistakes added up. Like a snowball rolling down the mountain, we’ve been riding the momentum when we are up, and been knocked down when things are going against us.”

In the opener, the Wildcats had to play from behind early on as Eudora scored three in the first inning off pitcher Dalton Stone to take the lead. Louisburg rallied to score two in the third inning and had five-run fourth inning to grab an 8-3 lead.

Garrett Caldwell opened the inning with a single and Stone followed it up with a double. After a Sam Guetterman walk, Korbin Hankinson and Blake Ruder singled to keep the inning going.

Louisburg also took advantage of five Eudora errors to jump in front and it seemed to have everything going its way – until the next inning, anyway.

Eudora exploded for nine runs in the top of the fifth inning on eight hits and two walks as the Wildcats (1-5) quickly saw their lead disappear.

Hankinson led the Louisburg bats with a three-hit game, including a double and an RBI. Grant Harding and Caldwell also had a pair of hits for the Wildcats, while Ruder finished with a team-high 2 RBIs.

“Offensively, we had our best performance of the season,” McGhee said. “We got runners on, moved them around the bases, and plated runs. We are developing a better approach at the plate, but still have a few kinks to workout. We had multiple guys come up with key hits that kept innings going. As a team, we thrive on the energy that we get from those innings, but we’ve got to find a way to sustain it.”

The Wildcats pounded out 12 hits in the second game, but trailed 7-1 in the sixth. Louisburg got back into the game in the bottom of the inning as it scored five runs.

Harding opened the inning on a single and scored on a double by Nate Swenson. After a Mitchell Drew single, both runners scored on a Ben LaJoie single to cut the Eudora lead to 7-4.

Eudora issued back to back walks to Beckett Rasmussen and Stone to load the bases, Hankinson singled home a pair of runs to make it 7-6.

After cutting the Cardinal lead to one, Louisburg committed

back-to-back errors to start the seventh, which led to five Eudora runs and put the game out of reach.

Five Wildcats had a multi-hit game and Swenson led the Louisburg bats with three hits and 2 RBIs. Hankinson and LaJoie each had two hits and 2 RBIs, while Drew and Harding also finished with a pair of hits.

Louisburg returns to action today when it hosts Wellsville for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Lewis-Young Park.