

Wildcats end losing streak with win over Baldwin



Louisburg senior Quincy Rice heads the ball near the goal Tuesday during the Wildcats' game with Baldwin in Louisburg. The Wildcats ended a two-game losing streak with a 4-2 win over Baldwin.

Going into Tuesday's game with Baldwin, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team was dealing with something none of them had felt before.

For the first time in program history, the Wildcats were on a losing streak – albeit only two games. Still, it made head coach Kyle Conley wonder how his team was going to respond.

The Wildcats didn't let him down.

Although both teams combined for five goals in the first half, the Louisburg defense tightened up in the second half and added a goal to get a 4-2 win over Baldwin at the Wildcat Sports Complex.

"Baldwin is a very aggressive and physical team, but I think our kids responded and did a nice job," Conley said. "It was really good for us to get a positive result, considering the losing streak was a first for us. Baldwin was a team that was ranked No. 1 in our region prior to the game, so for us to come out and play as hard as we did was fantastic. I loved how

aggressive we played to match their intensity.”

Louisburg (6-3-1) was especially aggressive on the offensive end and Baldwin had a tough time keeping up with the Wildcats’ speed – more specifically – Mackenzie Scholtz.

The freshman forward outran the Baldwin back line, which led to a couple one-on-one opportunities with the Baldwin goalie. Scholtz took advantage of that as she scored two goals and assisted on another to lead the Wildcats.

“Mackenzie has been playing really well and really buying into my philosophy,” Conley said. “She is moving a ton off of the ball and playing very simple. She has been getting better each and every game. Her greatest quality might be how she gets everyone else involved in the game. When our attack buys into the game plan by moving the ball quickly and moving off the ball, we are really tough to stop.”

Scholtz used her speed and got the Wildcats on the board early as she scored four minutes into the contest, but Baldwin responded with a goal of its own to tie the match with 13 minutes remaining in the first half.

In between that time, Louisburg junior Bailey Belcher had a chance to put the Wildcats up even more as she had two shots that went just wide and another when she was taken down in the box on shot, but no call was made.

A minute after Baldwin scored the tying goal, Scholtz responded as she got a through ball from Belcher and beat the Bulldog defense for a goal, then with seven minutes left in the first half, Belcher scored on a shot from an assist from Scholtz to make it 3-1.

It appeared the Wildcats were going to go into halftime with a two-goal lead, but Baldwin made two long passes up the field and managed to get a goal with 27 seconds left.

Louisburg's defense didn't allow the Bulldog players to get behind them in the second half as it limited the Bulldogs' shots on goal and never threatened to give up its lead.

"Defensively we are still working on our communication," Conley said. "I felt the girls did a very nice job in the second half talking and having each other covered. We struggled at first with their formation, but after a few adjustments I felt we were really strong in the back. We had depth and were able to support our outside backs a lot more. We will keep working and keep getting better."

Belcher sealed the win for Louisburg late in the second half as she made a defender miss at the top of the box and then struck the ball with her left foot for her second goal of the game with four minutes remaining.



Freshman Erin Lemke kicks the ball away from a Baldwin player Tuesday. Lemke recorded an assist in the win.

The Wildcat offense had more than 10 shots on goal in the game and put pressure on the Baldwin defense. Along with Scholtz and Belcher, Louisburg also got a good performance out of its midfielders, especially from Erin Lemke. The Louisburg freshman recorded an assist and started several runs toward

the goal

"I think the midfield did a very nice job of playing as a unit and keeping us spread out," Conley said. "It made it difficult for them to mark us and swarm the ball defensively. The midfielders did a very nice job in the second half of the Basehor game and for the majority of this game of moving the ball and moving to find space. We struggle when we stand and makes us way too easy to defend.

"Erin has been playing really well right now. She is always looking to get teammates involved and works her tail off. I am very pleased with how much she has improved and how hard she plays."

Louisburg returns to action at 4:30 today for a makeup game with Piper in Louisburg. They will finish a game that was postponed, in which the Wildcats have a 3-0 lead with 10 minutes left in the first half.

Wildcats come up short on the road

The last time Louisburg faced off with Basehor-Linwood was in the regional championship game a year ago.

The Wildcats left with their first regional championship and they hoped to have the same result last Friday in Basehor. Unfortunately, the Bobcats got their revenge as they held on for a 2-1 win over Louisburg.

Basehor-Linwood scored two first half goals to take an early lead, but the Wildcats responded in the second half and got several shots on the goal. One of them went in on a goal from Savannah Reinhart, thanks to an assist from Mackenzie Scholtz, but the Wildcats weren't able to find the back of the net again.

“The Basehor game was a little frustrating,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “We gave up two soft goals on their only two shots of the game. The second half we absolutely dominated. They only actually made it over midfield only a few times. We had a massive amount of opportunities and failed to capitalize. It was tough, but we worked hard to get back to moving the ball well and attacking the other team instead of being passive.”