

Lady Cats' season comes to a close in regionals



Louisburg senior Allyssa Griggs makes a pitch during the Lady Cats' game against Fort Scott in the first round of the Class 4A-Division 1 regional tournament in Paola. The Lady Cats fell 9-4 and ended their season with a 10-11 record.

The Louisburg High School softball team has made a big jump in the last two seasons.

After going winless in 2015, the Lady Cats responded with five wins last season and they doubled that number again in 2017. Louisburg tallied 10 wins going into the Class 4A-Division I regional tournament last Tuesday in Paola and were hoping to add to that total.

Fort Scott had other plans, however.

The No. 2 seed Tigers used a big fourth inning to pull away for a 9-4 win over No. 3 seed Louisburg and ended the Lady Cats' year with a 10-11 record. The loss also meant the final game for Lady Cat seniors Hailey Crowder, Allyssa Griggs and Emalee Overbay.

"Although we fell short in our last game, I was very proud of the progress we made this season," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "The three seniors provided great leadership on and off the field and they will be missed."

"We have an experienced and fairly young nucleus of players returning for the next few seasons, so the future of the program looks good. This group of girls is not afraid to put in extra work, which is what it is going to take to get to the next level."

Louisburg took a 3-2 lead into the bottom of the fourth inning, when Fort Scott recorded six runs and the Lady Cats weren't able to recover. Fort Scott was hit by a pitch three times, walked three times, reached on a Louisburg error and a single.

"It was a very tough loss," Ozier said. "We really felt like we had a chance to make some noise at regionals this year. As was the case with some of our losses earlier this season, we could not avoid that one big inning on defense. I felt like we had some momentum when we pulled ahead in the latter part of the game."

The Lady Cats grabbed the lead in the first inning when Overbay scored on a single from sophomore Molly Rison. Fort Scott answered with two runs in the bottom of the second to jump in front.

Overbay helped Louisburg take the lead back in the top of the fourth inning when she singled to score Kayla Willey and Bailey Kern.

Louisburg pounded out 10 hits on the day, including three from sophomore Karson Griggs. Rison added a pair of singles and 2 RBIs, while Lauren Cutshaw also had two hits. Overbay had 2 RBIs and scored a run.



Outfielder Bailey Kern tracks down a fly ball last Tuesday against Fort Scott.

"It was frustrating to see so many scoring opportunities squandered," Ozier said. "On the other hand, Fort Scott made the most of their base runners. The girls gave it everything they had though."

Allyssa Griggs pitched five innings for the Lady Cats. Griggs

gave up just four earned runs and had five strikeouts in her final game.

The Lady Cats had the bases loaded in the seventh inning after Rison singled home Karson Griggs to cut the Fort Scott lead to five, but could get no closer.