

Wildcats score 29 runs in sweep of Anderson County



Louisburg senior Grant Harding winds up for a pitch during the Wildcats' April 25 doubleheader against De Soto. The Wildcats defeated Anderson County on Thursday, 12-5 and 17-5.

GARNETT – Apparently all the Louisburg baseball team needed was a trip to Garnett.

It certainly fixed what ailed them.

The Wildcats, who had lost four of their last five games, turned it around in a big way as they scored 29 runs during their doubleheader Thursday, en route to a 12-5 and 17-5 victory over Anderson County.

"The sweep was much needed," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "We've had number of close games that took a wrong turn throughout the year and we definitely needed to come out and take both games. We had solid games offensively, and took care of things on defense. When the scores evened out, we put pressure on and added runs as we needed to."

It was a team effort, especially in the opener, as every player in the Wildcat lineup got a hit and all but one had a run batted in. Louisburg jumped out to a 5-0 lead after three innings and used a five-run sixth to pull away after Anderson County tied it the inning before.

Korbin Hankinson, Christian Tosterud, Garrett Caldwell, Dalton Stone and Ben LaJoie each had two hits to lead the Wildcats, while Tosterud, Grant Harding, Nate Swenson and Stone all had 2 RBIs. Tosterud and Hankinson both added a double in the win.

"As a team we had great night at the plate," McGhee said. "Overall we combined for a .435 average. Everyone was seeing the ball well, whether they were getting hits or being selective at the plate and drawing walks. We also did a great job on the base paths. We left quite a few runners on base, but managed to get runners on later in the game to make up for those."

Freshman Madden Rutherford started the game for the Wildcats (7-9) and went five innings and gave up two earned runs on seven hits. He ran into a little trouble in the fifth inning when Anderson County tied the game with four runs in the frame, but Swenson came on in relief and pitched two innings and allowed no hits.

The Wildcats got going offensively in the sixth to break open the tie game as Caldwell, Stone, Swenson and Hankinson each had RBI singles to give Louisburg the lead back and all but seal the win.

In the nightcap, Louisburg found itself tied with Anderson County after three innings, but the Wildcats used back-to-back seven run innings to get the run-rule victory.

Hankinson did a lot of damage with the bat in the nightcap. He went 4-for-5 with 5 RBIs, including a pair of doubles. Dalton Stone hit a 2-run home run to break open a tie game in the fourth inning.

Harding, Mitchell Drew and Beckett Rasmussen each had a 2-hit game to lead the Wildcats, while Stone, Drew and Harding each had 2 RBIs. Harding was also busy on the base paths with five stolen bases.

Senior Kylan Harper started the game for Louisburg and pitched into the fourth inning as he gave up five runs, two earned runs and had three strikeouts. Fellow senior Sam Guetterman came in to record the final two outs to preserve the run-rule victory.

“Madden and Kylan gave us quality starts and put us in the position to win the games,” McGhee said. “Rutherford is very efficient when he pitches, and has given us quality starts in each of his outings. Of the 27 batters he faced, 20 of them saw 3 or fewer pitches. We can rely on Harper to give us a solid start and carry us deeper into a game, which helps with managing our pitchers.

“Sam and Nate both made quick work of the batters they faced and Guetterman got us out of a tough spot in game two with four pitches. Both pitchers come in and fill up the zone and let their defense work behind them.”

Louisburg returns to action today when it hosts Ottawa on senior night. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Lewis-Young Park.

Louisburg drops two games to De Soto

On April 25, Louisburg hosted De Soto for a doubleheader at Lewis-Young Park and came up short in a 7-3 loss in the opener. The Wildcats forced extra innings in the nightcap, but fell 6-4 in eight innings.

In the second game, the Wildcats were patient at the plate and drew seven walks and turned several of those into runs. Louisburg scored two runs in the sixth to tie the game, but De Soto answered with two in the eighth to get the win.

Although they walked seven times, Louisburg had just five hits, one of which was a double from Mitchell Drew. Freshman Madden Rutherford had a pair of singles and 2 RBIs.

Grant Harding started the nightcap and pitched six innings. He gave up three earned runs and had three strikeouts. Nate Swenson came in for the seventh and got Louisburg out of a jam to help send it to extra innings.

"Nate threw strikes and worked to quickly to get outs," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "The defense did a solid job behind him and we had an opportunity to take the game into extra innings. We gave ourselves a chance, but came up short."

In the opener, Louisburg jumped out to a 3-1 lead before De Soto scored three in the fifth, two in the sixth and another in the seventh to secure the victory.

Junior Garrett Caldwell had a big day at the plate. Caldwell went 3-for-3, including a pair of doubles and an RBI. Swenson also recorded a pair of hits and an RBI.

Senior Dalton Stone pitched into the sixth inning and gave up three earned runs and had three strikeouts.