

Wildcats hope summer workouts pay off for season



The Louisburg High School boys soccer team wrapped up their week-long team camp on July 14 as the Wildcats had close to 36 athletes out a day during their five sessions.

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team couldn't have asked for a much better year than they had during the 2016 season.

All the Wildcats did was make program history and advance to the Class 4-1A state semifinals for the first time and finished fourth in the state. It was a season worth celebrating.

However, all that celebrating had to be put to the side with the start of summer as the Wildcats geared up for the 2017 campaign. Louisburg recently held its week-long team camp that ended on July 14 as the Wildcats had anywhere from 34-36 players show up each day as they prepare for what they hope is another trip to the state tournament.

"I felt camp started off a little sluggish, but we ended playing very well," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "It was important for the boys to understand that we needed to do even more this year, because we will have a target on our back and we won't sneak up on anyone."

The Wildcats have done a lot of conditioning work since the

beginning of the summer period and have also conducted practices several times a week.



Raistlin Brewer and the rest of the Wildcats had to deal with the heat during their week-long team camp earlier this month.

With all the work the Wildcats have put in on the field, the weight room and in conditioning, the hope is they will be ready to go once the first day of practice starts on Aug. 14.

“My expectation is that summer practice is used to develop our base skill set, familiarize them with some of the core drills, develop team chemistry and let them get use to my expectations and standards,” Conley said. “I felt we did a very nice job in each of these categories, in regards to my expectations/standards.

“We worked a lot on our technical ability and speed of play. Playing quicker and faster on the ball. We also focused on our communication and our off the ball movement. I felt we struggled with this at the beginning of the summer, but by the end of camp we were starting to play pretty solid and pretty clean.”

Conley also had his players do something a little bit

different this summer. The Wildcats traveled to Paola on a couple different occasions to scrimmage the Panthers on their home field and it gave the players a chance to look at where they need to improve.

The Wildcats lost seven seniors off of last season's team that finished with a 14-6-2 record, but Conley wanted to use the summer to make sure this year's group sets their own goals for what they want to achieve this year.



Kyle Allen works on a passing drill during the Wildcats' team camp on July 13.

"I think the boys understand how special last season was," Conley said. "I was a little concerned at the beginning of the summer because we were just going through the motions, but after a few coaching moments, they got refocused and worked really hard. They understand how fantastic last season was and they now know it isn't something that is untouchable. They are determined to get back there this year.

"We have to avoid comparing this team to last year's team. It is essential this team set their own expectations. We will have a standard of play, but as this team grows and develops,

anything is possible. I think it's vital that these young men play within themselves and do their individual jobs to help with the overall team success. With losing as many seniors as we did, we will have the mentality of next man up. We will do what we can to fill those voids that were left by the 2016 seniors."