

Fast start propels Louisburg to road win over Piper



Louisburg junior running back Austin Moore hits a hole created by his offensive line Friday at Piper High School. Moore rushed for more than 100 yards for the second consecutive game as the Wildcats rolled 35-7.

Louisburg High School football coach Robert Ebenstein couldn't have been more impressed with his team's start in their first road game of the season.

That was until how he saw his team respond in the second half Friday against Piper.

After the Wildcats scored 21 unanswered points to get out to a big halftime lead, Piper battled back to score on its first possession of the third quarter and forced a Louisburg turnover.

It was then when Ebenstein saw the true character of his team come out.

The Louisburg defense shutout Piper the rest of the half and put up two more touchdowns en route to a 35-7 win at Piper High School.

"I am very, very proud," Ebenstein said. "We are trying to learn and figure who we are and what we can become. I think we can become something pretty good. To be able to come out of

halftime, give up a score, fumble and then we bounce back and take control. I am pretty excited for them.”

Other than a couple possessions in the second half, it was a dominant performance for the Wildcats and it all got started on special teams – something the Wildcat coaches spent hours on with their players in practice leading up to the game.

All the extra work seemed to pay off as senior Ben Minster returned the opening kickoff 85 yards for a touchdown. The Wildcat defense followed that up with a stop and the Louisburg offense got their turn when quarterback Blue Caplinger broke free for a 41-yard touchdown run to put the Wildcats up 13-0 less than five minutes into the contest.

“I think it definitely knocked the wind out of their sails a little bit,” Ebenstein said of the fast start. “We take pride in our special teams and we spend a lot of time working on it. After our last game, one of the things we wanted to fix was our special teams and we spent three days working on just that. For them to take it to the house and reward them for their effort was just huge.”

Louisburg (2-0) went into halftime on a good note as the Wildcats drove down the field behind sophomore quarterback Madden Rutherford, who hit Brayden Gage for a 13-yard touchdown pass. After an Austin Moore 2-point conversion run, Louisburg took a 21-0 advantage.

Piper didn't seem back down as the Pirates took the first possession of the second half and scored on an 8-yard touchdown run by quarterback Dalton White. The Pirate defense then forced a Louisburg fumble – and all of a sudden – they were back in the game.

It didn't last long as the Wildcat defense rose to the occasion and shutout the Pirates the rest of the way. Louisburg held the Pirates to just 115 yards of total offense.



Senior Christian Tosterud hits Piper quarterback Dalton White for a loss Friday.

Senior defensive back Christian Tosterud found himself in the middle of several plays as he led the Wildcats with 13 tackles on the night, including 11 solo stops. Caplinger was second on the team with seven tackles and junior lineman Kiefer Tucker had six, including two tackles for a loss. Tucker also helped shut down the Piper rushing attack from his defensive end spot.

“Coach (Jeff) Lohse draws it up and teaches it well,” Ebenstein said of the defense. “Our kids just play smart and react. Christian was just all over the field for us tonight and he played great.”

“Kiefer is just one of those kids that does his job, so he does not get the stats, but he shut down every veer, speed and ready play down that Piper ran. He had a great game.”

Late in the third quarter, Rutherford found senior Desmond Doles on a screen pass and he ran 45-yards for the touchdown to put Louisburg up 28-7. In the fourth quarter, Moore broke loose for a 45-yard touchdown run of his own to all but seal the win for the Wildcats.



Louisburg wide receiver Desmond Doles sprints toward the endzone for a touchdown during the third quarter.

“We told them at halftime that Piper was well-coached and that they weren’t going to come out and quit,” Ebenstein said. “There is no such thing as a perfect game. There is always something that is going to go wrong, but it is all about how you bounce back from that. For us to do that as a young team –

that is impressive.”

Moore led the Wildcats in rushing for the second consecutive game with 101 yards and Caplinger was second on the team with 68 yards on the ground.

Rutherford threw for 136 yards to go along with his two touchdown performance and Doles led the team with 84 yards receiving.

Louisburg returns to action Friday when it hosts unbeaten De Soto. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Wildcat Stadium.

LOU	13	8	7	7 –
35				
PIP	0	0	7	
0 – 7				

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

L: Ben Minster 85 kickoff return (Drake Varns kick)

L: Blue Caplinger 41 run (kick failed)

Second quarter

L: Brayden Gage 13 pass from Madden Rutherford (Austin Moore run)

Third quarter

P: Dalton White 8 run (kick good)

L: Desmond Doles 45 pass from Rutherford (Varns kick)

Fourth quarter

L: Austin Moore 45 run (Varns kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Austin Moore 13-101; Blue Caplinger 10-68; Madden Rutherford 9-26; Charlie Koontz 4-25; Beckett Rasmussen 1-8; Will Ridley 11; Ben Minster 2-1. Totals: 40-226

PASSING – Madden Rutherford 8-10-136-2

RECEIVING – Desmond Doles 3-84; Ben Minster 2-25; Brayden Gage 1-13; Austin Moore 1-8; Will Ridley 1-6.

TACKLES – Christian Tosterud 13, Blue Caplinger 7, Kiefer Tucker 6, Austin Moore 4, Will Ridley 4, Charlie Koontz 4, Mitchell Drew 4, Garrett Harding 4, Desmond Doles 3, Brayden Gage 3, Noah Larson 2, Ben Minster 1, Will Smith 1, Garrett Lowry 1, Brayden White 1, Jonathan DePriest 1.