

Minster's goals spark Wildcats in win over Spring Hill



Louisburg junior Eli Minster runs to celebrate with his teammates after he scored the go-ahead goal in the second half Thursday against Spring Hill to help the Wildcats to a 2-1 win at Spring Hill High School.

SPRING HILL – Eli Minster started on the bench and finished Thursday's match with Spring Hill as one of the defenders.

In between that time, Minster came up with two of the biggest goals for the Louisburg boys soccer team so far this season – and as it turned out – were his first varsity scores.

The Louisburg junior found the back of the net to give the Wildcats a halftime lead, but after Spring Hill tied the match, Minster responded with another goal midway through the second half to give the Wildcats a 2-1 road win in Spring Hill.

The victory also pushed Louisburg's record to 4-0 on the season and the Wildcats have won three consecutive Frontier League contests.

"It was a huge win," Minster said. "It is the first time we have been 4-0 in a long time and Spring Hill has always been a

tough match for us. It feels really good.”

It was a match that featured several momentum swings and it started with the Wildcats. Minster opened the scoring on a pass from senior midfielder Grant Ryals as he was able to slot it past the Spring Hill keeper.

Louisburg controlled the possession in the first half and several of its 12 shots on goal came before halftime. The Wildcats got the wake-up call it needed before the match even started after the junior varsity team was shut out.

“We stepped up a little bit and played with a little passion and heart,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “We got after the junior varsity a little bit after they got beat 5-0 and I told the varsity boys that this can happen to them to if they don’t come ready to play. Our league is too good to take a night off.

“We had a chip on our shoulder coming in. As good of a season as we had last year, we could only tie Spring Hill, and they wanted to check things off the list that the team last year didn’t do and make their own destiny. It was a big win for sure.”

Spring Hill wasn’t about to go quietly as the Broncos put the pressure on the Wildcats in the second half. With 26 minutes left in the contest, Spring Hill tied the game on a header off a corner kick.

The Broncos took the momentum back – well – for at least six minutes anyway.

Minster saved the day once again as he got pass from junior Eric Vazquez near the top of the box and he put a shot on goal that went just past the outstretched arms of the Spring Hill goalie and put Louisburg up with 20 minutes left in the match.

“We were able to counter just enough and push forward,” Conley

said. "We countered some more and God bless Eli Minster. We were having a tough time breaking down and coming back to the ball and Eli figured it out. He was just beating them to the spot. He had two huge goals for us and the second one might be the goal of his life.

"It was just a fantastic finish. It was a well-played game and I think most of the game was played between the 18's. They had a few more threats in the second half and we had a few more in the first. Hats off to Spring Hill because they played hard."



Louisburg defender Scott Murphy tries to clear the ball away from a Spring Hill player Thursday.

As for Minster, he had no idea his goal even went in as he went face first into the turf after taking the shot.

"The second one I didn't think it was going to go in," he said. "I just hit the ground, got up and saw it went in. It

just feels so good to be able to help the team out and contribute.”

The Louisburg defense faced its toughest challenge so far this season as the Wildcats survived 12 corner kicks from Spring Hill and goalie Ambrose Stefan made a clutch save near the net in the final minutes to secure the win.

Kris Light, Scott Murphy, Kyle Allen and Will Frank – along with Jarod Rose and Minster – helped keep the Broncos at bay on the back line. Defensive midfielders Ryan Haight and Ryals also had their hands full marking the Broncos’ top scorers.

“It was the first time we have truly been tested in the back,” Conley said. “We for sure lived up to the motto ‘Bend don’t break.’ We bent pretty hard, and I thought we might snap a couple times, but the boys did a heck of a job and played their hearts out. It was a team win.”

Louisburg will try to make it five straight Tuesday when it hosts De Soto, which is currently 2-2 on the season.

“It should give us another confidence boost, but we just have to look toward De Soto and keep moving forward,” Minster said.