

# Louisburg soccer blanks Baldwin, holds on to league lead



Louisburg sophomore Landon Johnson puts a shot on goal against Baldwin on Monday at Wildcat Soccer Stadium. Louisburg shutout Baldwin, 3-0, to improve its record to 9-4 on season.

With a possible Frontier League title hanging in the balance, the Louisburg boys soccer team needed a win against Baldwin on Monday to stay atop the standings.

The Wildcats made sure they didn't lose that spot atop the perch. Louisburg came through at home as the Wildcats shutout Baldwin, 3-0, to earn the season sweep over the Bulldogs and improve its record to 9-4 on the season and 8-2 in Frontier League play.

Louisburg is currently tied with De Soto with two league losses, and if the season ended in a tie, then both schools would be considered co-champions.

"It is our league title to lose," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "If we keep playing hard and doing our job, then we will be in the driver's seat. At the same time, if we don't execute then any night it could slip up and go away. We just have to keep doing our job and good things will happen."

“The kids came out focused and played with a little bit of a chip on their shoulder, I think. That is a really good team that we just beat and we made it look way easier than what it was. They are going to be a really dangerous team come playoffs.”

A lot of good things happened for Louisburg against Baldwin as the Wildcats controlled the possession and had 14 shots on goal. Three of those shots went in and the Wildcats got out to an early lead in the first half.

Junior forward Brock Bila scored his first of two goals 14 minutes into the contest on an assist from sophomore Landon Johnson. Johnson played the Bila on a give-and-go opportunity in the middle of the field and Bila shot it past the Baldwin goalie.



**(From left): Kris Light, Jarod Rose, Brock Bila, Grant Ryals and David Holiday celebrate a goal in the first**

## **half Monday against Baldwin.**

Louisburg took that 1-0 lead into halftime, but the Wildcats didn't wait long to give themselves some cushion.

Senior Christian Scholtz crossed the ball into the box, where he found the foot of senior teammate Raistlin Brewer, who put the shot away just 20 seconds into the second half. Bila scored the game's final goal several minutes later on an assist from senior midfielder Grant Ryals.

"We knew we had to come out and set the tone and apply a ton of pressure," Conley said. "The first game we played they just shredded us up. The kids bought into the adjustment we made and they just executed phenomenally this time around.

"That first goal we had was just beautiful and it was good to see the kids execute, knowing their job, playing with confidence and just playing hard. That is what I need the kids to do. They just trust the process and good things happen."

The Wildcat defense also didn't allow many good looks at the goal as senior goalie Ambrose Stefan earned the shutout with three saves, while the back line provided a lot of support. Scott Murphy, Kris Light, Will Frank and Eli Minster, who is in for an injured Kyle Allen, all turned away opportunities and frustrated the Baldwin attack.

"We are starting to figure out that if we are aggressive then we can be pretty stinkin' good in the back, when we are not hesitant or soft," Conley said. "They are playing hard back there and Eli has been stepping up quite a bit at the outside back and Scotty has been solid there as well. Kris and Will have been solid all year and they are like the four horsemen back there. We are not really subbing and they are doing a good job."

Although it was a big win for the Wildcats as far as the league standings were concerned, it was also a memorable in

another way. Following the victory, the team made a postgame announcement honoring Conley for his 50<sup>th</sup> victory as the Louisburg boys and girls head soccer coach. He has an all-time record of 50-21-3 in his four seasons with the programs.



**Louisburg players unveiled a banner honoring head coach Kyle Conley for his 50th victory following Monday's win over Baldwin.**

He may have not liked all the attention, but Conley has enjoyed the opportunity to coach both programs and all they have accomplished.

"Don't get me wrong, I appreciate it very much, but I absolutely hate it," Conley said of the honor. "It is all about the kids. Without those kids playing hard and doing their job, you don't win any games. I didn't score any goals and it is all about these kids and they deserve as much, if

not, more than I do. I couldn't be prouder of a group of kids in my four seasons to allow this to happen. I have been very fortunate."

Louisburg returns to action tonight when it travels to Eudora. Junior varsity will begin at 4:30 p.m. and varsity will follow.