

Wildcats advance to regional title game with win over Ottawa



Louisburg sophomore Ryan Haight heads the ball away during the Wildcats' Class 4A regional semifinal game against Ottawa on Tuesday in Louisburg. The Wildcats won the contest, 3-0, and will play Independence title for the regional title.

The frustration was starting to mount for the Louisburg boys soccer team.

Louisburg peppered the Ottawa defense with 38 shots Tuesday in the Class 4A regional semifinal, but most of them seemed to miss in every way possible. They were either saved, just wide of the target or hit the post.

Then when the Wildcats did find the back of the net, the goals were nullified due to an offsides penalty.

Despite all that, Louisburg did sneak three shots past the Ottawa back line and the Wildcats advanced to the regional championship with a 3-0 victory over the Cyclones in Louisburg.

That result will pit Louisburg against Independence for the regional title at 5 p.m. today at the Wildcat Sports Complex.

"We did a very nice job of attacking and creating a massive

amount of opportunities,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “We just struggled to find the back of the net. I was pleased for the most part with how hard we played. We need to work on our ability to make simple passes, because we had way too many simple turnovers. We did a nice job in the back of dealing with their counter attack and holding up against their pressure. It was a good result and now we can focus on a strong Independence team.”

Louisburg (12-5) will host an Independence team with an 11-4-2 record after the Bulldogs defeated Baldwin in the other regional semifinal, 1-0.

At the same time, the Wildcats will be vying for their third consecutive regional crown and a spot in the state quarterfinals.

“Independence plays very aggressive,” Conley said “We will have to be able to handle that aggression and possess the ball and attack. It’s shaping up to be a great game. It also helps we get to play at home in the friendly confines of Wildcat Sports Complex.

“We will be ready. Playing for a regional championship is our goal. This is a great opportunity for both teams and I am sure it will be a quality match.”



Louisburg senior defender Kris Light (right) battles an Ottawa player for a 50-50 ball Tuesday in Louisburg.

Against Ottawa, the Wildcats were able to get on the board early in the first half. Senior midfielder Grant Ryals nailed a shot from about 20 yards out that found the corner of the net to put Louisburg up 1-0 just 10 minutes into the match.

Louisburg had its opportunities the rest of the half, but couldn't convert and the Wildcats still held a one goal lead at halftime.

It didn't take long for Louisburg to get going after that as sophomore midfielder Ryan Haight scored to double Louisburg's lead just two minutes into the second half. Junior forward Brock Bila sealed the win with another goal late in the contest.

The Cyclones didn't threaten much as Wildcat goalie Ambrose Stefan made just two saves, but earned his third consecutive shutout. The back four of Scott Murphy, Kris Light, Eli Minster and Will Frank also did their job in keep the Ottawa attack at bay.

Should the Wildcats win a regional championship tonight, the remaining teams will be reseeded and state quarterfinal games will be announced tomorrow. The actual state quarterfinals will be played on Oct. 31.