

Wildcats clinch share of league title despite loss



Louisburg senior Scott Murphy clears the ball out of the back Monday during the Wildcats make-up game with Piper at Wildcat Soccer Stadium. The Wildcats lost the match, 2-0.

As the Louisburg High School boys soccer team walked off the pitch at Wildcat Soccer Stadium following Monday's 2-0 loss to Piper, the Wildcats' mood wasn't a great one.

However, once a few more minutes passed, their mood perked up a bit.

Louisburg entered Monday tied with De Soto for the Frontier League lead, but later that evening De Soto was handed a 2-0 league loss by Baldwin, which ultimately gave the Wildcats a least a share of their first league title since 2010.

The Wildcats (10-5) will have an opportunity to keep the league title all to themselves tonight when they host Ottawa on Senior Night.

"Losing to Piper in the fashion that we did was extremely frustrating, but the silver lining was Baldwin beating De Soto," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "It guarantees us at least a share of a league title. It was nice, but we need to stay focused because we still have a lot of work to do. We have an opportunity to win it outright and Ottawa has been

playing much better so we will have our hands full.”

Before the loss to Piper, the Wildcats picked up a crucial road win last Thursday when they traveled to Eudora and left with a 2-0 win.

It wasn't easy as Eudora played a different formation and kept several players back, making it more difficult for Louisburg to get quality shots on goal. The Wildcats kept pressing the attack and took 22 shots.

Senior David Holiday broke open a scoreless game in the second half with a goal, and a few minutes later, junior Chris Williams added another goal to all but seal the win for Louisburg.

“Eudora packed it in quite a bit,” Conley said. “They played the majority of the game with nine guys behind the ball. They did whatever they could to take away passing lanes and make it difficult to break through. We eventually broke them down with two non-starters stepping up big time and finding the back of the net.

“The boys were frustrated at first, but settled in and found a way to break through. Eudora was playing a lot of close games and are making it very difficult to score on them. It was a really, really good result for us.”

Eudora only took two shots on goal as the Wildcat defense didn't get much of a test, but goalie Ambrose Stefan earned his fifth shutout of the season as the back line of Eli Minster, Kris Light, Scott Murphy and Will Frank did their job as well.



Senior defender Kris Light passes the ball out of the back Monday against Piper.

Against Piper, the Wildcats found themselves down early as the Pirates scored 12 minutes into the contest. Louisburg kept Piper off the scoreboard for the rest of the first half, and much of the second, to give itself a chance to tie the match.

The Wildcats had a few opportunities on goal as junior Brock Bila, senior Grant Ryals and sophomore Landon Johnson had looks at the net, but couldn't convert. Piper sealed the win with six minutes left in the match with its second goal.

"Piper was a very aggressive team and played very quick," Conley said. "I think we struggled because we do not have many teams that play like that in our league. They had three really well coached kids in the middle and they really had their way with us in the first half. I felt the second half we did very well in handling their speed of play and actually played with a

majority of the possession.

"I think we made some good adjustments at halftime and the boys really, really stepped up their intensity in the second half. I was proud of our guys and they didn't quit. They fought to the last whistle and kept playing hard."

Louisburg will try for the outright league title tonight against Ottawa. The junior varsity will begin at 4:30 p.m., with the varsity to follow.

It is also Senior Night for the Wildcats as they will honor their 10 seniors in-between the two contests.

"Senior Night will be a great opportunity to celebrate our 10 seniors," Conley said. "These young men have been part of a great season thus far. The success we have is a direct reflection to their hard work and dedication. It will be an intense and emotional night. Winning an outright league title will be something that these young men will be able to reflect on the rest of their lives."