

Wildcats put it together in shutout of Baldwin



Louisburg running back Will Ridley tries for a few extra yards during Friday's game against Baldwin. The Wildcats held Baldwin to under 100 yards of offense and rolled to a 34-0 win.

BALDWIN CITY – 'Play hard for four quarters' is a phrase most football coaches use to try to motivate their team in hopes of trying to get the best out of them.

The Louisburg football team took that to heart Friday when it faced off with Baldwin. Unlike the week prior, where the Wildcats struggled with energy, turnovers and penalties – and still won in the final seconds against Eudora – they took care of all the mistakes.

Louisburg got off to a fast start and never looked back in a 34-0 shutout of the Bulldogs in Baldwin City. It was a game where the Wildcats made plays in all three phases.

"This past week was our best week of practice so far and I think it showed," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "We were focused, we put in some new things, they picked it up and it was high energy all week. Our goal this week was just to have high energy throughout the entire game and during practice, and if you looked at us out there, we flew around and made a lot of plays. They played great."

The Wildcat defense frustrated Baldwin for much of the game and the Bulldogs never made a real threat on the endzone. Louisburg held Baldwin to just 74 yards of total offense and were active for most of the night.

Junior linebacker Austin Moore had a big game on both sides of the ball, but defensively he was all over the field as he led the team with 12 tackles. Senior defensive back Christian Tosterud had 10 tackles and senior linebacker Mitchell Drew finished with nine.

Defensive ends Noah Larson and Kiefer Tucker caused havoc in the Bulldog backfield and put pressure on the Baldwin offense. Defensive backs Blue Caplinger and Desmond Doles each had an interception.



Louisburg's Noah Larson grabs a hold of a Baldwin player's jersey as teammate Mitchell Drew (33) makes the tackle Friday in Baldwin City.

"Our kids up front are pretty quick," Ebenstein said. "I don't know if Baldwin underestimated how quick our defensive ends are, but they can fly. We have two athletic kids playing d-end that are in great shape and they get after it and really move.

"I think us running the same offense as Baldwin helped a little bit because we have seen it for a few weeks now. But (defensive coordinator) Jeff Lohse is as underrated as anybody in the entire league when it comes to football. He scouted them up, he knew exactly what he wanted to do and he hammered it into our players all week. He did a great job with those guys."

Offensively, the Wildcats (4-1) were just as sharp as they ran the ball at the Bulldogs and never let up as they totaled 319 yards on the ground. Louisburg jumped out to a three touchdown lead in the first half and didn't look back.

A lot of those yards came thanks to the legs of Moore and quarterback Madden Rutherford. Moore finished with game with 141 yards on the ground to go along with two touchdowns.

Rutherford, a sophomore, made his fair share of big plays as well. He scored a game-high three touchdowns, including two on the ground. Running backs Will Ridley and Caplinger also reeled off big runs to keep the Louisburg drives going.



Blue Caplinger gets out in front to make a block on a Baldwin player for teammate Brayden Gage.

The Wildcats were able to make those plays thanks to the offensive line Garrett Lowry, Garrett Harding, Larson, Tucker and Brayden White, along with tight ends Ben Minster and Tosterud.

“Our line was doing a great job of making holes up front and reaching to the linebackers,” Rutherford said. “It allowed Austin to do what he does and he played great.

“We switched up formations a little bit, and went under center a little more, but we are celebrating each play more and we are playing with high energy. That was definitely a key factor for us.”

Moore opened the game with a 12-yard touchdown run in the first quarter and it was all the points the Wildcats would

need. Rutherford expanded that lead in the second quarter when he hit Minster for a 9-yard touchdown pass and then scored on a 1-yard quarterback sneak shortly before halftime.

"It was really impressive for us," Moore said of the shutout. "We came out with a lot more intensity than we have in the past and I think it showed. Offensively we played a lot better than we did the week before and we were trying to pick each other up after every run."

Moore added an 11-yard score in the fourth quarter, and with six minutes left in the game, Rutherford juiced a Baldwin defender and broke free for a 49-yard touchdown to seal the win.

"What we were really preaching to them to was to play well in all three phases for four quarters," Ebenstein said. "So being able to score points early is really big for us and we just built on that from there."

The Wildcats will try and make it three wins in a row Friday when they host Spring Hill for homecoming. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m., as Louisburg tries to exact revenge after losing to Spring Hill in the final seconds a year ago.

"We are really excited for homecoming week and everything that is involved with that," Moore said. "We are definitely ready to play Spring Hill again."

LOU	7	14	0	13
- 34				
BAL	0	0	0	0
- 0				

SCORING SUMMARY:

First quarter

L: Austin Moore 12 run (Drake Varns kick good)

Second quarter

L: Ben Minster 9 pass from Madden Rutherford (kick failed)

L: Rutherford 1 run (Austin Moore run)

Fourth quarter

L: Moore 11 run (kick failed)

L: Rutherford 49 run (Varns kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Austin Moore 20-141; Will Ridley 7-75; Madden Rutherford 6-64; Blue Caplinger 2-39. Totals: 35-319.

PASSING – Madden Rutherford 2-10-15-1

RECEIVING – Ben Minster 1-9, Desmond Doles 1-6

TACKLES – Austin Moore 12, Christian Tosterud 10, Mitchell Drew 9, Noah Larson 7, Brayden Gage 5, Will Ridley 4, Kiefer Tucker 4, Blue Caplinger 3, Kohl Vogel 3, Michael Waldron 3, Garrett Harding 3, Will Smith 3, Brayden White 2, Jorge Lebron 2, Beckett Rasmussen 1, Garrett Lowry 1, Matt Holloway 1, Desmond Doles 1.