

Wildcats fall in close match to Spring Hill



Louisburg sophomore Avery O'Meara knocks the ball away from a Spring Hill player Thursday in Spring Hill. The Wildcats came up just short against the Broncos in a 1-0 loss.

SPRING HILL – If playing one of best teams in the state isn't difficult enough, the Louisburg girls soccer team had to do it without one of its leading goal scorers.

The Wildcats ventured to Spring Hill for a Frontier League match with the Broncos and more than held their own against the 1-loss team. Louisburg couldn't find the back of the net, but played stingy defense against Spring Hill in a 1-0 defeat.

Louisburg didn't have many scoring chances throughout the night and it didn't help that the Wildcats were without their all-state player in Bailey Belcher. Despite that, Louisburg coach Kyle Conley liked what he saw out of his team.

"The girls played their butts off," Conley said. "Losing Bailey, who is a main goal scorer for us, in the middle is a game changer. We had girls step up in her spot and I thought they did pretty well. We played hard and our work ethic really came through in this game and it showed."

Defense was a big positive for the Wildcats as they limited the Broncos' shots on goal. The back line of Trinity Moore,

Hannah Straub, Camdyn Clark and Kaitlyn Lewer turned away several Spring Hill opportunities.

Louisburg (4-3) also had a big game from senior goalie Shay Whiting, who recorded several saves. Junior goalie Carson Buffington replaced Whiting with 10 minutes left in the match and made a jump save of her own to keep it a one-goal deficit.

"I think Trinity played really well in the back and Hannah played really well too until she had to leave a couple times due to an injury," Conley said. "Cammy and Katie were really good too and have been all year, so I thought we played pretty well back there against what is a pretty talented team. I am very proud of them. That is the best team in 4A right there.



Louisburg defender Hannah Straub (21) clears the ball away Thursday against Spring Hill.

"They only had like two dangerous chances and I am not even going to count the corner kick that went in. I think kind of crowded it in to limit their chances and I think Carson had one big save and Shay had the other. We changed the formation at the end to see if we could get lucky, but unfortunately it just didn't work out."

Midway through the first half, the Broncos were able to get on the board as they used a corner kick that went into the box, and after a little scrum, Spring Hill's Anna Watson snuck the ball just over the line for a goal.

It would be all Spring Hill needed as it dominated possession for much of the match and limited the Wildcats' opportunities.

"Part of our formation is we sit in, let you possess the ball, take a bad ball and then we counter," Conley said. "Unfortunately that last counter is the one we are missing right now. We are close, but we are not used to playing turf so the ball moves a little faster, but that is no excuse, we just have to be better. We need to do a better job of just controlling and finding feet."

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track in what looks to be a busy week for the Wildcats. They begin play today when they travel to Eudora for a 5 p.m. start.

The Wildcats will then host Harmon on Wednesday and Basehor-Linwood on Friday in what they hope will be a successful five day period.

"It will be huge," Conley said. "We should be in each of these three games and if we can get a few wins I think that would do a lot for us, especially if we can get Bailey back for one or two of those. We will just have to see."