

Bila's hat trick helps Wildcats to first victory



Louisburg senior Brock Bila celebrates a goal during the Wildcats' 4-0 victory over Paola on Thursday at the Wildcat Stadium Complex. Bila recorded a hat trick on the night as the Wildcats picked up their first win of the season.

Last week's season opening loss at Fort Scott didn't sit well with the Louisburg High School boys soccer team.

It was a game they felt they should have won.

Two days later, the Wildcats made sure they didn't make the same mistake again.

Louisburg hosted Paola for its home opener Thursday and the Wildcats used a big second half to snag their first victory of the season. Senior Brock Bila, who missed the team's season opener, responded in a big way as he scored three second half goals to help give Louisburg a 4-0 win over the Panthers.

"It was definitely a good win," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I think Paola had a lot of the play, but the way our team is set up is we are geared for counter attack and geared for transition and we did a really good job of cutting them when we could. We did a really good job of weathering the storm for the first 20 minutes. Thomas (Arnett) did a good job back there in goal and made some really big saves for us. So,

it was definitely better than our opener.”

Paola and Louisburg each had their chances on goal in the first half and the Panthers controlled possession through much of the first half before the Wildcats started to turn the tide in the final 10 minutes.

Senior Chris Williams, Bila and junior Ryan Haight all had good looks at the net at different times, while Williams made several hard runs at the goal – only to see their shots go just wide or get saved. The teams went into halftime in a scoreless contest.



Junior defender Will Frank (24) heads the ball away from the goal Thursday during Louisburg’s win over Paola.

Bila made his chances count in the second half. His first one came in the opening minute of the second half as he beat the Paola goalie on a 1-on-1 opportunity to score the game’s first

goal.

About 12 minutes later Bila struck again, and much like the first score, he beat the Panther goalkeeper in the box to put the Wildcats up 2-0.

Louisburg made it a three-goal lead when Williams was fouled in the box and the Wildcats were awarded a penalty kick with 21 minutes remaining. Haight made the PK and it was smooth sailing from there.

Bila completed the hat trick with five minutes left in the match on another shot in the box and gave the Wildcats their first victory of the season.

“It was good to see some passion and some emotion from him,” Conley said of Bila. “The first 10 minutes I was a little worried, but then he started to figure it out. He played hard and played the right way and that is the stuff that I like to see. He showed positive energy and he just competed.”

The Wildcats (1-1) also had solid play from its defense as goalie Thomas Arnett earned the clean sheet – the first of his varsity career. Seniors Eli Minster, junior Will Frank, sophomore Haden Yeager and freshman Michael Seuferling also helped contribute to the shutout by limiting the Panthers’ chances, including ones from Paola’s all-league player in Ryan Wokutch.

“Paola clogs the middle like crazy and we made some adjustments to take away some players that they had to make sure they couldn’t get at us, and I think that was the key,” Conley said. “Wokutch had one chance at the end and Thomas made a big save on it.



Sophomore Haden Yeager steps in to knock the ball away from a Paola player Thursday at home.

“(Wokutch) is a talented kid. He doesn’t like to be chased or bumped too much, but I thought we played hard and we didn’t play dirty. We obviously frustrated them a little bit and it was good for us.”

Not only was it their first win of the season, but for the Wildcats, it couldn’t come at a better time as they prepare for back-to-back matches with Basehor-Linwood and Bonner Springs. Louisburg will host Basehor-Linwood on Wednesday.

“It was good to see that we are not distracted,” Conley said. “We got our stuff squared away, we started acting right and we played together. We were organized, and I was very excited with how organized we stayed because there was a good chance that we could have gotten run on. The boys held their ground, stayed structured and that is really good for a young team.

“We are not built for back to back, but we will have to suck it up and do our job. Basehor is pretty good. They have a new coach, a new style and we will be ready for them.”