

Revenge win over Ottawa puts Wildcats in regional title game



Louisburg's (from left) Ryan Haight, Michael Seuferling, Colin Cook and Haden Yeager celebrate Cook's goal early in the first half Tuesday in Ottawa. The Wildcats defeated the Cyclones, 3-1, to advance to the regional championship.

OTTAWA – In two previous meetings during the regular season, the Louisburg boys soccer team just couldn't figure out a way past Ottawa.

The Wildcats seemed to solve the riddle against the Cyclones on Tuesday and they couldn't have picked a better time to do it.

Louisburg traveled to Ottawa for the Class 4-3-2-1A regional semifinal and the Wildcats got the win they were looking for with a 3-1 victory that sends them to the regional championship for the fourth consecutive season.

"We just had some really bad luck in the first two games with them," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "This was a game where we felt we could win and the kids played that way. The kids played hard, they executed and did their jobs. We showed that we should have beaten them the first two times, but we just had horrific luck and we couldn't finish and this was

vengeance for that. I am very proud of the boys.”

Scoring wasn't a problem this time around for the Wildcats (6-10) as they had three different players find the back of the net. Junior Colin Cook, along with seniors Chris Williams and Brock Bila, all came up with big goals to go up in front early.

Cook scored his goal nine minutes into the contest when Eli Minster sent the pass to the back side of the goal where Cook was waiting and he was able to tap it in to put Louisburg up, 1-0.

The score would stay that way until early in the second half when Williams collected a rebound off a Bila shot and sent it past the Ottawa goalie for the two-goal lead.



Defender Will Frank heads the ball away Tuesday during the regional

semifinal in Ottawa.

Ottawa didn't back down as it scored a goal six minutes later to cut the lead in half. It took Louisburg less than a minute to give them a two-score lead again as Bila finished it off with a goal of his own and the Wildcats were able to hold on.

"We were actually working on that the last few weeks and it worked," Conley said of Cook's goal. "We were able to play that back side ball and he was able to get it in. It was really cool to have three different goal scorers, and all three guys busted their butt and finished well. It was a lot of fun."

The Wildcat defense did its part as the back line of Minster, Will Frank, Michael Seuferling and Haden Yeager, along with help of midfielder Ryan Haight, helped contain the Cyclone attack. Ottawa turned up the intensity late in the second half as it put three shots on goal, but goalie Thomas Arnett came through with some key saves late.



Junior Ryan Haight holds off an Ottawa player to win a 50-50 ball Tuesday against the Cyclones.

“Thomas made a really great save there on a free kick that just bent around the wall,” Conley said. “Thomas read it well and that was huge. Then they had a header in the box that he was able to save as well, which was fantastic. It was a good all-around effort.”

Louisburg, which is the No. 11 seed, will travel to No. 3 Bishop Miege (10-5-2) tonight for the Class 4-3-2-1A regional championship match. The Stags have won the last two state championships and the Wildcats know they will have tough challenge ahead of them.

“We are looking at it as it is just another team and it is that simple,” Conley said. “That is why you play the game. We are not looking at paper, and if that was the case, they would

have a state championship before the season started. They want to stay in 4A, so we will play them and we will play hard. They are a fantastic team and one of the best in the state of Kansas.”