Wildcats’ perfect season comes to close with loss to Miege



Louisburg junior Charlie Koontz gets a block from teammate Josh Casey as he was able to score one of the Wildcats’ three second half touchdowns in their 55-21 loss to Bishop Miege on Friday in the Class 4A sectional playoffs.

As the Louisburg football players walked off the field last Friday night following their sectional playoff game with Bishop Miege, the Wildcats felt something they hadn’t experienced this year.

A loss.

It came at the hands of the four-time defending state champion Stags, who made things difficult on the Wildcats from the start and didn’t let up, as Louisburg fell 55-21 at Wildcat Stadium.

The Wildcats finished their season with a 10-1 record, a Frontier League championship and a regional championship. Still, the fact that their season is over is hard feeling for the Louisburg players to shake.

“Being 10-0 and then having that first loss of the season was very disappointing,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said.

“Losing always sucks, but losing in the playoffs and having to wait until next August is the worst. At the end of the day, Miege is a very good team and we did some good things. We got them to fourth down on multiple drives in the first quarter, we just couldn’t make the plays on those big downs. Then we got behind a little and started pressing.”

On a frigid night that featured a slick and hard Wildcat Stadium field, both teams battled tough field conditions and it affected the Stags early as they mishandled several snaps. Louisburg was able to force Miege into third, and fourth and long situations, but the Stags converted several big plays to get out of it.

Bishop Miege scored 27 first quarter points, with three of those touchdowns coming on passes of more than 30 yards. The Stags added two more scores in the second quarter and jumped out to a 41-0 halftime lead.



Junior Garrett Harding (left) and senior Noah Larson team up for a block Friday against Bishop Miege.

“They have big time play makers all over the field, and their offensive line was able to give time in the pocket and they just made those plays,” Ebenstein said.

The Stags had two losses on the season coming into the game, but those were against the No. 1 team in 5A in St. Thomas Aquinas and a perennial power in Missouri, Rockhurst. They also play in a 5A and 6A dominated league throughout the season.

Miege has since feasted on Class 4A opponents when its gets to the playoffs, and the talent discrepancy made it difficult for the Wildcats to overcome.

Despite freezing cold temperatures and a large halftime deficit, the Wildcats didn’t give up and played hard in the second half.

In the third quarter, senior Blue Caplinger scooped up a Miege fumble and returned it 67 yards for a touchdown to get Louisburg on the board.

The Wildcats added two more scores in the fourth quarter as junior Charlie Koontz broke free for a 21-yard touchdown run and then senior Brayden Gage returned a kickoff 77 yards for the Wildcats’ final touchdown.

“As a coaching staff we challenged the guys to show their true colors and grit and I was very pleased with the fight and character our guys showed,” Ebenstein said. “We came out and won the second half.”



Seniors Brian Houck (23) and Jonathan DePriest bring down a Miege runner Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

It was a special season that saw the Wildcats win 10 straight games for the first time since 2010 and they also came away with a pair of championships. Despite all that, it was tough to say goodbye to a year that brought many great memories.

Add in the fact that 18 seniors played their final football game at Wildcat Stadium, it was an emotional ending.

“Overall it was a great year,” Ebenstein said. “I am very proud of our guys and excited for them that they were able to get double digit wins for only the third time since 2000, and there was a lot of really good football played during that time period. It was a lot fun to be a part of.”

LOU	**0**	**0**	**7**	**14**

– 21

BM	**27**	**14**	**7**	**7 – 55**

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

B: Deaunte Parker 2 run (kick failed)

B: Hudson Bentley 38 pass from Sam Pedrotti (run good)

B: Phillippe Wesley 31 pass from Brison Cobbins (kick good)

B: Jaylen Scruggs 39 pass from Pedrotti (kick failed)

Second quarter

B: Cobbins 9 run (run good)

B: Wesley 9 pass from Pedrotti (kick failed)

Third quarter

L: Blue Caplinger 67 fumble return (Drake Varns kick)

B: Jude Putz 20 pass from Harrison Braudis (kick good)

Fourth quarter

L: Charlie Koontz 21 run (Varns kick)

B: Jake Ryan 36 pass from Timothy Dorsey (kick good)

L: Brayden Gage 77 kickoff return (Varns kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING: Charlie Koontz 9-48; Blue Caplinger 2-8; Brayden Gage 1- -2; Madden Rutherford 4- -5

PASSING: Madden Rutherford 3-13-16

RECEIVING: Josh Casey 1-6, Weston Guetterman 1-6, Michael Waldron 1-4

TACKLES: Charlie Koontz 11, Brayden Gage 8, Jorge Lebron 5, Brian Houck 5, Ben Wiedenmann 4, Kiefer Tucker 5, Brayden White 4, Beckett Rasmussen 3, Blue Caplinger 3, Tanner Belcher 3, Noah Larson 2, James Foote 2, Hunter Day 2, Jonathan DePriest 2, Gabe Rader 1, Dylan Knipp 1, Garrett Harding 1.