

Experienced Lady Cats excited to get season started



Louisburg senior Molly Rison, a first team all-league and all-state player a season ago, looks to lead the Lady Cats along with seniors Karson Griggs and Madison Svoboda.

The 2018 season was a rocky one for the Louisburg girls softball team as it featured a lot of young players on the varsity level.

It turned into a three-win season for the Lady Cats, but with all the growing pains they experienced a year ago, Louisburg hopes 2019 will bring a newfound optimism to the team.

Louisburg returns almost their entire varsity roster from a season ago, including its three All-Frontier League selections. It is a good start for a Lady Cat team that struggled to find many positives last year.

“We are hoping to improve upon last year’s three win season,” Louisburg coach John Ozier said. “We let six games get away from us last year in the last few innings, so we have got to learn to finish games. The coaching staff has witnessed good chemistry thus far with our girls,

and we anticipate
it continuing throughout the upcoming season.”

The Lady Cats return a good group of bats to lead the way offensively and it starts with senior Molly Rison. The Louisburg first baseman earned first team All-Frontier League honors last season and was an all-state selection.

Rison had a big season for Louisburg as she led the Lady Cats in four statistical categories as she finished the season with a .508 average and had a .720 slugging percentage. She also had 33 hits on the year to go along with 10 doubles, one home run and 30 RBIs.

Seniors Karson Griggs and Maddie Svoboda will also give Louisburg some depth at the top of the lineup as the two will play third and second base, respectively. Both players could also see time in the outfield as well.

Griggs, who earned honorable mention all-league honors last season, ended the year with a .420 average, which included 23 hits, eight RBIs, six doubles and a home run as she hit near the top of the lineup most of the season. She also led the team with 29 runs scored.

Svoboda also had a good season at the plate for Louisburg as she connected on four home runs and had 13 RBIs to go along with 22 runs scored and a .300 batting average.

“All three seniors have stepped up and accepted the leadership role with the underclassmen,” Ozier said. “I look for

great things out of all three this year.”



Sophomore Alyse Moore is one of several returning starters for the Lady Cats.

Junior Kayla Willey, who was selected honorable mention all-league last season at second, will split her time between there and the outfield. Willey, who didn't commit an error last year, also had .417 average on the year with eight RBIs.

Sophomore Alyse Moore will return to her starting shortstop role, while juniors Reilly Ratliff-Becher and Lauren Cutshaw will split time at the catcher spot. Junior Paige Eccher will also see some time in the outfield.

The Lady Cats will have to rely on a young pitching staff and sophomore Brooklyn Diederich will see a lot of time on the mound this season after starting several games as a freshman.

Junior August Daniels and freshman Mia Wilson are the other two Louisburg pitchers who are vying for playing time as well.



Sophomore Brooklyn Diederich will lead the Louisburg pitching staff.

The games haven't even started yet for the Lady Cats and they have already encountered some obstacles – namely Mother Nature. Louisburg has had very few practices outdoors due to the cold and snowy weather, and are a little behind on getting ready for the season.

“This is my fourth year with the program and I have never experienced a start to the season where we have not been able to have a complete practice outside,” Ozier said. “The girls have worked hard under the

very difficult practice situations. It is very difficult to simulate game situations, especially outfield reps, when you are crammed into a gym.”

Louisburg will get its season started Tuesday when it travels to Piper for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Piper High School.

It will be the first of three straight doubleheaders on the road for Louisburg. The Lady Cats have their home opener on April 4 against Wellsville.