

Wildcats blank Harmon to win season opener



Junior Trinity Moore beats a Harmon player to a 50-50 ball Thursday during the Wildcats' season opener in Louisburg. The Wildcats defeated Harmon, 5-0.

It may be a new season for the Louisburg girls soccer team, but they looked like the same Wildcats that found their way to the state title game a year ago.

Even with a few different pieces, Louisburg was able to jump on Harmon from the start during Thursday's season opener and the Wildcats came away with 5-0 shutout on their home pitch.

It was the start of a long journey for Louisburg, but the Wildcats took a step forward – albeit a small one – in starting off their season with a win.

"It was good," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We played a lot of kids in a lot of different spots and they came and played hard. I think we dominated the game and Harmon might have had one shot, if that. The kids did what we asked them to do, but we still have plenty to work on this week in practice."

The Wildcats (1-0) were able to get off to a good start thanks to the feet of junior Mackenzie Scholtz. The Louisburg forward recorded a hat trick in her first time out and those three goals helped ease what nerves there were to begin the match.

Scholtz scored two of those goals in the first 11 minutes of action to help give the Wildcats the momentum they were looking for. With three minutes left in the first half, Scholtz completed the hat trick as she converted a penalty kick to put Louisburg up 3-0 at halftime.

"She did a good job," Conley said of Scholtz. "She was moving a little bit and we have put her in more of a leadership role to do a little bit more talking and coaching out there. Mackenzie knows, and has been in the program long enough, that she knows the expectations and she can help relate that to the younger players. I think it was a good first game for her."



Junior Avery O'Meara sends the ball up the field Thursday against Harmon.

Louisburg continued putting pressure on Harmon in the second half and were awarded another penalty kick when freshman midfielder Reese Johnson was tripped up in the box. Johnson took the kick and found the back of the net for her first varsity goal to put the Wildcats up 4-0.

The Wildcats sealed the win late in the second half when junior Trinity Moore hit a shot from just outside of the box and it curled into the net for the final goal.

As well as the offense played at times, the Wildcat defense also played well in its limited chances. The back line of Camdyn Clark, Kaitlyn Lewer and Madison Quinn didn't let many balls get through and goalie Carson Buffington protected the net for the shutout.



Defender Madison Quinn controls the ball Thursday in the Wildcats' win over Harmon.

The Louisburg midfield controlled possession, in what was a physical game between the two teams, and were able to get several good looks at the goal. The big lead also allowed several players to see the field and get some experience on the varsity level.

"The best part is that this game allowed them to figure out what they are supposed to do and where they are supposed to be," Conley said. "That helped quite a bit. I think we actually played better later in the game, but we just scored goals quick and were able to get out to a lead. We struggled at first to figure out where our runs are supposed to be, but then we settled down and did what we were supposed to do.

"It was good to get all the kids some minutes and get them some time on the varsity level and get their feet wet. It was a good first game and I think the girls learned some things, but we have a lot of work to do still."

Louisburg will try to make it two wins in a row Tuesday when it travels to Bonner Springs for its first road match of the season. Varsity is set to begin at 6 p.m. The Wildcats will return home Thursday for a matchup with Tonganoxie.