

Wildcats fall short in doubleheader at Baldwin



Louisburg starting pitcher Garrett Harding releases a pitch during the first game last Tuesday in Baldwin City.

BALDWIN CITY – It wasn't the start the Louisburg baseball team was looking for last Tuesday when it traveled to Baldwin for a doubleheader.

The Wildcats were shutout 10-0 in the first game and not many things went their way. A lot changed in the nightcap.

Although Louisburg still fell in the second game, 5-4, the Wildcats took a lot of positives from a contest that provided strong pitching and timely hitting.

"We struggled to get runners moving in the first game," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "We left a lot of runners in scoring position. We had multiple innings with runners on and no outs that we were unable to take advantage of. So, bouncing back in the second game was big. We played with better focus, but had some mistakes that came at key moments."

The first game was a tight one for the first few innings as Baldwin held just a 1-0 lead into the fourth inning and Louisburg starter Garrett Harding had kept the Bulldog hitters off-balance. Baldwin got things going with four runs in the fourth, three in the fifth and two more in the sixth to seal the win.

The Wildcats (0-4) put together seven hits, but were scattered throughout the contest.

Logan McClellan and Andrew Krause led the Wildcat offense with two hits each and Madden Rutherford had the lone extra base hit with a double.

Chase Norton and A.J. Drew each added a single in the loss

In the nightcap, the Wildcats got a good performance from McClellan. The Louisburg senior pitched 4 1/3 innings and gave up just three earned runs and struck out six batters. Krause followed it up with 1 2/3 innings of shutout relief to go along with two strikeouts.

“Logan did a great job throwing strikes,” McGhee said. “He allowed his defense to work for him and pumped from the start of the game. He provided some solid innings and then when to the outfield and threw a runner out that was headed to second. Not much more that we can ask for defensively.”

Louisburg opened the second game with a two-run first inning when Harding singled to score pinch-runner Blue Caplinger and then Krause scored freshman Brandon Doles on a fielder's choice.

The Wildcats led 2-1 going into the bottom of the third when Baldwin answered with two runs to take the lead. Louisburg tied the game with a run in the top of the fifth, but the Bulldogs scored two more runs in the bottom of the fifth and

was able to hold off the Wildcats.

Harding led the Wildcat offense with a three-hit performance to go along with an RBI and senior Beckett Rasmussen also had a single.

In their first varsity games, freshmen Maverick Rockers and Doles each recorded a single and Rockers had an RBI in the sixth to pull Louisburg within one. Fellow freshman Kolby Kattau also got his first start in the opener.

“They came in with a great approach at the plate and showed some quality at-bats,” McGhee said. “Doles had several at-bats in which he worked the count and extended his at-bat with a solid two strike hitting approach. Rockers came up with a key hit late in the game that put us in striking distance.

“It was great to see that our younger players can jump in and compete at the varsity level. I’m sure there were a few jitters at first, but each of them overcame the nerves and put out great effort.”

Louisburg will try for its first win of the season tonight when it travels to Spring Hill. The Wildcats will host Wellsville on Thursday in their home opener at Lewis-Young Park.