

Wildcats pick up first win with split of Bonner Springs



Louisburg junior Madden Rutherford tags out a Bonner Springs runner Tuesday during the Wildcats' game at Lewis-Young Park.

It has been a rough stretch to start the season for the Louisburg baseball team.

The Wildcats have not been at full strength since their opener and have had a difficult schedule to begin the year. All that led to eight straight losses and Louisburg was looking for its first win going into Tuesday's doubleheader with Bonner Springs.

Louisburg is winless no more as the Wildcats defeated the Braves 8-6 in the first game, and although they lost the nightcap 11-1, it was good to get the monkey off their back.

"Getting the first win was big," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "It was much needed. We've been down several players over the past week, and finally had our most experienced guys back. Our younger players have done a great job competing against the more experienced lineups of Baldwin, Spring Hill and Wellsville over the past six games."

One of those younger players was freshman Brandon Doles who came up big for the Wildcats late in the first game. With the game tied in the bottom of the fourth inning, Doles singled home senior Noah Larson to give Louisburg a 7-6 lead.

Doles then came on in relief to get his first varsity win as he pitched 3 1/3 scoreless innings and gave up just one hit and struck out a batter.

“Brandon has done an outstanding job this season,” McGhee said. “He has shown quality stuff on the mound each time he has thrown and has a great approach at the plate. He is patient and takes advantage of the opportunities that he has had. He hasn’t given up many walks and challenges hitters to put the ball in play. Brandon has been on a roll to start the season.”

Both teams opened the game with a run in the first inning, and after Louisburg was down 2-1 in the bottom of the second, the Wildcats took the lead with three runs in the frame.

Michael Rogers tied the game with an RBI single that scored pinch runner Blue Caplinger and then Logan McClellan singled to score Rogers to give the Wildcats the lead. Madden Rutherford then walked with the bases loaded to put Louisburg up 4-2.



Senior Blue Caplinger steals second base Tuesday and would later score a run in the Wildcats' win over Bonner Springs.

Louisburg (1-9) responded with two more in the third when McClellan doubled to score Caplinger and Rogers scored on a wild pitch to give the Wildcats a 6-3 advantage.

Bonner Springs tied the game at 6-all with three runs in the fourth, but Doles' RBI single put Louisburg up one and then got an insurance run when Beckett Rasmussen scored on an error in the sixth.

"We did a great job battling in the game," McGhee said. "We combined efforts on the mound and had some great at-bats. Our hitters were patient at the plate and worked counts to their advantage. We had some hard hit balls that drove in runs when we needed them."

Seniors Jakob Krause, Rasmussen and McClellan each had two hits to lead the Wildcats and all three had a double. Rutherford

and McClellan each finished the day with 2 RBIs.

The nightcap didn't go as well for the Wildcats as Bonner Springs scored eight runs in the final two innings as the Braves turned a 3-1 game into an 11-1 run-rule win in the sixth inning.

Louisburg hurt itself defensively with six errors and the Braves took advantage. Offensively, the Wildcats recorded just three hits on singles from Rasmussen, Garrett Harding and Andrew Krause.

"In the second game we had several errors to start the game that allowed Bonner to get an early lead," McGhee said. "We had opportunities throughout the game, but were unable to capitalize. At one point we had bases loaded with no outs, and were unable to score a run.

"The biggest impact on the game were the 'freebies' that we gave up, extra bases on misplayed balls, walks, and errors that kept innings going. Bonner did a great job taking advantage of our mistakes."

Louisburg will return home today when it hosts Tonganoxie for single game. First pitch is set for 6 p.m.