

REGIONAL CHAMPS: Wildcats knock off Piper to advance to state



The Louisburg girls soccer team celebrated its fourth straight Class 4-3-2-1A regional title Thursday with a 2-0 victory over Piper in Louisburg.

The Louisburg girls soccer team is one of the youngest tenured programs in the state, but at the same time, it is one of the more accomplished.

Louisburg added to its list of accolades Thursday when it hosted Piper for the Class 4A regional championship.

The Wildcats' 2-0 victory over the Pirates, not only avenged a loss from earlier in the season, but gave them their fourth consecutive regional title.

Add to the fact that the Wildcats are currently just in their fourth year of existence, makes each of these regional titles special in their own way.

"The feeling is amazing," junior Mackenzie Scholtz said. "Winning a regional title shows everyone how much work we have put in all season and lets us prove to everyone that

we work hard all
of the time.

“The feeling hasn’t really changed
over these three years. It’s so much fun getting to win in
front of half of the
town and seeing everyone so proud of us. I don’t think it will
ever get old
because it is so exhilarating every time.”

Louisburg finds itself in familiar
territory as the Wildcats (15-3) host Kansas City Christian
(9-6-1) on Tuesday
for the Class 4-3-2-1A state quarterfinals. The Wildcats have
advanced to the
state semifinals the last two seasons, including a state
runner-up finish last
year.

Although the Wildcats have had plenty of success in past
seasons, they realize they should celebrate the journey, and
the win against Piper was no less special than the three
previous regional titles.



Junior captain Erin Lemke puts a shot on goal Thursday against Piper.

“It is absolutely incredible what the young ladies within this program has created in our first four years as a program,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “I could not be happier with how hard these girls play and how they play for our community. The girls in our program acknowledge how much we owe the community for creating this opportunity for these young ladies. We have been very spoiled here at Louisburg with the success we have had. Four straight regional championships is unbelievable.

“We have our goals as a program and playing for a regional championship is on our list every year. These girls understand the importance of the work it takes to achieve something like this

and to not take it for granted. The girls were ecstatic with our win over a really quality team in Piper. We felt that we had something to prove after losing to them earlier in the year.”

The Wildcats used that loss earlier in the year to the Pirates as motivation and it was evident early in the match that Louisburg wasn't going to let the same result happen this time around.

Louisburg was aggressive on the attack as the Wildcats had several early opportunities on the Pirate defense, but couldn't find the net in the first 20 minutes. From there, things opened up for Louisburg.



Louisburg senior Julianne Finley pushes the ball up the field against Piper.

Junior Morgan Messer got a pass from

midfielder Erin Lemke near the top of the box and Messer took the shot and found the right corner of the net to put the Wildcats up 1-0.

Late in the first half, the Wildcats struck again as Scholtz had a breakaway opportunity down the left side of the field and beat the Piper goalie for an open net and the Wildcats led 2-0 at halftime.

“It was nice to get some goals early, but 2-0 is the worst lead to have because as you get up two, you start to get comfortable and stop playing as hard or as aggressive,” Conley said. “We did a nice job of playing pretty well in the second half, but the last 10 minutes was a little nerve-racking. We made some adjustments but struggled to stay aggressive in the midfield. The girls played hard and did a really nice job with having pressure and cover all over the field.”



Junior Trinity Moore takes a shot in the second half of the Wildcats regional title matchup against Piper.

Piper did put some shots on goal in the second half to try and get back in the match, but the Wildcat defense held firm as goalie Carson

Buffington recorded her seventh shutout in her last eight matches.

The Louisburg defense of Kaitlyn Lewer, Madison Quinn, Skylar Bowman, Avery O'Meara and Hallie Hutsell has been a stabilizing force in recent weeks and that includes senior captain Camdyn Clark, who was recently lost for the season due to an injury.

"Our defense has been fantastic," Conley said. "Those young ladies all have played incredible. The defense has posted 12 shutouts and a .882 goals against average. The girls are playing aggressive and being fundamentally sound. I love how hard they are playing and the intensity they

are playing with. They have been fantastic all year.”

Before the Wildcats’ match against Piper, they were just coming off an upset win over Spring Hill at home and they believed that helped them against the Pirates and will continue to do so moving forward.

“We played a really good first half against Piper and our win over Spring Hill before that gave us momentum,” Lemke said. “Both teams beat us earlier in the year, so to pull off wins so late in the year, and in the postseason, is exciting.

“The win against Piper was huge. We went into that game feeling like we had something to prove. We wanted the regional title, and another shot at state to motivated us through the game.”



The Louisburg girls soccer team poses with the Class 4-1A regional title trophy following its 2-0 win over Piper.

Louisburg will have its shot at the state semifinals Tuesday against Kansas City Christian. The Wildcats, who will host KCC at 5 p.m., defeated the Panthers, 6-0, earlier in the season.

“It is going to be a big game,”
Conley said. “Kansas City Christian is a very dangerous team
and have some
really talented players down the middle of the field. We will
need to play our
game and play well to win. They are very fast up top as well.”