

Louisburg survives Ottawa to remain without a loss



Louisburg senior defender Will Frank heads the ball away from the goal late in the Wildcats' 2-1 win over Ottawa on Thursday at Ottawa High School.

For about 70 minutes, it was all going to plan for the Louisburg boys soccer team during its league match Thursday against Ottawa.

The Wildcats held a two-goal lead on the road and were about to cinch their eighth win of the season. Ottawa had different plans, however.

Ottawa played aggressive in the match's final 10 minutes and put the pressure on the Wildcat defense that allowed them to cut the Louisburg lead in half. Despite that, the Wildcats were able to hang on for a 2-1 victory and they still have not suffered a loss this season.

"The boys played really well and did a nice job of controlling the play," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I think we did a nice job of playing hard and moving the ball the best we could on their field. They played a unique formation and they made it hard to break down. I do feel the boys played hard, but lacked

focus the final eight minutes of the game.”

Many of the Cyclones’ shots on goal came toward the end of the half and scored with eight minutes left in the match.

The shots kept coming, but the Wildcat back line held strong as senior Will Frank headed the ball away near the goal on one attempt. Then, with two minutes remaining, goalie Garrett Rolofson made a diving save near the line to help secure the win.



Junior defender Luke Faulkner clears the ball out of the back while teammate Michael Seuferling looks on Thursday in Ottawa.

Ottawa

had two corner kick opportunities in the final minute-and-half, but the Wildcat defense did enough to get the win.

“Yeah

after Ottawa got their goal, they had all the confidence,” Conley said. “They played inspired soccer and their crowd came to life and motivated their players. We started to panic and lost our focus for the last eight minutes. It was surely a learning moment for our young team. We will learn from this and get better. I was excited that the boys held on and fought through some adversity.”

Louisburg

(8-0-1) took control of the match early and dominated possession. The Wildcats had 13 shots on goal and were able to get their first one to go through right before halftime.

Freshman Cade Gassman scored his first of two goals in the 39th minute and gave Louisburg a little bit of confidence going into the break. Gassman was in the right place at the right time in the second half, as he rebounded a Braden Yows shot, and it found the back of the net for a 2-0 lead.

Treston

Carlson, Ethan Ptacek, Michael Seuferling, Gavin York, Ethan Showalter and Yows all had shots on goal during the match, and it was one that could have gotten out of hand early.

“We did dominate the game, but we struggled to finish,” Conley said. “I was excited to see some of the creativity the boys showed throughout the game. I felt we left 3 or 4 off of the board. We had plenty of looks but just couldn’t find the back of the net.”

Louisburg hopes to pick up a couple of wins at home this week and it begins Tuesday when it hosts Tonganoxie. The Wildcats will also host Baldwin on Thursday. Both matches are slated to begin at 6 p.m.

“Tonganoxie is a well-coached team that is going to play really hard,” Conley said. “They will play pretty direct and we will have to adjust that style of play.”

Thursday will be the Wildcats’ cancer awareness match as both Baldwin and Louisburg will be dressed out in special pink kits for the occasion.

Louisburg rallies to tie Baldwin

Louisburg took its perfect season on the road last Tuesday when it traveled to Baldwin and left there without a loss – but it wasn’t a win either.

Baldwin scored twice – once in each half – but the Wildcats were able to answer within minutes each time as they rallied for a 2-2 tie at Baldwin High School.

“Playing

at Baldwin always provides some interesting intangibles,"
Louisburg coach Kyle
Conley said. "Varsity plays first, which messes with a
routine. On top of that,
the field was an absolute swamp. With our style of play, it
made it very
difficult to keep and possess the ball when you were playing
on slop. The field
conditions didn't affect Baldwin's play as much because of how
direct they
play.

"I
really did like the boys' ability to fight back and overcome
the deficits we
faced. As I told the boys, I felt that we did not play our
best and we
struggled to capitalize on our opportunities. I think the
playing surface had a
lot to do with that."

After
Baldwin took a 1-0 advantage midway through the first half,
the Wildcats
answered two minutes later as freshman Colin McManigal crossed
the ball into
the box and Logan Faulkner beat the Bulldog goalie to the ball
and put it in.



Junior Ethan Showalter battles a Baldwin player for a 50-50 ball last Tuesday.

The second half was much like the first as Baldwin took the lead, but Louisburg answered again when freshman Cade Gassman had a one-on-one with the goalie and flicked it past him to tie it at two.

The match went two overtimes, and each team had opportunities, but neither could find the back of the net.

Goalie Garrett Rolofson had six saves on the day for Louisburg, while McManigal, Gassman, Faulkner, Treston Carlson, Ethan Showalter and Braden Yows all had

shots on goal for the Wildcats.