

Banged up Wildcats fall to Chanute in regional playoffs



Louisburg senior Garrett Harding brings down a Chanute running back during the Wildcats' regional playoff game Friday in Chanute.

CHANUTE – The Louisburg football team tried to hold it together as long as it could, but on Friday in Chanute, the Wildcats just didn't have enough left in the tank.

Louisburg, a team that has been decimated by injuries the last few weeks, came up just short in the regional round of the Class 4A state playoffs with a 30-21 loss to Chanute and the Wildcats saw their season come to an end with a 6-4 record.

Quarterback Madden Rutherford had a broken thumb and was relegated to wide receiver and punter. Linebacker Andy Hupp was very limited on how much he could go and senior Charlie Koontz played only defense due to a lingering injury.

The Wildcats saw their offensive line depth tested in recent weeks with the loss of center Ian McGuire, while other players, including freshman backup center J.R. Rooney also played through

injury.

Junior running back Ben

Wiedenmann, who carried the Wildcats with 198 yards on the ground and three

touchdowns, could hardly walk by the time the game was finished. Several other

Wildcats also sat out or played with injury, forcing the Wildcats coaches to do

a lot of last-minute shuffling.

“The kids showed a lot of heart, especially when you look at who was injured,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Our quarterback, Madden, was injured and our quarterback on defense, Hupp, who is our middle linebacker, was also injured and could hardly go. If Charlie was most kids, he wouldn’t have played at all and has been injured all week. Ben can barely walk, then Ian and Jay (Scollin) were already out coming in, as were Dominic (Owens), Aiden (Barker) and A.J. (Reed). I can’t doubt our kids for a second. They have been working their butts off and really played hard and gave it all they had.”

With all the injuries, Ebenstein implemented a new offense prior to the Chanute game. Junior receiver Weston Guetterman took over quarterback duties with Rutherford and Hupp, the back-up quarterback, both unable to take snaps.



Sophomore Brandon Doles jumps through a hole in the line created (from left) by Brayden White, Garrett Harding and JR Rooney.

The Wildcats ran the wishbone and Guetterman did a lot of handing off to Wiedenmann, Brandon Doles and Kolby Kattau. For the most part it worked for Louisburg, as it racked 259 yards on the ground and the Wildcats got out to an 8-0 lead in the first quarter after an 18-yard run and 2-point conversion from Wiedenmann.

Louisburg got a good push from its offensive line of Brayden White, Garrett Harding, JR Rooney, Andrew Krause and Sam Kratochvil, along with tight end Michael Waldron.

Although the Wildcats got out to a good start, Chanute battled back and eventually took the lead on a pair of touchdown passes from quarterback Ty Bowman in the second quarter to put the Blue Comets up 14-8.

That second touchdown pass came on fourth down with 28 seconds left in the first half when Bowman found an open receiver for a 28-yard score.

Chanute got the ball to start the second half and added another score to go up 20-8 and put the Wildcats in a deep hole.

"It looked good, and it worked, just not good enough," Ebenstein said of the offense. "It was what we thought it would be. It isn't the best offense to have when you are trying to come back from two possessions down. We did all we could."

Louisburg continued to battle as it drove down the field and Wiedenmann scored on a 1-yard touchdown run with 50 seconds left in the third and trailed just 20-14.

Chanute added a 32-yard field goal in the fourth to go up nine, but Guetterman returned the kickoff to near midfield to give Louisburg good field position and it took advantage.

Wiedenmann ran right through the Blue Comet defense for a 46-yard score, and after a Drake Varns extra point, the Wildcats trailed 23-21.



Ben Wiedenmann stiff-arms a Chanute defender for a long run Friday. Wiedenmann finished the night with three touchdowns and 198 yard on the ground.

"Ben is a monster," Ebenstein said. "He was nowhere near 100 percent and he was limping around all week. Then he took a helmet on the thigh again, but he just kept going. He is a freak athlete and he ran hard all night."

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, the Blue Comets found the endzone one more time to go back up nine and Louisburg didn't have enough left for another comeback.

Defensively, the Wildcats were able to slow the Blue Comets down at times despite the

injuries. Senior Garrett Harding recorded a team-high 10 tackles and junior Justin Collins was second with eight. Doles and senior Michael Waldron added seven and six tackles, respectively.



Junior Konnor Vohs makes a tackle on a Chanute receiver Friday during the Wildcats' regional playoff game.

The loss also meant the final time on the sideline for seniors White, Kratochvil, Krause, Varns, Harding, Ian McGuire, Rutherford, Waldron and Koontz as the Wildcats begin to prepare for next year.

"It is always a great season when you are in the playoffs," Ebenstein said. "It is the best time of the year. We

are going to give them a couple weeks off and then we will start up with winter weights and do it again. These kids are all like family to me, and any week we can continue with them, is a blessing. Unfortunately it all has to come to an end, but I really enjoyed my time with them."

LOU	8	0	6	7
- 21				
CHA	0	14	6	10
- 30				

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

L: Ben Wiedenmann 18 run
(Wiedenmann run)

Second quarter

C: Garrett Almond 16 pass from Ty
Bowman (run failed)

C: Briley Peavy 28 pass from
Bowman (Bowman run)

Third quarter

C: Bowman 1 run (kick failed)

L: Wiedenmann 1 run (kick failed)

Fourth quarter

C: 32-yard FG

L: Wiedenmann 46 run (Drake Varns
kick)

C: Peavy 2 run (kick good)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ben Wiedenmann 24-198, Brandon
Doles 8-30, Kolby Kattau 6-23, Weston Guetterman 5-8

TACKLES – Garrett Harding 10,
Justin Collins 8, Brandon Doles 7, Michael Waldron 6, Ben
Wiedenmann 5, Andy
Hupp 4, Brayden White 3, Andrew Krause 3, Konnor Vohs 3,
Weston Guetterman 2,
Kolby Kattau 2, Madden Rutherford 1, Drake Varns 1, Eli
Johnson 1, JR Rooney 1.