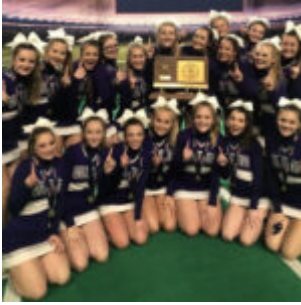


# Wildcat cheer makes history with school's first female state title



The Louisburg High School cheer squad was all smiles after the Wildcats edged out Augusta to win the 2019 Class 4A state championship in Topeka.

It has been almost two weeks since the Louisburg High School cheer squad made history, but the excitement is still like it all happened yesterday

And why wouldn't be – Louisburg won a state title.

The Wildcat cheerleaders competed at the Class 4A KSHSAA Game Day Spirit Showcase Competition on Nov. 23 at the Stormont Vail Events Center in Topeka and came back home with a big trophy in tow.

Louisburg edged out runner-up Augusta with a point total of 82.25 to 81 in the finals to secure what is just the third athletic team state title in school history.

"I was so nervous at the awards," Louisburg senior Lauren Vincent said. "We were all holding

hands and had our heads down. We thought that we would get second place at best, most likely third. We were content because we put everything out on the mat and did the best we could. But when they called out second place and it was Augusta, we screamed, cried, and hugged each other because we knew that we had just won.

“When our name was called for first, we jumped up and hugged each other. Then I ran out onto the mat and grabbed the trophy and we held it up and jumped around victoriously. It was the best feeling in the entire world. Knowing that all of our hard work had finally paid off was indescribable feeling of joy.”

The Louisburg cheerleaders that competed are Lexi Pena, Lauren Vincent, Ashlyn McManigal, Brooklyn Mitchell, Gabby Tappan, Andrea Gaza, Eleanor Willming, Jayden Trester, Lacie Kallevig, Sammy McDaniel, Mable Graham, Anna Morrison, Bella Feikert, Audrey Anderson, Sydney Dudzik, Kaitlyn Vest, Jolie Hendrickson, Abby Bradley and Zoe Cutshaw. Louisburg’s head coach is Jayna Guerra.

Not only were the Wildcats the third team to win a state title in school history, they were also the first female squad to win a team crown as well. All the history just added to what was a special day for the program.

“It means so much to me and all my teammates,” Tappan said. “As someone who’s been a part of a variety of sports my entire life, I know how hard each of our teams work to do their very

best in whatever sport they're a part of. We are so thankful that we got to make history for Louisburg and it is something that I can guarantee that each and every one of us will remember it for the rest of our lives."

The Wildcats, who competed against 18 other programs, opened with a fight song routine, followed by crowd leading and then the band chant.

It was the latter that helped put them in the finals when the top six teams were announced.

At the time, Louisburg was second in points with 180.6, but Piper – the defending state champion – had racked up a score of 194.8 with a good opening round.

"Our band chant was definitely the highlight of our individual performances," Guerra said. "On and off the practice mat, I was approached by coaches, athletes, and staff members commenting on how unique and clean our routine was. That was really reassuring to me being a first time coach. That let me know that I was doing good, and was providing for my girls.

"Overall I think our final performance was the best. They killed it out there. Competition day, they were coachable and made quick changes to make the routine fit what the judges were ultimately looking for."

In the finals, Louisburg performed its all-cheer, which is all three routines plus

a situational sideline for whatever the judges call and they had to perform it all in a 3-minute window.

“We were a little nervous because we have lots of stunts and we always need to have our spirit up and be engaging with the crowd, so it’s very tiring,” Tappan said. “We had practiced a lot though so we knew we could do it. At that point we weren’t thinking we were going to win, we were just happy we made it to the finals.”

When the announcement finally came, the Wildcat cheerleaders were in disbelief when their name was called for first and they had won the state title. A flood of other emotions soon followed, and it was then they realized all their hard work had paid off.

“To win a state title my senior year is the most amazing yet rewarding feeling,” Vincent said. “Us seniors have been working so hard for this moment for the past four years. We have analyzed countless routines and observed the seniors from the past years to better ourselves and prepare for this leadership position. And when our time finally came around to lead, we felt prepared and knew that we had a good team on our hands.

“We have put in so much work the last four years to make sure that our team and choreography were up to par. We were hard on our girls sometimes, but to win the state title means that our leadership and constructive criticism paid off. I’m so proud of our girls

for stepping up  
to both Jayna and our high expectations of success.”

It was a lot of work to get prepared for the  
showcase event as the Wildcats began prepping in October and  
had 1-2 practices  
a week along with their normal cheering engagements.

“I could not have asked for a better  
group of hard working girls,” Guerra said. “They are the ones  
that did all the  
work, I just guided them in the direction they set the path  
for. For me, seeing  
their reactions and having them know that their hard work paid  
off was all  
I needed. I will fully admit that I am overjoyed with our  
placement, but I am  
more proud of the girls and the leadership and dedication they  
showed  
throughout the process.”