

# Wildcats medal three at Frontier League tourney



Louisburg junior Cade Holtzen works for a pin Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament on Saturday at Ottawa High School. Holtzen finished second at 126 pounds.

OTTAWA – Three Louisburg wrestlers found their way to the podium during the Frontier League Tournament on Saturday at Ottawa High School.

Cade Holtzen, Ryan Owens and Brandon Doles each placed in the top three of their respective weight classes to help lead the Wildcats in the nine-team tournament. Holtzen made his way to the championship before finishing second, while Owens and Doles each took third place.

In all, six wrestlers placed in the top five and the Wildcats finished ninth overall with 107 points. Bonner Springs won the league title with 234 points and Paola was second with 180.5.

“Competition at league was pretty tough this year, and our league has only gotten stronger with the addition of Piper, Tonganoxie, and Bonner, but I was

initially disappointed with how we finished up as a team,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Then I remember that there’s a reason why we have a full season leading up to regionals and state. We face tests every week at every tournament, and the focus is on growth and progress. No match should define a season, and we’re not going to let our league performance define the team’s season.

“Last week was Homecoming, which was full of all sorts of activities and distractions, and we also had a snow day when we couldn’t even practice. A lot of things provided obstacles, but in the end, we walked out of league with a specific insight into where we need to work on improving for regionals and state.”

Holtzen (29-3) earned a spot in the championship match of the 126-pound class. The Louisburg junior opened with pin over Paola’s Sheldon Martin and then pinned Piper’s Nick Lawson in the semifinals.

All that set up a rematch of last season’s 113-pound league final between Holtzen and Bonner Springs’ Cassius Vanderpool. Unfortunately for Holtzen, who is currently ranked No. 6 in Class 4A, the result wasn’t the same as he lost a close 3-2 decision to finish runner-up.

“Cade wrestled a really tough match, and I loved seeing his confidence early in the match,” Bovaird said. “As it progressed, though, I wonder if he got to thinking too much and let his focus shift from his wrestling to the end of the match. It was a momentary lapse where his opponent was able to get an escape and score the winning point.



**Sophomore Brandon Doles tries to put his opponent on his back Saturday during a 160-pound match.**

“Overall, he had a pretty dominant day. He had a rematch against the Piper kid. The last time they wrestled, Cade wasn’t able to get the pin and he

only scored a tech fall; on Saturday, he not only repeated his dominance on top, but he also got a pretty solid pin out of it.”

Owens

(30-5) had a strong start to his league tournament at 120 pounds as he opened with an 18-8 major decision over Paola's Steven Yeager and then battled Bonner Springs' Peyton Richardson in the semifinals. It was a back and forth match, but Owens was eventually pinned late in the third period.

The

Louisburg junior responded with a pin of Ottawa's Trevor Kaub on the backside of the bracket and then pinned Yeager in the third-place match.

Doles

(26-8) also won his first match of the day as he pinned Paola's Corey Holub, but then came up against Spring Hill's Jakob Stovall in the semifinals. It was a low-scoring, tight match, but Stovall scored late to take the 3-2 decision.

Doles

responded on the backside to pin Baldwin's William Damet and then pinned Bonner Springs' Jackson McArthur in the third place match.



**Junior Ryan Owens finished the league tournament with a 3-1 record and a third place finish.**

“They both wrestled solid matches throughout the day,” Bovaird said of Owens and Doles. “I think their semifinals losses, along with several other key losses for the team that day, really showed us how much we need to focus on conditioning this week. Brandon was aggressive throughout the semis match with Spring Hill, but unable to capitalize on his scoring attempts.

“Ryan showed a lot of dominance in his semis match against Bonner Springs, but ultimately ran out of gas in the third. They were tied up before he got turned. Overall, I’m pretty

happy with their ability to bounce back and score some big points in the consolation rounds.”

Sophomore Johnathan

Keegan-Childs just missed out on the medal stand as he finished fourth at 195 pounds after recording two pins.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett

also earned two pins at 113 pounds and finished fifth overall.

Sophomore Aiden

Barker also took fifth at 170 pounds after he finished with two pins and a 2-2 record on the day.

Louisburg will continue

its postseason action this Friday and Saturday as it hosts the Class 4A

regional tournament. The top four finishers in each weight class will earn a spot at the state tournament next week in Salina.

“I think the whole team is pretty stoked to be hosting regionals,” Bovaird said. “It’s a big deal to have our regional tournament on our home mats, and our gym seems to have been made to host an event like this. We should have a nice crowd cheering on the team, but I think with the smooth practices we’ve been having and the team’s ability to reset and refocus, we should have a pretty solid tournament this year.”