

Louisburg falls to defending league champ, Tonganoxie



Louisburg senior Andy Hupp brings down Tonganoxie's Tyler Bowden with help of some teammates Friday at Tonganoxie High School. The Wildcats fell, 24-14.

TONGANOXIE – The Louisburg football team faced one of its more difficult challenges of the season Friday when it traveled to defending Frontier League champion, Tonganoxie.

In the first half, the Wildcats found themselves in the game and were down just 10 points at halftime. Unfortunately, two Tonganoxie touchdowns in the fourth quarter proved too much to overcome in a 24-14 loss.

Louisburg (1-1) found itself down 24-0 in the fourth quarter, before the Wildcats scored two late touchdowns to make the game a little closer.

"They worked too hard to lay down and take a shutout," Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein said of his players "The frustrating thing is we were hoping we could learn some things before the fourth quarter and try to figure things out. They fought hard and they worked hard. We are young and we were kind of exposed there for a little bit. Tongie is a heck of a team, but honestly we just kept beating ourselves. We just have to keep getting better."

After a scoreless first quarter, Tonganoxie struck first on a 25-yard field goal from Jackson McWilliams, but the Wildcat

defense came up big late in the second quarter. Junior Brandon Doles recovered a Tonganoxie fumble on the Chieftain 35-yard line and gave the Wildcats a short field to try and take the lead.

The Wildcats weren't able to take advantage of the opportunity as the Chieftains picked off a Louisburg pass with under three minutes left in the first half. That gave Tonganoxie an opportunity and it took advantage as it scored on a 20-yard run from Sam Kleidosty with 58 seconds left and took a 10-0 lead into halftime.

"We get that turnover and then the first thing we do is jump offsides and then it is first and 15," Ebenstein said. "Honestly, first and 15 is bad for us. We are not that kind of team. We just need to make sure we are focused in. It was a turning point in that game, but I thought Coach (Drew) Harding had a heck of a game plan, but that is a tough, physical team we are playing. We got a little gassed, but a lot of our kids are on the field the whole game and they played hard."

Tonganoxie running back Tyler Bowden found success in the second half. Bowden, an all-state transfer from Lawrence Free State, scored twice in the fourth quarter – including a 51-yard touchdown – to help the Chieftains all but seal the win.

"(Bowden's) last run, we were just completely misaligned," Ebenstein said. "It was one of those things where if we were lined up right then we make that tackle. He is tough, their system is good and they have a lot good seniors. Tongie is a good team."

Louisburg didn't give up, however, as the Wildcats put two drives together to score a pair of touchdowns in the final five minutes.



Senior running back Ben Wiedenmann drags some Tonganoxie defenders for a big gain Friday.

Quarterback Weston Guetterman found Konnor Vohs on a 23-yard pass, and that set up a 9-yard touchdown run from senior Ben Wiedenmann. Sophomore Layne Ryals added the extra point to make it 24-7.

Ryals came through for the Wildcats in just his second varsity game as he put down a good onside kick, that was recovered by Louisburg and the Wildcats had another opportunity.

Running back Kolby Kattau found Vohs on a 25-yard halfback pass on a drive that ended up on a 12-yard touchdown run from Wiedenmann, who finished the game with 91 yards on the ground.

Defensively, senior Andy Hupp was all over the field for the Wildcats as the defensive lineman recorded a team-high nine tackles, while junior Aiden Barker and sophomore JR Rooney

each added a sack.

Kattau and Wiedenmann both had six tackles from the linebacker spot. Guetterman, Justin Collins, Vohs and Barker each finished with five.

Louisburg will try and bounce back Friday when it host Baldwin. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

"We have to focus on us," Ebenstein said. "We just have to get better and work on what we do. Our kids' heart is the positive. It is easy for any team to lay down when you are losing 24-0, but we were able to put up 14 points in those five minutes to finish strong. These kids are going to keep learning and build off this. We are going to get better."

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SCORING SUMMARY

Second Quarter

T: Jackson McWilliams 25 FG

T: Sam Kleidosty 20 run (McWilliams kick)

Fourth Quarter

T: Tyler Bowden 3 run (McWilliams kick)

T: Bowden 51 run (McWilliams kick)

L: Ben Wiedenmann 9 run (Layne Ryals kick)

L: Wiedenmann 12 run (Ryals kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ben Wiedenmann 16-91; Andy Hupp 8-19; Kolby Kattau 4-7; Weston Guetterman 8-5; Justin Collins 1-4

PASSING – Guetterman 2-7-26; Kattau 1-1-25

RECEIVING – Konnor Vohs 2-48; Jase Hovey 1-13

TACKLES – Andy Hupp 9, Kolby Kattau 6, Ben Wiedenmann 6, Weston Guetterman 5, Justin Collins 5, Konnor Vohs 5, Aiden Barker 5, Brandon Doles 3, Jase Hovey 3, Nathan Vincent 3, JR Rooney 3, Dominic Owens 1