

Wildcats fall to Frontier League champ – and rival – Paola



A host of Louisburg defenders try to bring down Paola quarterback Garrett Williams last Friday during the Wildcats' final regular season game at Paola.

It was a result that no one on the Louisburg sideline was hoping for – nor expecting.

The Wildcats traveled to Paola last Friday in hopes of knocking off the No. 1 team in the state, and rival, Paola. No matter the records, it has historically been a competitive game – and for a little while – it was looking like it was going to be a defensive battle.

In the final three quarters, Paola quickly dashed any of hopes of the Wildcats pulling off the upset. The Panthers scored 49 straight points to open the game and handed Louisburg a 49-7 defeat. Paola also clinched the Frontier League title in the process.

Penalties cost the Wildcats (4-4) in several of their drives as they were flagged eight times for 60 yards and Louisburg had a tough time slowing down the Paola rushing attack.

“To be honest, there were no specific problems other than the ones we created for ourselves,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Penalties killed us. We have to be better and

that falls directly on my shoulders to get us prepared and able to use good technique. We also did a poor job on the attention to detail aspects of the game. We played with poor technique and attention to detail. When you play a very good team with that type of mental approach you lose by a lot, and that is exactly what happened.”

The Panthers (8-0) amassed more than 400 yards of total offense and 394 of those yards came on the ground – many of which were courtesy of running back Jovanni Blackie and quarterback Garrett Williams.

Blackie rushed for 204 yards to go along with three touchdowns, while Williams carried the ball 14 times for 142 yards and two scores.

It was a close game in the first quarter as the Wildcats trailed just 6-0 heading into the second period. Louisburg forced a fumble on Paola’s opening possession, but mistakes and penalties stalled many of the Wildcats’ offensive drives and were unable to find the endzone.

“I was proud of our fight in the first 18 minutes of the game, for sure,” Ebenstein said. “Then we got down by 14 and had trouble on a kick return and had some poor field position and our focus went away. The first quarter our energy was high, but the execution was still poor. We had way too many penalties to take advantage of what opportunities we had. Playing behind the sticks is never easy.”



Louisburg quarterback Weston Guetterman hands the ball off to Justin Collins, while Ben Wiedenmann looks to block against Paola last Friday.

Paola would score two touchdowns in each of the next three quarters to pull away from the Wildcats.

Senior running back Ben Wiedenmann prevented the shutout when he broke free for a 69-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter to give the Wildcats their lone score of the game. He led Louisburg with six carries for 90 yards, while quarterback Weston Guetterman had 64 yards on 16 carries.

Defensively, Guetterman led Louisburg with eight tackles on the night, while seniors Konnor Vohs and Andy Hupp each added seven stops. Senior Justin Collins also forced a fumble for Louisburg.

The Wildcats will get a fresh start to their season as they

are the No. 8 seed in the Class 4A playoffs and will host No. 9 St. James Academy (3-4) at 7 p.m. this Friday. The winner of that game will play the winner between No. 1 Paola and No. 16 Ottawa next week.

“St. James is a very solid team and their only losses have come to the other big private schools in the metro (St. Thomas Aquinas, Rockhurst, Miego), and 6A powerhouse Blue Valley,” Ebenstein said. “This is the first year for them being back down in 4A, so we will have our work cut out for us. If we focus on what we can control, we have a very good chance of beating any team in 4A.”

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| PAO | 6 | 15 | 14 | 14 | – |
| 49 | | | | | |
| LOU | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | |
| – 7 | | | | | |

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

P: Jovanni Blackie 5 run (kick failed)

Second quarter

P: Blackie 4 run (Brock Pitzer pass from Garrett Williams)

P: Garrett Williams 1 run (Ian Heid kick)

Third quarter

P: Fletcher Aude 2 run (Heid kick)

P: Blackie 37 run (Heid kick)

Fourth quarter

P: Williams 3 run (Heid kick)

P: Aude 1 run (Heid kick)

L: Ben Wiedenmann 69 run (Layne Ryals kick)

LOUISBURG STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ben Wiedenmann 6-90; Weston Guetterman 16-64; Justin Collins 7-37; Andy Hupp 7-14; Konnor Vohs 1-6

PASSING – Guetterman 2-12-22

RECEIVING – Vohs 2-22

TACKLES – Weston Guetterman 8, Konnor Vohs 7, Andy Hupp 7, Justin Collins 4, Kolby Kattau 4, Ben Wiedenmann 3, Jase Hovey 2, Aiden Barker 2, Alec Younggren 2, JR Rooney 2, Jay Scollin 1