

Lady Cats edge Tonganoxie for season's first win



Louisburg players surround Brylee Diederich after she caught the game's final out Thursday against Tonganoxie. The Lady Cats' 5-3 victory was their first of the season.

With three outs remaining, the Louisburg softball team and fans were on the edge of their seat.

What was at stake for the Lady Cats was their first win of the season as they took a two-run lead into the seventh inning Thursday against Tonganoxie at Lewis-Young Park.

Louisburg needed something positive to go its way after losing its first eight games to start the season and it got just that.

The Lady Cats, thanks to a couple big defensive plays in the seventh, came away with a 5-3 victory over the Chieftains and the players were more than happy to celebrate their first win.

"The girls were excited to get that win for each other," Louisburg coach Nick Chapman said. "We put together a full 7 inning game and grinded to get that win. I don't think I could put into words how proud I am of this group to grind that out.

"When Brylee (Diederich) caught that ball, I went crazy. It was just the build up of waiting for this team to play a game like that because I know they are capable of doing great

things this year. I'm just waiting for them to believe it and hopefully we are one step closer to that."



Junior Mia Wilson slides safely into home plate after she scored on a passed ball Thursday against Tonganoxie.

Several different players came up big for the Lady Cats, but maybe none bigger than Mia Wilson. The Louisburg junior pitched the final three innings of the game, allowed no hits, no runs and struck out four.

Wilson also contributed at the plate with an RBI single in a big sixth inning for Louisburg. She also had two runs batted in on the day and scored a run.

"Mia Wilson was huge," Chapman said. "She made plays in the field. The day before, she stayed after practice and we worked on those little bloopers between infield and outfield. Then the first ball hit to her was exactly that and she got to it and

made the play. It was huge to start the game making plays on defense. She was big on offense. She hit well, she laid down a sac bunt and I think ended up getting on base from it. She did some things that are not recorded in the stat book like some big time heads up baserunning to get to the next base.

“When we went through their lineup twice with Megan (Quinn), we threw Mia in there to pitch and she only had a half inning of warm up while we were hitting. She came in and shoved. Out of her 42 pitches, 31 of them were strikes. She was big time.”

Tonganoxie got out to good start against Louisburg early as the Chieftains took a 2-0 after the first inning, but the Lady Cats quickly rallied to take the lead. Louisburg used a 3-run second inning to grab the one-run advantage.

Megan Quinn led off with a walk and then pinch-runner Rylee Hickey stole second and went to third on a wild pitch. Wilson then reached on a Tonganoxie error, allowing Hickey to score.

Wilson would later go on to score on a passed ball and Brooklyn Diederich singled home sister Brylee Diederich to give Louisburg the lead.



Louisburg first baseman Megan Quinn stretches out for the ball during Thursday's game against Tonganoxie.

The Chieftains tied the game at 3-all in the top of the third, which set up the Lady Cat heroics in the sixth.

Louisburg loaded the bases after Brooklyn Diederich was hit by a pitch, Jenna Cauthon reached on an error and Izzy Moreland singled. Quinn was hit by a pitch that scored Brooklyn Diederich and Wilson followed it up with a single that scored Jenna Cauthon to make it 5-3.

Tonganoxie had one last chance in the seventh, but with two runners on, Brooklyn Diederich made a running catch in centerfield for the first out. Then after a ground ball out, Tonganoxie hit a fly ball to Brylee Diederich and the Lady Cats clinched the win.

"As tense as that game was, I'm glad we had to work to win

that game,” Chapman said. “It taught us how to win those close games. We had to execute some things at the plate. We had to execute on defense also. Our pitchers (Megan and Mia) are pitching their butts off this year and our defense had their backs.

“Brylee Diederich had four put outs on 4 fly balls that were not easy to hang with. Each of one them hung in the air forever and sometimes those are hard because it feels like they are in the air forever, especially when it’s to end the game. Her sister Brooklyn made 2 of her own and she had to really get to them. She has such amazing range and it’s always fun to watch her chase down a ball in center. If we don’t execute on both sides of the ball, we don’t win that game. We needed a game like that to show us that we are capable of doing great things.”

Louisburg will try and make it two in a row in a week that features two doubleheaders. The Lady Cats are scheduled to host Ottawa on Tuesday and then Osawatomie on Thursday at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch for both is set for 4:30 p.m.