

Wildcats roll to regional title game with rout of Bishop Ward



Louisburg freshman Hailey Sword battles a Eudora player earlier in the season. The Wildcats, who beat Bishop Ward 10-0 on Tuesday, will play Eudora for the regional championship today at Wildcat Stadium.

Finding the back of the net and taking advantage of opportunities have been a problem at times for the young Louisburg girls soccer team.

It wasn't Tuesday.

The Wildcats hosted Bishop Ward in the Class 4A regional semifinals and Louisburg made the most of its chances in a 10-0 victory.

Louisburg will now play host to Eudora today for the regional championship as the Wildcats look to advance to the state quarterfinals.

"We were in delay several times (due to lightning), but the girls came out and possessed the ball well and attacked," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I liked how aggressive we were and how our team moved the ball and found the open player. The girls were very unselfish and played a really nice game. They did a nice job communicating and playing simple. It was nice to see the girls play that way."

The Wildcats (10-6-1) dominated possession as they racked up 33 shots on goal and put away their fair share.

Senior Olivia Barber, along with freshmen Hailey Sword, Lola Edwards and Lexi Hampton, each finished with two goals.

Junior defender Ruth Minster got into the scoring action late with a goal off a corner kick and Catie Lemke came off the bench to score her first varsity goal of the season.

Reese Johnson was a catalyst for the Wildcat attack as she led the way with two assists. Adyson Ross, Tehya Harvey, Bree Gassman, Edwards and Barber each had an assist to their line.

The game also allowed Conley to empty his bench and everyone had the opportunity to play in the first playoff game of the year.

“It was nice to get every girl in the game and for a lot of them it was their first playoff game,” Conley said. “It was fun to watch them compete and play for each other. We dominated possession and did a very nice job of executing our game plan.”

It figures to be a bigger challenge for the Wildcats tonight against Eudora. Louisburg, which will host the Cardinals at 5 p.m. at Wildcat Stadium, split with Eudora during the season as each won on their home field.

With a regional championship on the line, stakes are much higher and Conley believes his team is ready for the challenge.

“This is going to be an absolute battle,” Conley said. “To me, both teams are solid and play well. I think this game is going to come down to who wants it more and who can execute. Weather could come into play and who can handle that the best will be a factor. Our girls are ready and are prepared. Eudora is a solid team and we will have to play well to beat them.”