

Hupp enjoys experience at Kansas Shrine Bowl



Louisburg grad Andy Hupp (36) runs onto the field with his defensive teammates during the Kansas Shrine Bowl on June 26 at Hutchinson Community College.

When the Louisburg football season came to an end last November, Andy Hupp thought his football playing days were done.

Hupp was ready to put the sport he loved behind him and focus on his future. However, football wasn't done with him just yet.

Earlier this year, Hupp was selected to participate in the 2021 Kansas Shrine Bowl and represent the East team on the defensive side of the ball.

So for one last time, Hupp put on the pads late last month and played about half of the game in the East's 14-0 loss at Hutchinson Community College.

Despite the defeat, the Shrine Bowl was an experience Hupp won't soon forget.

"It was a blessing to be able to strap up the pads one final time," Hupp said. "Although it was really fun creating a bond with players that I've always played against and been 'rivals' with (Branden Martin from Tonganoxie and Carter Stanchfield from Paola) I really missed playing this sport with my boys

back home.

“It is really sad that I will never play football again, but I left the game on one of the most prestigious notes possible in my opinion. So I am happy with the way my career ended.”



Hupp, who played on the defensive line, was a part of what was a defensive battle between the two teams.

The West had just a 7-0 lead late in the game before sealing the win late on a turnover and a score.

The Louisburg grad recorded two tackles in the contest as he played close to half of the snaps.

"It was a different feeling playing in this game," Hupp said. "It was a college regulated game with media breaks and 12 minute quarters so it was really fun with all of the different factors, especially when you add in the skill level of everyone on the field. It made it feel like a real college football game.

"I made a couple tackles, and a forced incomplection. There was one play where the quarterback was scrambling and I hit him pretty good and my nose started bleeding a lot so I had to go get that fixed."

Hupp reported to the Shrine Bowl practice a week before the game and the teams had two-a-day practices, scrimmages and film study.

However, it was the opportunity to meet the patients at the Shriners Hospital for Kids that was the highlight of Hupp's week.

"The experience was definitely one of a kind," he said. "Meeting some of the Shriners Hospital kids was by far the best part. Their stories are amazing and I've never seen bigger smiles.

"All in all, the Shrine Bowl experience was awesome and meeting those kids puts a lot into perspective. I'm glad I had the opportunity to play for them."