

Hallas earns first league medal for Louisburg girls wrestling



Louisburg senior Bailey Hallas took fourth at the Frontier League Girls Tournament on Feb. 4 and become the first Wildcat girls wrestler to earn a league medal. On Saturday, Hallas finished 0-2 at regionals to end her season.

Girls wrestling has taken off in some parts of the state, but in Louisburg, that momentum is slowly building.

Senior Bailey Hallas is the lone member of the Wildcat girls wrestling team, but that didn't stop her from making some history.

On Feb. 4, Hallas competed in the Frontier League Girls Tournament in Eudora and earned the program's first ever league medal in girls wrestling. Hallas finished fourth at 109 pounds.

"The whole program is very proud of how Bailey has been doing, and we were all excited to see her give it her best shot in the postseason," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "She's our first league medalist, and she's doing an awesome job of laying a strong foundation for girls wrestling at Louisburg High School."

Hallas finished 1-3 on the league tournament, but won her first match of the day with a pin of Bonner Springs' Kylie

Enriquez, which allowed her to place fourth and get on the medal stand.

Hallas tried to become the first Louisburg girls wrestler to earn a spot at the state tournament Saturday at the Class 4-1A regional tournament in Chanute, but finished the day with an 0-2 record.

The Louisburg senior finished her season with a 7-13 record, but didn't get to have the normal season that a lot of female wrestlers were fortunate to have.

"It's been tough trying to get her matches," Bovaird said. "Many of the schools on our schedule have separate schedules for their girls teams, so when we've hosted teams, their girls have been competing elsewhere. We were supposed to get Bailey into the Topeka Invitational since they were going to have a girls bracket, but that tournament ended up getting canceled due to inclement weather.

"We have been able to get her more matches this year than last year. She's been right in there with the guys all season long, doing the work they've been doing. She doesn't ask for special treatment, nor does she expect it. She's paying her dues with the rest of the team."

Although Hallas' season is over, she laying the groundwork for what Boviard hopes becomes a bigger program in the future.

"Girls wrestling is on the rise in our part of the state – Baldwin, Spring Hill, Paola, Ottawa, Fort Scott – they're all pushing toward the front of girls wrestling in Kansas," Bovaird said. "We'll be right up there soon. We've got girls with our youth wrestling club who are seeing a great deal of success, and they're bringing their friends into the mix. The girls are the best recruiters for the sport. Louisburg has a culture of strong female athletes, and that's evident every year with our volleyball, basketball, soccer, and track success.

“Unfortunately, along with that success comes the expectation for club or year-round participation in those sports. I’ve talked to countless high school girls who would have given wrestling a shot, but their schedules are pretty full with other activities. Bailey has been a great asset to the laying of the foundation for future generations of girls wrestlers though. Already, Bailey, Heather Eslinger (one of our Wildcat Wrestling Club coaches and mother of a 7th grade girl wrestler), and I have been talking strategy for recruiting and building.”