

# Wildcats medal six at Baldwin Invitational



*Louisburg senior Brandon Doles works for some back points during a match Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational. Doles, who finished fourth at 182 pounds, competed in his first tournament action in almost a season-and-a-half.*

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg wrestling team found itself in a very competitive tournament for the second straight week.

This time the Wildcats competed in the Baldwin Invitational Tournament that featured several state-ranked wrestlers and teams. Louisburg more than held its own.

Louisburg took eighth overall with 105 points in the 16-team tournament. The Wildcats also had several find the medal stand.

Senior Aiden Barker took second at 195 pounds, while freshman Ashton Moore was third at 170. Colton Blue (113 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126), Brayden Yoder (170) and Brandon Doles (182) each finished fourth.

“We could take the route of nothing but easy tournaments and inflate our records, but eventually we’re going to need to see these tough opponents,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “A tough schedule tests us and prepares us for the end stretch – league, regionals, and state. Last week, we talked about how an athlete needs to look at a test. A test isn’t something that is definitive; it’s an assessment of where we’re at now,

what we need to improve on, and what we're doing right."

Barker has been doing a lot right this season as he is currently the No. 4 ranked wrestler in Class 4A with a 24-5 record, with many of those losses coming against higher-ranked opponents.



***Louisburg senior Aiden Barker works for a pin Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational.***

One of those case in the championship match Saturday as Barker squared off with Wamego's Hayden Oviatt, who is currently the the No. 1 wrestler in 4A.

Oviatt pinned Barker in the first period, but had a strong day up to that point. He opened with a pain in the quarterfinals and then squared off with No. 6-ranked Jared Ferguson out of Ottawa, for the second time this week.

Barker controlled the match to take the 9-5 decision, which put him in the 195-pound finals.

“Aiden had a great tournament, but that Wamego kid is just plain unreal,” Bovaird said. “He’s only a junior, but at state he took 4th as a freshman at 160 and 3rd as a sophomore. Aiden will see him again at state.

“Overall, Aiden wrestled well. He opened with a solid win against a strong Goodland wrestler, and then had a rematch with Ferguson from Ottawa in the semifinals. He was in pretty good control that whole match.”

Saturday also marked the first tournament action in a year-and-a-half for Doles. The Louisburg senior missed last season due to a leg injury, and a shoulder injury sideline him for the first half of this season.

After getting his first win of the season last Thursday in a dual against Ottawa, Doles responded with a fourth-place finish at 182 pounds. Both of his losses came against Burlington’s Brock Zimmerman in what were close decisions.

Doles earned a pin in his first match of the day, and then followed with victories over Labette County’s Austin Ourada and Osawatomie’s Seth Carrow.

“Brandon has been missed on the mat this last year and a half, but he’s had a great presence as a sort of assistant coach in the meantime,” Bovaird said. “I loved getting to sit in his corner again this weekend. He’s got some things to overcome in regards to conditioning and confidence, but that’s understandable. He’s gotten through the hard part of having his first tournament back, so now it’s time to focus on getting in shape and knocking off the rust.”

Louisburg was also able to snag a pair of medals at 170 pounds as Moore and Yoder squared off with each other on two different occasions, with Moore winning both close matches.

“One pretty neat thing was that we had two freshmen place,” Bovaird said. “Ashton Moore had to wrestle his teammate Brayden Yoder twice, winning 3-1 and 1-0 both times. Those two are really going to push each other the next three years, and I’m excited to see what sort of a power-punch they’re going to give our line-up. We’re just pretty solid in that weight range.”

Blue finished with a 3-2 record at 113 pounds as he recorded a pair of pins in the consolation bracket, before falling in a 10-4 decision to Osawatomie’s Parker Layman in the third-place match.

Bartlett also had a 3-2 record at 126 pounds as he reached the semifinals, before losing a 4-1 decision to Prairie View’s Hagen Blanck. In the consolation side, he won a 5-0 decision over Rock Creek’s Spencer Bard, then lost a tough 3-2 decision to Goodland’s Octavio Gonzalez in the third-place match.

Baldwin hosted a girls invitational tournament Friday and senior Bailey Hallas battled to take fourth overall at 109 pounds.

Hallas finished the day with a 2-3 record and recorded two pins in the process.

Louisburg will now have some time off as the Wildcats won’t compete again until Feb. 9 when they travel to Eudora for the Frontier League Invitational.

## **Ottawa edges Louisburg in dual**

Despite winning its last three matches of the night, Louisburg came up just short last Thursday in its home dual with Ottawa.

The Cyclones topped the Wildcats, 37-34, but won some close matches.

The final match of the night came down to 195 pounds when

Aiden Barker, who is ranked No. 4 at 195, defeated No. 6 ranked Jared Ferguson in a big victory.



***Louisburg junior Elijah Eslinger gets a pin against his Ottawa opponent last Thursday in a league dual at Louisburg.***

At 182 pounds, senior Brandon Doles won by decision as he wrestled in his first match back from injury and freshman Ashton Moore won by major decision at 170.

Kaven Bartlett won by decision at 126, Jay McCaskill recorded a pin a 138, Colton Blue won by pin at 113 pound and Elijah Eslinger won his heavyweight match by pin.