

Koontz sweeps hurdles to lead Wildcats at league track



Louisburg senior Tom Koontz broke the Frontier League record in the 110 high hurdles and set a new personal record in the 300 hurdles on his way to two league titles Thursday at the Frontier League meet at Ottawa High School.

OTTAWA – They won league titles, set personal records and broke a league and school record, but despite all that, the Louisburg boys couldn't quite get their ultimate goal – a league title.

The Wildcat track team competed in the Frontier League Invitational on Thursday at Ottawa High School and finished runner-up in the team standings with 122 points. Eudora won the league title with 144 points.

Despite that little disappointment, the Wildcats still won league titles in four events and finished in the top two in three more.

“For the most part they all performed well due to the first time running in 90-plus degree temperatures and going against tough competition,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “We had some improvement throughout, and had guys gut it out by running multiple events in the heat.”

Senior Tom Koontz swept the hurdles to lead the Wildcats and did so in impressive fashion.

Koontz broke the Frontier League record the 110-meter high hurdles with a time of 14.59 seconds. He eclipsed the old time of 14.78 set by Paola's Carson Eilts in 2018.

Junior Mason Dobbins finished runner-up in the event in 15.31 and junior Nathan Apple was fourth in 15.49.

Despite hitting a couple hurdles in the 300, Koontz set a new personal best time of 39.39 seconds to win a league crown there as well. Apple was sixth in 42.18.

"It was nice to see his hard work pay off by setting a new league record," Wright said. "Tom ran a very clean race. In the 300s, after hitting a couple of hurdles, Tom was still able to improve his time. It's scary to think what time he would have run if he had run a clean race."

The Wildcats also won a pair of league titles in the field events.



Louisburg junior Nathan Vincent won the league title in the javelin with a throw of 163-9 Thursday in Ottawa.

Junior Nathan Vincent held off the field with a throw of 163 feet, 9 inches in the javelin to win gold. Eudora's Kole

Manley was second, just six inches behind Vincent.

In the long jump, Hayden Feikert saved his best jump for last. The Louisburg senior won the event with a personal-best mark of 20-10.5. The Wildcats now have three athletes that have jumped more than 20 feet this season.

"Hayden has been stuck at high 19's for the last three years," Wright said. "It was nice to see him finally break 20 feet and win the league his senior year. We do have a good jumping core with three jumpers over 20-7 plus. It is never the same person winning week to week."

Louisburg also had a pair of runner-up league finishes as Dobbins finished second in the high jump after he cleared 6-2.

Sophomore Caden Caplinger finished in a tie for second in the pole vault with Eudora's Kurtis McCormick as the two cleared 13-6.

The 4×100-meter relay made school history, but not with their league finish. The team of Koontz, Dobbins, Caplinger and Ethan Ptacek set a new school record time of 43.33 seconds, which was good for third overall.



(From left) Ethan Ptacek, Caden Caplinger, Mason Dobbins and Tom Koontz broke the school record in the 4×100 relay Thursday at the league meet in Ottawa.

They eclipsed the old mark of 43.34 that was set in 2019 by Charlie Koontz, Ben Wiedenmann, Blue Caplinger and Justin Collins.

“It’s hard to believe we got third place while breaking the school record,” Wright said. “That just shows how fast our league is. Our handoffs are getting better, but we have some room for improvements.”

The 4×400 relay of Hunter Heinrich, Colyer Wingfield, Koontz and Ptacek also knocked three seconds off their personal best and took third in 3:27.25.

Ptacek scored points in a pair of sprints as he finished fourth in the 400 in 52.02 and seventh in the 200 dash in 23.20. Dobbins also scored points in the 200 as he took fifth in 23.01.

In the distance races, senior Jaden Vohs raced against strong

competition and finished well. Vohs was third in both the 800 (2:03) and 1,600 meters (4:41).



Louisburg senior Jaden Vohs leans at the finish line with a Tonganoxie and Eudora runner at the conclusion of the 800-meter run.

Freshman Jerynce Brings Plenty was fourth in the 3,200-meter run in 10:47 and fifth the 1,600 in 4:46. Sophomore Noah Cotter was fifth in the 3,200 in 11:02.

The 4×800 relay of Cotter, Hunter Heinrich, Hayden Ross and Andrew Brown took seventh in 9:16.

In the field events, junior J.R. Rooney recorded a throw of 45-6 in the shot put to take third overall.

Senior Chase Pritchard led the Wildcats in the discus as he took fifth with a toss of 131-5 and Vincent was seventh at 129.

Junior Isaiah Whitley scored points in the high jump after he cleared 5-8 and took seventh.

Louisburg will now prepare for its most important competition

of the season – the Class 4A regional meet in Eudora. Field events begin at 1 p.m. on Friday as the top four in each event qualify for the state meet next week in Wichita.

“We are excited about regionals,” Wright said. “Our regional is hands down the toughest one in 4A. If you come out in the top four in our regional, then you have a good shot at medaling next week in state. We have a lot of opportunities to be in the top four, and I hope we go out and compete.”

Other results are:

100 dash: Jase Hovey, 18th, 11.85; Hayden Feikert, 19th, 11.98; Isaiah Whitley, 22nd, 12.04

200 dash: Cooper Hipp, 16th, 23.84

400 dash: Hunter Heinrich, 8th, 53.84; Hipp, 14th, 58.56

800 run: Andrew Brown, 17th, 2:20

1,600 run: Leo Martin, 18th, 5:20

3,200 run: Martin, 10th, 11:44

Pole vault: Remington Rice, 10th, 10-6

Long jump: Colyer Wingfield, 8th, 19-7; Hovey, 12th, 18-5.5

Shot put: Connor Lee, 11th, 41-4; Jaymes Melton, 14th, 40-6

Discus: Layne Ryals, 9th, 124-7

Javelin: Carson Wade, 10th, 125-5; Ryals, 13th, 119-1