

Lady Cats split with Piper as they enter postseason play



Members of the Louisburg softball team gather on the infield prior to the start of an inning during a game earlier this season. The Lady Cats split with Piper on Thursday at Lewis-Young Park.

In a matchup that was postponed twice during the season, Louisburg and Piper finally squared off on the softball diamond Thursday in Louisburg.

It was the regular season finale for both teams and Louisburg was able to come away with one victory to help give the Lady Cats some momentum going into the postseason.

Louisburg used a big inning to get past Piper, 7-4, in the opener before falling in the nightcap, 17-1. The Lady Cats ended the regular season with an 8-12 record after only winning one game a year ago.

“That win was huge for us in terms of us seeing that we can play with any team,” Louisburg coach Nick Chapman said. “We played like we are capable of.”

Piper jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first inning of the opener, but the Lady Cats responded with seven unanswered runs, including a 5-run fourth inning.

In that fourth inning, freshman Sabra Brueggen broke open a tie game with a single that allowed freshman Addy Stohs to

score and sophomore Rylee Hickey later scored on a passed ball.

After sophomore Jenna Cauthon singled home Brueggen, sophomore Izzy Moreland cleared the bases with a 2-run double that gave Louisburg a 7-1 lead.

"Their first two hitters were good and they helped them to a two run lead to start the game," Chapman said. "We didn't let that get to us. We put one run up the next inning. Another the inning after that and then our bats exploded for that big inning. We took team at-bats, put the ball in play and made things happen."

Louisburg pounded out 14 hits, including a team-high three hits from senior Mia Wilson. Cauthon, Moreland, Stohs and Brueggen each finished with two hits, while Moreland and Cauthon had three and two runs driven in, respectively.

On the mound, the combination of sophomore Megan Quinn and Moreland held the Pirates to just the four runs on six hits. Quinn gave up just one earned run in 4 1/3 innings and had three strikeouts, while Moreland pitched the rest of the way and gave up one earned run and had also had three strikeouts.

"Megan and Izzy worked really well together," Chapman said. "Megan pitched really strong. Everything was working for her. She hit her spots, made them put the ball in play and our defense made plays. Same with Izzy. She came in and Piper didn't adjust to what Izzy offered. Those two are pitching really well down the stretch and are going to be huge for us this week in our regional."

The Lady Cats begin postseason play Tuesday as they travel to the Eudora regional. Louisburg earned the No. 10 seed and will face No. 7 Tonganoxie at 3 p.m.

If the Lady Cats advance, they will play the winner between No. 2 Eudora and No. 15 Paola later in the evening.

"I think we are ready for this week," Chapman said. "We happened to find ourselves in an all-Frontier League regional, which stinks because we don't see someone we haven't met, but it's nice because we know what to expect for the most part.

"We didn't play our best last time we played Tongie and we are playing our best softball right now. It's playoff time. Everyone is 0-0 again and anything can happen."