

Wildcats tie Tonganoxie in second straight double overtime match



Louisburg senior Matthew Sword battles a Lansing player to clear the ball out of the back during the Wildcats' home match on Sept. 13.

TONGANOXIE – Playing one double overtime match is grueling enough, but Louisburg found itself in its second in a matter of three days.

The Wildcats, who were trying to end their three-game losing skid, found themselves deadlocked Thursday against Tonganoxie. Twice the Wildcats had the lead, only to see the Chieftains tied it back up on both occasions to force overtime.

Louisburg was able to end its losing streak, but not in the manner it wanted as the Wildcats left Tonganoxie with a 2-2 tie. Still, Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird believes his team will use it as a positive and is better than its 1-3-1 record indicates.

“Soccer is a weird sport,” Bovaird said. “How many other games can end in a tie, even after an overtime period? The frustrating thing is coming off a 100-minute game and doing all that work but only being able to say it was a tie. It is nice to see the losing skid come to an end. Louisburg soccer is not used to that sort of start to a season. Granted, we’ve only played 5A and 6A teams up to this point, but we’ve been

competitive.

“With the exception of the Gardner game, we’ve had the majority of possession time in our games. On top of that, we’ve had some pretty good success rates at connecting passes. We’ve been working on playing possession soccer and using that style to wear down our opponents, and with the stats from each game, we’ve been improving every time.”

The Wildcats opened the scoring in the 10th minute as sophomore Colton Blue passed the ball to middle, where the ball was deflected in the box and senior Colin McManigal was there to tap it past the goalie.



Senior Toby Espina-Roca heads the ball away during the Wildcat's match against Lansing on Sept. 13.

The Chieftains tied it up moments later, but in the 34th minute, McManigal put a shot on goal that bounced off the post

and Blue knocked it in to give Louisburg a 2-1 halftime lead.

Tonganoxie tied the match again later in the second half to force the overtime periods, in which both teams had opportunities, but couldn't find the back of the net.

"It's tough to go the distance plus overtime in any game, but when you have two games like that in a span of three days, it takes a toll," Bovaird said. "I think it was good, though, because it's helping us get into game shape. Running and doing drills at practice can only do so much for game conditioning, but real live soccer against an unfamiliar opponent can give us the chance to push ourselves further than we typically could at practice. The important thing is that we take care of our bodies and give them the recovery that they need."

McManigal had five shots on goal to lead the Wildcats and fellow senior Cade Gassman added three in the loss.

The Wildcats will try for their second win on the season Tuesday when they travel to Spring Hill, which is one of the top teams in the Frontier League.

"Louisburg soccer isn't used to having a losing record, but this is a new year and a new team," Bovaird said. "Bringing Coach (Ben) York back on staff has been a huge help with redefining what our program is all about. We're not wiping the slate clean and starting fresh; rather, we're taking what has brought us success in the past and making adjustments based on the strengths of the individuals in the program. I'm hopeful for the next few games. Spring Hill will be a tough one, as always, but in this sport, anything can happen. I love the attitudes of our guys so far this season."

Wildcats fall to Lansing in double

overtime

With just seconds left in its home match against Lansing on Sept. 13, Louisburg was in desperate need of a goal and Colin McManigal came through.

McManigal was in the right spot at the right time as he took the rebound off a Gavin York shot and put it away to tie the match with 56 seconds left in regulation. Unfortunately, the Wildcats couldn't compete the comeback as Lansing scored in the second overtime to hand Louisburg a 3-2 home loss.



Colin McManigal celebrates his game-tying goal on Sept. 13 against Lansing.

The Wildcats were called for a penalty in the box and Lansing was awarded a penalty kick. The Lions converted the opportunity to leave Louisburg with a win.

“On paper and in the match report, we were the more dominant team than Lansing, but in the end, it’s about scoring goals and we weren’t able to do that,” Bovaird said. “We out-possessed them, out-shot them, and out-worked them –

especially in the overtime period – but it came down to an unfortunate situation in the penalty box that gave them the game-winning goal.

“While it was a physical game, I think the things that hurt us were our inability to produce longer strings of passes and possession, along with not being able to get our shots on frame. Don’t get me wrong, the guys played with so much heart and passion, and I’m very proud of them for that. It’s still early in the season, and despite our record, we’re moving in the right direction.”

Louisburg got on the board first as senior Toby Espina-Roca found the upper-right corner of the net on a shot from about 20 yards out to give Louisburg a lead midway through the first half.

Lansing responded five minutes later to tied the match and then took the lead early in the second half.

Then came McManigal’s goal, which gave the Wildcats a jolt of momentum.

“One of the greatest things I’m seeing from Colin is his confidence and his determination,” Bovaird said. “I love the example he’s setting for the younger players. He is so close to turning the corner and hitting the back of the net quite a bit more, and I’m confident that he’ll continue to lead and step up to the challenges in front of him.”