

Wildcats place fourth at Tongie; Bartlett wins 138-pound title



Louisburg senior Kaven Bartlett works for a pin Saturday during the Randy Starcher Invitational at Tongnaoxie High School. Bartlett won the 138-pound class.

TONGANOXIE – The Louisburg wrestling team competed in its first individual bracket tournament of the season Saturday at the Randy Starcher Invitational.

It was a strong showing for the Wildcats as they finished fourth in the team standings with 174.5 points in the 11-team tournament at Tonganoxie High School. Louisburg also had three wrestlers earn spots in the championship match.

Tonganoxie won the tournament with 251.5 points and Clay Center was second at 225. Savannah (Mo.) was third with 176.

“I was pretty pleased with everything on Saturday,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We were in and out of second place throughout the day, but in the end a few things just didn’t go our way. Tonganoxie is a strong team, and they held the lead for most of the tournament.

“The great thing is that the teams finishing in third through sixth place were only three points apart from one another. We even finished ahead of a state-ranked team, Independence, that was at full strength with its lineup.”

Wildcat senior Kaven Bartlett, who is currently ranked No. 3 in Class 4A at 138 pounds, lived up to his ranking as he finished the day with five wins. He opened the tournament with a win by tech fall, but then recorded three straight pins.

Bartlett squared off with Independence's Josh Lawrie in the final and scored a 3-0 decision. He is now currently 15-0 on the season.

"Kaven is showing so much confidence and determination this season," Bovaird said. "He's on a mission, that's for sure, and he's emerging as an incredible leader for the team. Whether it's at practice or in between matches at tournaments, he does a phenomenal job working with his teammates. He was solid on the mat this weekend, especially on his feet."



Louisburg senior Elijah Eslinger put his opponent from Independence on his back Saturday. Eslinger finished second at 285 pounds.

Another senior, Elijah Eslinger, also entered the tournament undefeated and was ranked No. 5 at 285 pounds in Class 4A. He breezed through his first four matches as he won all four by pin in under a minute.

Eslinger then squared off with Clay Center's Luke Young in the championship. Young, who is ranked No. 3 in Class 4A, pinned Eslinger in the first period and the Louisburg senior finished second overall. He is 14-1 on the year.

Sophomore Jay McCaskill also found himself in the top two at 157 pounds. After he received a bye in the first round, he recorded three straight pins to advance to the first place match.

McCaskill faced off with Clay Center's Talyn Pfizenmaier in the championship and McCaskill fell in a 6-0 decision to take second. McCaskill is currently 11-3 on the season.



Louisburg sophomore Jay McCaskill finished second at 157 pounds.

“Elijah and Jay both ran into a couple of ranked kids from Clay Center in their finals match,” Bovaird said. “Jay was able to hang with his opponent for most of the match. He’s showing a lot of smoothness and confidence on the mat, which is great for a sophomore to be showing. Elijah has grown so much from last season to this one, and I’m seeing a lot of diversity with his wrestling. He’s opened up his repertoire of moves, which is going to be huge for the postseason.”

Five other Wildcats also left Tonganoxie with some hardware. Sophomore Will Showalter (106 pounds), junior J'Lee Collins (126), sophomore Logan Henry (132), senior Jesse Murphy (144) and senior Trace Eslinger (215) all earned fourth place medals.

“With this being our first tournament of the year with individual brackets, it was nice to see the guys win some hardware,” Bovaird said. “They won their first medals of the season, and it was the first ever varsity medal for several of them. Our younger guys are showing so much growth this season, and it’s pretty exciting to see their progress.”



Louisburg junior J'Lee Collins was one of five Wildcats to earn fourth place medals Saturday in Tonganoxie.

Now the Wildcats are off for the rest of 2022 and will open the 2023 part of their schedule at home on Jan. 7 when they host the Louisburg Invitational.

Bovaird has liked what he has seen so far and is looking forward to what the rest of the season has in store.

“We’re entering the break with a 5-5 dual record and a fourth place finish at a pretty tough tournament,” Bovaird said.

“Over half of our varsity wrestlers have .500 records or better, and we’ve been able to field a full lineup at most of our competitions. We’re missing a key returner with Ashton Moore, who’s certified to wrestle at 175 this season. We’ll know more soon about when he’s going to be back for us. There’s still a bunch of newer wrestlers who are filling it at varsity, and I love the mindset that they’re bringing to the mats.”

106

Myke McKitrick (0-3) placed 6th.

- Round 1 – Mason Gibbons (Independence) 11-0 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 3:55)
- Round 2 – Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 3 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 2:37)
- 5th Place Match – Myles Curry (Topeka-Highland Park) 7-3 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 3:32)

106

Will Showalter (6-7) placed 4th and scored 9.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 2 – Mason Gibbons (Independence) 11-0 won by tech fall over Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 (TF-1.5 3:02 (16-1))
- Round 3 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 2:37)
- 3rd Place Match – Miller Coffman (Clay Center Community)

5-4 won by fall over Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7
(Fall 0:00)

113

Broden Vargo (1-3) placed 6th and scored 8.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 won by forfeit over SCRATCH-Christopher SCRATCH-Switzer (East (Kansas City)) 2-6 (For.)
- Round 3 – Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 4 – Kayden Chance (Frontenac) 9-4 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 0:23)
- Round 5 – Jordan Bauswell (Tonganoxie) 5-6 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 3:52)
- 5th Place Match – Kyle Sloan (Frontenac) 4-2 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 0:29)

120

Keegan Rogers (3-8) placed 9th and scored 2.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Cash Wilderman (Frontenac) 14-0 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 1:36)
- Round 2 – Hawken Andrews (Eudora) 12-4 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 1:25)
- Round 3 – Clayton Crookham (Tonganoxie) 7-5 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 0:57)
- Round 4 – Jack Fairbank (Independence) 4-8 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 2:58)
- 9th Place Match – Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 won by fall over Chris Switzer (East (Kansas City)) 0-5 (Fall 4:24)

126

J`Lee Collins (7-6) placed 4th and scored 11.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Dax Duffett (Tonganoxie) 3-2 won by fall over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Fall 4:35)
- Round 2 – J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 won by fall over Owen Leffert (Tonganoxie) 5-11 (Fall 0:34)
- Round 3 – JT Alton (Clay Center Community) 8-4 won by decision over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Dec 8-6)
- Round 4 – J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 won by fall over Noah Van Foeken (Eudora) 7-9 (Fall 1:01)
- Round 5 – Gage Schottel (Savannah) 8-3 won by fall over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Fall 1:54)

132

Mika McKitrick (5-8) placed 5th.

- Round 1 – Kohen Wright (Independence) 12-0 won by tech fall over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 (TF-1.5 3:09 (24-8))
- Round 2 – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by major decision over Tanner Yankovich (Eudora) 9-7 (MD 10-2)
- Round 3 – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by decision over Caiben Shaffner (Clay Center Community) 0-4 (Dec 8-3)
- Round 4 – Jomar Pero (Frontenac) 7-4 won by fall over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 (Fall 3:12)
- 5th Place Match – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by fall over Payton Coleman (Tonganoxie) 2-9 (Fall 0:33)

132

Logan Henry (4-3) placed 4th and scored 16.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 won by fall over Payton Coleman (Tonganoxie) 2-9 (Fall 0:40)
- Round 2 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 3 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 won by fall over Bryson Jeffers (Savannah) 2-11 (Fall 0:29)
- Round 5 – Bergen Souder (Frontenac) 4-1 won by fall over Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 (Fall 1:27)
- 3rd Place Match – Jomar Pero (Frontenac) 7-4 won by fall over Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 (Fall 2:47)

138

Kaven Bartlett (15-0) placed 1st and scored 32.5 team points.

- Round 1 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by tech fall over Scott Sloan (Frontenac) 1-4 (TF-1.5 3:11 (16-0))
- Round 2 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Wesley Borger (Eudora) 8-8 (Fall 0:49)
- Round 4 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Aiden Lessard (Lansing) 2-8 (Fall 1:14)
- Round 5 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Deagen Pasley (Savannah) 10-7 (Fall 0:55)
- 1st Place Match – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by decision over Josh Lawrie (Independence) 9-3 (Dec 3-0)

144

Jesse Murphy (10-5) placed 4th and scored 18.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Todd Brown (Tonganoxie) 3-2 (Fall 2:36)
- Round 3 – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Chase Davis (Frontenac) 9-5 (Fall 1:31)
- Quarterfinal – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Taylor Dumas (Clay Center Community) 10-7 (Fall 4:30)
- Semifinal – Justin Shields (Lansing) 15-1 won by fall over Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 (Fall 1:47)
- 3rd Place Match – Lincoln LaFave (Savannah) 11-3 won by fall over Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 (Fall 2:43)

150

Colin Robinson (0-7) placed 10th and scored 0.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Braeden VanDonge (Eudora) 9-2 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 1:10)
- Round 2 – Wyatt Frazier (Frontenac) 11-3 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 3:16)
- Round 3 – Tommy Messersmith (Tonganoxie) 13-2 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 0:50)
- Round 4 – Juma Byaombe (East (Kansas City)) 4-8 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 0:50)
- 9th Place Match – Austin Howell (Lansing) 6-9 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 1:11)

157

Jay McCaskill (11-3) placed 2nd and scored 26.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 2 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Justice Rockhold (Lansing) 2-2 (Fall 0:53)

- Round 3 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Jack Messersmith (Tonganoxie) 6-7 (Fall 2:23)
- Round 5 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Mikia Hill (East (Kansas City)) 6-5 (Fall 0:57)
- 1st Place Match – Talyn Pfizenmaier (Clay Center Community) 9-1 won by decision over Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 (Dec 6-0)

165

Vance Hahn (0-15) placed 6th and scored 3.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Alex Williams (Frontenac) 8-6 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:05)
- Round 2 – Colton Brusven (Tonganoxie) 7-2 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:14)
- Round 3 – Chance Phillips (Savannah) 9-4 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 0:48)
- Round 4 – Brett Loader (Clay Center Community) 14-2 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 0:59)
- Round 5 – Thomas Romero (Eudora) 1-4 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:08)

175

Brecon Klugman (2-8) placed 9th and scored 0.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Braedon Speer (Eudora) 14-2 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:49)
- Round 3 – Robert Ragland (Savannah) 3-9 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:27)
- Round 4 – Tucker Jackson (Clay Center Community) 9-1 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 1:29)
- Round 5 – Adrian Burney (Topeka-Highland Park) 8-4 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:38)

- 9th Place Match – Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 received a bye () (Bye)

190

Brayden Yoder (10-5) placed 5th and scored 11.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by decision over Cael Dye (Tonganoxie) 13-3 (Dec 4-3)
- Round 3 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by decision over Thomas Ramsey (East (Kansas City)) 8-4 (Dec 9-6)
- Quarterfinal – Isaiah Melugin (Independence) 6-6 won in sudden victory – 1 over Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 (SV-1 11-9)
- Cons. Round 1 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Jacob Holt (Frontenac) 8-5 (Fall 5:14)
- 5th Place Match – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by injury default over Ethan Tiers (Clay Center Community) 12-4 (Inj. 0:00)

215

Trace Eslinger (10-3) placed 4th and scored 18.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Branden Gregory (Eudora) 2-9 (Fall 1:25)
- Round 2 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Isaiah White (East (Kansas City)) 0-5 (Fall 0:40)
- Round 3 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Angel Contraras (Kansas City-JC Harmon) 5-3 (Fall 2:47)
- Round 5 – Caden Baragary (Lansing) 11-1 won by fall over Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 (Fall 1:04)
- 3rd Place Match – Braylon Berry (Clay Center Community) 14-3 won by fall over Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3

(Fall 1:52)

215

Kyle Oram (3-3) placed 6th.

- Round 1 – Braylon Berry (Clay Center Community) 14-3 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 0:47)
- Round 3 – Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 4 – Hunter Benedict (Tonganoxie) 8-2 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 0:13)
- Round 5 – Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 won by fall over Jacob Lorraine (Savannah) 3-8 (Fall 2:32)
- 5th Place Match – Angel Contraras (Kansas City-JC Harmon) 5-3 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 1:29)

285

Elijah Eslinger (14-1) placed 2nd and scored 20.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Jake Garris (Independence) 4-8 (Fall 0:39)
- Round 2 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Brandon Collins (Topeka-Highland Park) 3-11 (Fall 0:36)
- Round 3 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Kevin Whitten (Eudora) 7-9 (Fall 0:11)
- Round 4 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Gavin Rhoads (Tonganoxie) 7-4 (Fall 0:38)
- Round 5 – Luke Young (Clay Center Community) 16-1 won by fall over Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 (Fall 0:17)