

Wildcats shutout Bonner Springs on emotional Senior Night



Lexi Hampton gives senior Tehya Harvey a big hug following her first goal of the season, while fellow senior Adyson Ross comes in to celebrate Thursday during the Wildcats' shutout of Bonner Springs on Senior Night. Harvey played in her first game of the season after suffering an ACL tear.

Senior night usually brings out a plethora of emotions and Thursday for the Louisburg girls soccer team was no different.

In fact, it might have had a few more tugs at the heart strings.

As happy as the Wildcats were to end their regular season home schedule with a 5-0 victory over Bonner Springs, it was how they did it, and who they honored, that made it even more special.

Despite have to dodge rain drops for much of the night, the Wildcats honored their senior class of Brylee Diederich, Bree Gassman, Tehya Harvey, Brianne Kuhlman and Adyson Ross and did so in convincing fashion.

The victory pushed the Wildcats' record to 10-4 on the season as they look to continue to improve with the postseason looming.

"I told the (senior) girls the other night that I don't have any regrets about the season, but my only regret is that I have only been around them a year," Louisburg coach Ben York said. "They are a great group of girls. They like to joke and laugh a lot, but when it comes down to it, they are ready to go compete when its time.

"There was already such a good foundation here when I started and the seniors are a part of that. They are just a fun group to be around and they have made a big impact on the program. Now we just want to send them out in the best way possible."



Louisburg honored eight seniors prior to the Wildcats' game against Bonner Springs on Thursday. Pictured, from left, are Tehya Harvey, Brianne Kuhlman, Adyson Ross, Brylee Diederich, Bree Gassman and managers Ayden Deterding, Gavin York and Matthew Sword.

Soccer didn't even seem in the cards this season for one of the Wildcat seniors. Harvey tore her ACL in the fall and she thought her season was over.

It was a devastating blow, but it didn't let it stop her from trying to make it back. That journey ended with one of the most memorable moments of the season to date.

Not only was Harvey able to play limited minutes, but she made a big impact on the game.

Junior Lexi Hampton had a breakaway opportunity late in the first half, but saw Harvey on the opposite side of the field. Hampton made the perfect pass that found Harvey's foot as she put it in the back of the net to score her first goal of the season.

"Not sure I would have seen that coming six months ago when we found out about her injury," York said. "I don't know you could write a movie script better than what actually happened. When we found out she was having ACL surgery, she was emotional. I told her whatever happens, we would get her whatever time we could on Senior Night.

"It might be a pivotal moment for Tehya. It was neat to see the connection her and Lexi had. It was a very unselfish moment there from Lexi as she could have scored the goal herself, but it was a neat deal to be a part of. I was proud to be on the sidelines just to watch it all. Everyone has always been supportive of her and I think we all enjoyed the moment."



Louisburg senior Brylee Diederich beats a Bonner Springs player to a 50-50 ball Thursday.

Harvey's goal put up the Wildcats up 2-0, as just moments before, Diederich opened the scoring to get a goal on Senior Night.

Early in the second half, the Wildcats increased the lead to 3-0 when Hampton scored off an assist from Ross. It was Ross who followed that up with a goal of her own to make it a 4-0 contest.

Hampton completed the scoring with her second goal of the night as the Wildcat dominated possession from start to finish.

This was the second meeting between the two teams as the Wildcats defeated Bonner Springs 10-0 earlier in the season.

"I don't expect a lot out of senior night as there is so many distractions, but we got the win and that is the most important," York said. "I wasn't frustrated that we weren't scoring as much, even though we had multiple opportunities. The girls just stayed the course and didn't get frustrated, which was good to see. Bonner was not the same team we played earlier in the year and they have improved as well."



Senior defender Brianne Kuhlman heads the ball away Thursday against Bonner Springs.

It was a nice win for the Wildcats as they were coming off a difficult 2-0 loss to Basehor-Linwood last Tuesday.

"We got off to a slow start and felt like a couple players weren't firing 100 percent and it was one of those midseason games where you can't explain why things happen the way they do," York said. "I think if we were to see them again it would be different, but they have some fast girls. It was their senior night too and I think they were pretty inspired. It was a weird night for us, and we had plenty of opportunities especially late, but we just didn't play well.

The Wildcats will end the regular season this week as they travel to Ottawa today and Lansing on Thursday.

"The last two-and-a half weeks we have made a ton of progress," York said. "This coming week is going to be a good measuring stick with where we are at. We are all healthy and are in a good spot. We have had some good practices, and if we can get out and play quick, then we can do good things. We

have things we have been working on all season that are coming around too. Hopefully by the end of the year we can see it all come together.”