

# White's two goals rally Wildcats past Leavenworth in opener



*Louisburg junior Emmett White celebrates his go-ahead goal late in the second half Tuesday against Leavenworth.*

For the first 60 minutes on Monday in its season opener, Louisburg had Leavenworth right where it wanted it.

The Wildcats led the Pioneers by a goal midway through the second half, and then the match became a fireworks show. Leavenworth scored twice to take the lead and turned the game on its head.

Then the match changed once again. Louisburg junior Emmett White answered back as he scored a pair of goals in the final 10 minutes to give the Wildcats a come-from-behind 3-2 victory over Leavenworth.

For a team that took the field with just two returning starters, and very little varsity experience, the Wildcats didn't let getting down late get to them.

"That's what the game is all about – overcoming adversity," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Starting off the year with a win was a major stepping stone for us. A lot of the guys were feeling nervous since it was the first varsity time many of them have played. Combine that with the natural jitters that athletes feel for their first game of the season,

and it can be an emotional ringer that they go through. I'm proud of how they played, holding onto the lead for most of the game, and then coming back after conceding two goals."

Leavenworth looked like it was going to spoil the Wildcats' opener with a pair of goals midway through the second half and took a 2-1 advantage. Time was running out on Louisburg.

White became the aggressor for the Wildcats as he scored the tying goal with 8 minutes remaining in the match on a through ball from sophomore Owen Marsh. Then two minutes later, White struck again.

He found himself at the top of the box as the ball came right at him and he struck it past the Pioneer goalie to put the Wildcats back on top for good.



***Louisburg senior John Powls heads the ball away in the box***

## ***Tuesday at home against Leavenworth.***

After just one match, White has already eclipsed his scoring mark from a year ago after getting shutout in that category.

“Emmett has already made a statement on offense this season,” Bovaird said. “He didn’t get any goals last year and only had two assists, but in one game he’s scored twice and was a solid presence in the midfield. If you were there and witnessed his playing, you could see the passion in his body language, his refusal to give up, and his leadership in front of his peers.”

Louisburg senior John Powls opened the scoring in the game’s first 10 minutes as he scored on a breakaway opportunity to give the Wildcats a 1-0 lead – an advantage they would hold for nearly 50 minutes.

In between that time, the Wildcats had opportunities to increase their lead as White had a potential goal that was taken away due to an offside call.

White was also fouled near the box, and instead of being awarded a penalty kick, the ball was spotted just outside that took another scoring opportunity away.

Junior Colton Blue also had two shots on goal, including one that was stopped on a diving save by the Leavenworth keeper.

The Wildcat defense held strong for much of the contest and sophomore goalie Evan Moreland tallied four saves in his varsity debut.





***Louisburg senior Evan Moreland slides in for a diving save Tuesday against Leavenworth.***

It was a much-needed win and confidence builder for a team that had much of their roster play in its first-ever varsity contest.

“I told the guys before the game started that discipline is never pleasant,” Bovaird said. “In fact, it’s often painful, but those who remain true to their training will reap the benefits in the end. That’s our goal this season – pursuing excellence by focusing on the details and remaining disciplined throughout the game. We all know it’s almost a completely new team out there this year, but you can’t overlook the hard work that they’ve all put in during the off-season.

“All last year, we knew that there were 15 of our teammates who wouldn’t be coming back. This year’s squad is full of guys who truly believe they can step up and represent LHS on the

field. Monday's game wasn't the prettiest, and we witnessed some major things we need to work on fixing, but that's the easy part. These guys have already made the commitment to giving it all they've got."

Louisburg will try and build on this win tonight as the Wildcats travel to Independence for a 6 p.m. start.