

Wildcats see improvement despite losses to Eudora, Topeka High



Louisburg forward Owen Marsh works for an opening during a match earlier this season.

Ever since its win in the season opener, the Louisburg boys soccer team has faced its fair share of obstacles and tough breaks.

The Wildcats have played overtime matches, suffered other close losses and have gone up against bigger schools and programs. They have also had to deal with their fair share of injuries.

Louisburg just finished up a six-game stretch in 11 days that saw the Wildcats have to fight through those bumps and bruises. It ended this past week with a pair of losses to Eudora and Topeka High.

On Thursday, the Wildcats lost a tough 1-0 match to Eudora, before falling 4-0 on Saturday on the road against Topeka. Louisburg has lost its last seven matches, but for a roster

filled with young, inexperienced players, they are battling to the end.

“The Eudora and Topeka games mark the end of a gauntlet that we’ve been running these past two weeks,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “I mean, six games in 11 days is pretty tough for any team, let alone team as young as we are.

“Our schedule can be pretty brutal, but our goal is to prepare our guys for each game so that they play their best, regardless of the size of our opponents’ schools.”

Against Eudora, the Cardinals scored the game’s lone goal midway through the first half on a cross into the box.

The Wildcats had their fair share of opportunities as they took 12 shots on the night, including three from Emmett White. Owen Marsh and Colton Blue also had shots on target.

Louisburg goalie Evan Moreland helped keep the game close with six saves and two blocked shots.

“We went head-to-head with Eudora, a team with quite a bit of returning experience and leadership,” Bovaird said. “They’ve had some tough losses this season, and I’m very proud with how we battled.”

On Saturday against Topeka, the Wildcats squared off with the Class 6A team and the Trojans put the pressure on the Wildcats from the start.

Topeka scored two first half goals and took 43 shots on the day, including 19 on target. Moreland was busy in the net with 15 saves, including eight blocked shots.

“Topeka is a very talented 6A team, and they put a lot of speed and power on the field,” Bovaird said. “That team is a shooting team, that’s for sure. We held our own with them the second half of the game and limited their shots from outside as much as we could.”

Louisburg will have another tough week ahead of itself as it will square off with two of the Frontier League's top teams in Baldwin and Spring Hill. The Wildcats travel to Baldwin today for a league match.

As tough as the schedule is, Bovaird sees his young team improving each time out.

"Each game sees a marked improvement from our guys," he said. "It's not evident from the scoreboard or the stat sheets, but you can see growth and development happening all over the field. We're young, but no one is going to out-work us this season."