

Wildcats rally past Basehor-Linwood in overtime to win season opener



It could have easily went the other way for the Louisburg boys soccer team.

After giving up a goal in the opening minutes of Tuesday's

season opening match at Basehor-Linwood, the Wildcats could have looked back at their 4-win season a year ago and all those close games that didn't go their way.

Doubts could have crept in the minds of the Wildcat players – but they didn't let it happen.

Instead, the Wildcats persevered, and after they recorded the game-tying goal in the second half, senior Emmett White scored the golden goal in overtime to give Louisburg a 2-1 victory to begin its season with a positive result.

“If you rewind to our first overtime game of last year's season, we were tied up with Bonner Springs and playing great, but then things went south when they scored off an own goal in overtime,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Now with this season, the guys kept their fire going, even when things weren't really going our way. They were disciplined and they believed in the process. Winning like that in overtime really helped reinforce so much of what coach (Nick) White and I are trying to instill in the team.”

Louisburg (1-0) found itself down in the game's opening minutes, and had their opportunities to tie it later in the first half and early in the second half, but couldn't get the opportunities to go.

The Wildcats finally broke through the Basehor defense as junior Owen Marsh played a through ball that found the foot of Colton Blue and the Louisburg senior found the back of the net midway through the second half.

“We started off a little flat, and they got an early goal on us,” Bovaird said. “That definitely wasn't how we wanted to begin the game. We had so much possession, and by watching the game you can tell it's a much improved team from last year. Their goal came off a little lapse with our back line, but they shaped up and held their own the rest of the game.”

“Basehor didn’t really make many threats after that goal. We evened things up in the second half when Owen sent a through-ball past the defense for Colton. Colton’s timing was perfect, he stayed onside until the ball went through, and he went to goal with precision and composure.”

The match eventually went to overtime, and toward the end of the 10 extra minutes, the Wildcats got their second goal.

Ryan Barberich sent a long pass into the middle box, which found the chest of White, who settled the ball and put it past the Basehor keeper for the game-winner.

It is that perseverance that Bovaird hopes will propel his team to several more wins this season.

“We’re trying some new things with our formation, which allowed for a few hiccups, but it’s a process of learning, Bovaird said. “The guys are savvy enough soccer players that they’re figuring things out pretty quickly. We didn’t have one of our seniors due to illness, but with a little adjustment of sliding Owen Marsh back to center mid and putting Brody Bovaird up top in his place, we overcame that obstacle. Our starters did a phenomenal job, and our subs stepped right in and played their part.

“Sure, going down 1-0 within the first few minutes of the game isn’t ideal, missing out on getting calls to go our way is frustrating, and being unable to capitalize on some good scoring opportunities runs the risk of breaking down with our style. But the thing is that these guys kept their faith, they refused to let frustration set in, and they were resilient through it all. That’s an outstanding preview of what we hope to be a great season.”

Louisburg will try for two straight wins Thursday as the Wildcats host Independence for a 6 p.m. start at the Wildcat Soccer Stadium.