

Wildcat defense rises to occasion in road win over Ottawa



Louisburg senior Brayden Yoder brings down Ottawa quarterback Haydon Hull on Friday during the Wildcats' 17-7 win over the Cyclones.

OTTAWA – In what was the final game of its 3-game road trip, the Louisburg football team faced its toughest challenge to date.

The Wildcats traveled to Ottawa and went up against a 1-loss Cyclone team that had its eyes on a Frontier League title themselves.

Louisburg quickly dashed those hopes and showed why it is the 2-time defending league champion.

The Wildcat defense held the Ottawa offense to just seven points and Louisburg used two long drives that helped it to a 17-7 victory Friday.

Louisburg maintained its perfect season with a 7-0 record and is still currently ranked No. 1 in Class 4A.

“This was definitely a good game for us to experience,” Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. “We faced some adversity and they certainly had all the momentum there to start the second half. For the guys continuing to play through that and getting the win was good and hopefully this type of game will benefit us in the future.”

As much as the Wildcat offense has thrived this season, it was their defense that came through with its best performance of the year. Louisburg held Ottawa to its lowest point total of the season.

Ottawa’s previous lowest total was 21 points in a loss to Eudora and the Wildcats made a lot of big stops against the Cyclones’ high-powered offense.



Louisburg senior Miles Meek sacks the Ottawa quarterback last Friday during the Wildcats' win at Ottawa.

"They played really, really well and playing to the scheme and knowing their assignment," Harding said of the defense. "We did a really good job. We gave up a few big plays that we shouldn't have, but this team is very explosive, and to hold them to seven points is a good performance."

"Ottawa has a good running back, some good wide receivers and a quarterback that can make some plays. Their offensive line is good too. They are a well-rounded team and they were 5-1 coming in for a reason, so to walk out with a win feels good."

Louisburg got on the board first in the opening quarter as the Wildcats drove 97-yards to score the game's first touchdown. On a fourth down and goal from the 1, senior Ashton Moore ran it in to put the Wildcats up 7-0.

Ottawa drove down near the redzone on its next possession, but senior Logan Henry picked off a pass in the endzone to prevent

a Cyclone score.

The Wildcats put together another drive in the second quarter that ended on a 41-yard field goal by Blaise Vohs and Louisburg took a 10-0 lead at halftime.

Ottawa came out with a vengeance after halftime. The Cyclones forced a punt on the Wildcats' first drive of the half, and then scored on a 26-yard pass to cut the Louisburg lead to three.

After the Cyclones forced another Wildcat punt, Ottawa was on the move again, but the Wildcats got pressures from Lucas Swartz, Brayden Yoder, Erik Lien and Ashton Moore that forced three straight negative plays and an Ottawa punt.

The Wildcat defensive front created havoc most of the night and it was led by Yoder, who finished with seven tackles and a sack. Seniors Conlee Hovey and Miles Meek also had a sack.

"Defensive line played really well and we were able to put pressure on them," Harding said. "Their quarterback is a tough guy to corral and bring down, but they were able to do it several times and really made it uncomfortable for him."



Louisburg senior Ashton Moore scored two touchdowns and rushed for 127 yards on 34 carries Friday at Ottawa.

Moore took care of the rest from the linebacker spot as he led the team with 10 tackles, including a tackle for a loss. He also created a big turnover as he took the ball away from a Cyclone receiver after a big catch and returned it more than 20 yards in the first half.

Moore carried the load on offense as the Wildcats featured a run-heavy attack. He carried the ball 34 times for 137 yards and had both touchdowns and was also the team's top receiver with four catches for 41 yards.

"Ashton did take on a load," Harding said. "We told him that he was going to be carrying the football a lot and we told him that we are going to need him defensively as well. Ashton stepped up to the challenge and just had a big time game."

Several of those carries came on the game's most crucial drive. The Wildcats started with 1 minute and 30 seconds left

in the third quarter, and Moore put them up by 10 on a 2-yard run with under five minutes left in the fourth.



Conlee Hovey points for a first down after a big catch kept a fourth quarter drive alive.

The drive was 14 plays that covered 61 yards and took 8 minutes and 40 seconds. The Wildcats also got big conversions on third down on catches by Reid McCaskill and Hovey and runs from quarterback Alex Saad.

“Controlling the clock was one of our goals and we wanted to keep their offense on the sidelines,” Harding said. “A drive like that was exactly what we wanted to do.”

“All those guys played really well. We needed to convert on some third and fourth downs and Saad was able to get us a couple. Then Reid and Conlee had big catches for us as well. It was a team-effort for sure.”

Louisburg’s defense put together one more stop and were able

to walk out of Ottawa with its perfect record intact.

The Wildcats will now try to secure their third consecutive league title this Friday as they host Spring Hill on Senior Night. The Broncos are 6-1 on the season as both teams are vying for the league crown.

“It will be a challenge,” Harding said. “They are a really good football team and they are a physical team that does a lot of good things. We will have to have another good week of preparation in order to come out and get a win. We are certainly excited to play at home for sure.”

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SCORING SUMMARY

First Quarter

L: Ashton Moore 1 run (Blaise Vohs kick)

Second Quarter

L: Blaise Vohs 41 FG

Third Quarter

O: Cole McGrath 26 pass from Haydon Hull (kick good)

Fourth Quarter

L: Moore 2 run (Vohs kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ashton Moore 34-137; Alex Saad 5-45; Myles Vohs 1-5; Darby Van Eaton 1-2

PASSING – Alex Saad 10-17-94

RECEIVING – Ashton Moore 4-41; Conlee Hovey 3-33; Reid McCaskill 1-16; Myles Vohs 2-4

TACKLES – Ashton Moore 10, Brayden Yoder 7, Lucas Swartz 6, Logan Henry 5, Russell Wiseman 4, Conlee Hovey 4, Miles Meek 3, Myles Vohs 2, Erik Lien 2, Jimmy DeVary 2, Rickey Giles 1, Reid McCaskill 1, Bryce Thompson 1, Gage Feldkamp 1