

Louisburg girls wrestling finds positives in season opening meet



The Louisburg girls wrestling team finished 13th out of 23 teams last Friday at the Wild West Classic at Olathe West High School.

OLATHE WEST – The Louisburg girls wrestling team has 10 athletes on the team this season and eight of those are new to the high school level.

Many of those Wildcats got their first taste of varsity action last Friday at the Wild West Classic at Olathe West High School. There were 23 teams that competed and the Wildcats were able to find some success.

Louisburg finished 13th in the team standings with 121 points,

while Shawnee Heights was first at 321. Kearney (Mo.) was second with 286.5 points.

"We are starting off with a really young team," Louisburg girls coach Heather Eslinger said. "We have three sophomores with only two returning from last year and eight freshmen. Some of the freshmen have experience, but most of the others are a little bit less experienced with two or three of them just starting wrestling this year for the first time.

"With that being said, Olathe West was kind of a big eye opener and probably a bit intimidating way to start our season. There were some really tough teams there in Olathe North, RayPec and Kearney. They all had some really strong veteran wrestlers, but I have to say that all of our girls went out aggressively in each match."

Sophomore Leola Eslinger and freshman Brooklyn DeWeese both led the way for Louisburg as they each earned a sixth place finish at 3-2 on the day.

Eslinger, who wrestled at 145 pounds, opened her tournament with a pin before falling by pin the next round. She responded with a 12-1 major decision over Ray-Pec's Kinsley Larimer.

In the consolation bracket, Eslinger pinned Chanute's Willow Vaughn to reach the fifth place match, where she was pinned by Kearney's Isabella Wenzel.

As for DeWeese, the Wildcat 120-pounder began the tournament with two straight pins before losing by pin to Shawnee Mission South's Stella Segura. In the consolation bracket, DeWeese earned a pin over Nemaha Central's Alexis Bebe, before losing by pin the fifth place match to Audrey Hinkly of Shawnee Heights.

"Brooklyn had a great night with three pins," coach Eslinger said. "She's still a little green in certain areas, but once she gets her opponent on the mat she is relentless until she

gets a pin.

“Leola did very well attacking and taking advantage of scoring opportunities. She had a tough match where she had split her lip and we had some uncomfortable blood time on the side lines. She took it like a champ and went back as aggressive as ever and won with a major decision.”

Freshman Emma Duckworth also finished with a 3-2 day and took ninth overall at 125 pounds with three pins.

Sophomore Allison Martin recorded her first pin as she was 2-3 on the day at 135 pounds. Maliya Collins also registered two wins, both by fall, to go 2-3 at 140 pounds.

Evelyn Rue (1-4) and Bella Pickman (0-4) also wrestled for Louisburg at 130 and 110 pounds, respectively.

Louisburg is back in action on Dec. 19 when it travels to Olathe West for a mixer. Matches are set to begin at 4:30 p.m.

“I think it’s taken a while for the girls to figure out where they fit in the wrestling room as a team within a team so to speak, but I feel like we made huge strides Friday coming together and supporting one another and learning our role as girls supporting girls in a room full of boys,” coach Eslinger said.