

Louisburg rolls to December Duals title with five straight wins



Louisburg senior Jay McCaskill gets one of five pins on the night Thursday at home during the December Duals Tournament.

After a rough season opener that saw several Louisburg wrestlers out with an injury or illness, the Wildcats responded in a big way in their home debut.

Louisburg ran roughshod over the competition Thursday in the December Duals as the Wildcats posted a 5-0 record. They earned wins over Shawnee Mission North (75-6), Harmon (72-6), Prairie View (57-24), Baldwin (57-21) and Independence (56-24).

Seven Wildcats also finished with a perfect day as Levi Cotter (106 pounds), Canaan Clayton (120), Mika McKitrick (132), Bryce Thompson (157), Jay McCaskill (165), Brayden Yoder (190) and Ashton Moore (215) all posted a 5-0 record and earned All-Tournament Team honors in the process.

“It was incredible to see the team respond with such determination and energy,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Going 5-0 against some quality teams like Baldwin, Prairie View and Independence was a great thing for our program. Seeing the guys do so well was a great reminder of how resilient this group is. They’ve been through a lot over the years, and to see them back on the mat as a team was really special.”

McCaskill and Yoder led the way for Louisburg as all five of their wins came by pin as they put together a dominating performance, while Clayton recorded four pins and had one forfeit.

McKitrick also finished the day with four pins, all coming under 40 seconds, and also had a 17-1 technical fall. Thompson had three pins, win by forfeit and earned an 8-4 decision over Independence’s Arian Roe.



Louisburg senior Mika McKitrick gets a pin Thursday at home during the December Duals.

As for Moore, the No. 3 ranked wrestler at 215 pounds, he had a little tougher road. Moore recorded three pins, had a technical fall, but his toughest match came against Prairie View's Parker Schwarz.

Schwarz is currently ranked No. 3 at 195 pounds and the two squared off in what was a low-scoring, tight match. Moore eventually won 4-2 by ultimate tiebreaker in what was one of the more thrilling matches on the night.

"Early in the season, it's tough to win close matches," Bovaird said. "Conditioning and fitness plays a huge role, as well as mental toughness. We had two guys win ultimate tie-breaker matches – Ashton Moore and Greysen Dixon – which was a great example to the younger guys in the program. Overall, we had 56 wins as a team, with 41 pins, 2 technical falls, and 1 major decision. I'm very proud of that sort of performance."

Junior Vance Hahn finished 4-1 at 175 pounds with a pair of pins and a major decision. Senior Logan Henry and sophomore Spencer Mattison combined for a 4-1 record at 138 pounds. Henry suffered an injury in his lone loss, and Mattison came in to fill for the final two matches.

Parker Showalter (113), Myke McKittrick (126), Greysen Dixon (144) and Miles Meek (285) also had a winning day. Dixon had a 2-1 performance, while the other three finished with a 3-2 record. Freshman Bo Ballard was 2-3 at 150 pounds.

"I'd say that the most special part of Thursday night was the team spirit that we showed," Bovaird said. "The way the guys cheered for every match of every dual, made it seem like we were battling for a state championship. Each of our wrestlers played his role, battled for bonus points in the duals, supported one another, and made adjustments when needed. We had some fantastic moments that showed our grit. Having seven wrestlers go 5-0 and make the All-Tournament Team was a really special way to end the night. Nearly everyone finished the tournament with a winning record."

Bovaird also knows, that while it is early, he liked what he saw from his team and their ability to bounce back from a tough season opener.



Louisburg sophomore Bryce Thompson picks up an opponent Thursday during the December Duals at Louisburg High School.

“Going undefeated in a tournament like this was no small feat, and it really speaks to the team’s character and work ethic,” he said. “Last year, we won two close duals against Baldwin and Independence, but this year the guys left no doubt with their performance on the mat. They stepped up in every dual, adapting to different challenges and staying focused.

“It also shows their growth—both as individuals and as a team. Dual tournaments like this one will test your team depth, stamina, and mental toughness. I couldn’t be prouder of how they handled it. We were nearly at full strength, but then lost our varsity 138 to a concussion. Luckily we had depth with our lineup to be able to bring in our backup wrestler, Spencer Mattison, who went 2-0 with two pins for us.”

Louisburg will try and keep that positive momentum going Thursday when it travels to Olathe West for a dual. The Wildcats will complete the 2024 part of their schedule Saturday when they travel to the Randy Starcher Memorial Tournament in Tonganoxie.