

# Moore, Yoder lead Wildcats to home tournament title



***Louisburg senior Ashton Moore works up a pin during the Louisburg Invitational on Saturday at Louisburg High School.***

The Louisburg wrestling team didn't have much preparation for its home tournament Saturday as students missed several practices due to snow days following Christmas break.

It wasn't the best way to start 2025, but the Wildcats managed just fine as they won the Louisburg Invitational for the second time in three years and did so in convincing fashion.

Louisburg won the team title with 216 points and Blue Valley West was second with 153 points in the 14-team tournament. The Wildcats also medaled 10 on the day and had two individual champions.

"We had some adversity hit us last week – mostly with the

weather and being unable to get in as many practices as I would have liked,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “At the start of the tournament, you could tell that our fitness was definitely working against us. I gave the team a pep talk after the second round and told them that if they wanted to get in the team race, they needed to get it set in their minds that everyone was battling fitness, not just us. It can’t be an excuse for losing matches or making mistakes. They really turned things around after that.”

Two Wildcats found their way atop the medal stand as seniors Brayden Yoder and Ashton Moore each won their respective weight classes and did so in different ways.

Yoder (15-6), who wrestled in the 190-pound bracket, opened with three straight pins that put him in the semifinals. Competition got a lot tougher as he squared off against Blue Valley Northwest’s Blake Berry, a returning state qualifier in the semis.



***Louisburg senior Brayden Yoder works for one of his three pins Saturday at the Louisburg Invitational. Yoder won the 190-pound bracket.***

Berry and Yoder were deadlocked for most of the match, but the Louisburg senior recorded a 4-3 decision in overtime to advance to the finals. It was there where Yoder outlasted De Soto's Dylan Roy in a 3-0 decision for the championship.

"He won a great match against the Northwest kid, who was a state qualifier in 6A last year," Bovaird said. "Just a gutsy performance, getting that win in the tie-breaker. Brayden is in an awesome groove right now, and it's pretty exciting to see it. He's strong and confident, and he's got such a great wrestling IQ. This was his third time winning the Louisburg Invitational, which is a great feat."

Moore (15-2) earned the title at 215 pounds and created a little history for himself along the way. Moore recorded his 100th career win with a pin of Piper's Wyatt Koenig in the quarterfinals.

He then recorded a 16-1 technical fall of Leavenworth's Montrez Cameron in the semifinals, which set up a match of state-ranked wrestlers in the championship.



***Members of the Louisburg wrestling team celebrate Ashton Moore's 100th win Saturday at their home tournament.***

Moore, who is ranked No. 3 in Class 4A, squared off with No. 5 Parker Schwarz of Prairie View for the title. Moore, who edged Schwarz at the Tonganoxie tournament before the break, earned a pin in the tiebreaker this time around to win the title.

"Last month when Ashton wrestled Schwarz, he weighed in at 190 after being pretty sick," Bovaird said. "This time, he weighed in at 211 – that 20 pounds makes a difference. Ashton was aggressive and smart on his feet, and I loved seeing him turn things up to a different level when he got on top of that kid in the tie-breaker. He's been working so hard and he's such a great kid. I was really proud to see him get win No. 100 on Saturday."

Along with Yoder and Moore, the Wildcats had four other wrestlers reach the championship match. Levi Cotter (106 pounds), Canaan Clayton (120), Mika McKitrick (132) and Vance Hahn (175) all finished one win shy of a title and took second.



***Louisburg sophomore Levi Cotter finished second Saturday in the 106-pound bracket.***

Cotter (17-4) recorded three pins on his way to the championship match, including a first period pin of De Soto's John Legatt in the semifinals. Cotter fell in the third period to Blue Valley West's Zack Olsen in the championship, who has just one loss on the year.

As for Clayton (14-6), he opened the tournament with a win by technical fall, and then reeled off three straight pins, before falling by pin to Blue Valley Northwest's Parker Burk in the championship.

McKitrick (16-5) battled a shoulder injury to earn a spot in the title match at 132 pounds. The Louisburg senior recorded four straight pins to advance to the first place match, but was pinned by Blue Valley West's Scott Fohlmeister.

Hahn (13-8), a junior, had his best tournament as a Wildcat as he recorded his first varsity medal. Hahn rattled off four

straight wins to start the tourney, including one by pin and one by major decision. He squared off with Royal Valley's Avery Hunter in the championship, but lost by pin.

Louisburg's Keegan Rogers (126), Logan Henry (138), Jay McCaskill (165) and Miles Meek (285) also earned a medal as each finished fourth.

"They wrestled with courage and strength, which was a key part of our pre-match talk," Bovarid said. "They also showed they were able to overcome adversity as well. Mika McKitrick made the finals, despite having a bum shoulder. Vance Hahn not only earned his first varsity medal, but also made the finals at 175. Despite being an unattached wrestler and not scoring any team points, Keegan Rogers also earned his first varsity medal by taking fourth at 126."

The Wildcats will hit the mats again Friday as they compete at the Wellsville Invitational. Matches begin at 1 p.m.