Wildcats capture Wellsville title to win second straight tourney



Louisburg senior Canaan Clayton gets a takedown during his 120-pound match last Friday at Wellsville. Clayton and the Wildcats won the Wellsville Tournament.

WELLSVILLE – The Louisburg wrestling team has done nothing but win in 2025 and that continued Friday at the Aaron Patton Memorial Tournament at Wellsville High School.

The Wildcats won their second straight competition to start the new year as they cruised to the team title with 210.5 points and beat runner-up Santa Fe Trail by more than 80 points in the 24-team tournament.

On top of that, the Wildcats also had three individual

champions and eight finish in the top four of their respective weight classes. It was the second straight time Louisburg has won the Wellsville tournament.

“This year was a big improvement from last year,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “In 2024, there were a lot of smaller teams, smaller brackets, and mismatches in the finals. This year, the semifinals, finals, and consolation finals were much more exciting. Winning it last year was pretty neat, but this year it felt a whole lot better.

“The most significant element was that we went undefeated in the first round of the tournament, and in the second round we lost maybe three matches. That meant we went into the semifinals with quite a few wrestlers. You don’t get to that point unless you step up to perform.”

Seniors Canaan Clayton (120 pounds), Brayden Yoder (190) and Ashton Moore (215) all earned individual titles as all three dominated their weight class.

Clayton won all three of his matches by pin and did so in a minute or less. In the championship, Clayton pinned Santa Fe Trail’s Bryce Combes in 59 seconds to improve to 17-6 on the season. It was also his first career tournament championship on the varsity level.

As for Yoder (19-6), he won two of his first three matches by pin and then squared off with Gardner-Edgerton’s Dawson Cassida in the first place match. Yoder battled Cassidy to a 10-5 decision to win the 190-pound bracket.

Moore (19-2) controlled the 215-pound weight class as all four of his wins came by pin, including a second period pin of West Elk’s Joshua Patteson in the championship match.

“All three of them are really stepping up and performing well,” Bovaird said. “Canaan got his first varsity championship of his career in style, winning all three matches

by a first-period pin. Brayden wrestled so many solid matches, just being smart and staying in solid position. He really gave a lot of great examples of his wrestling IQ with those matches. He didn't force anything, he was smart by holding off some solid attacks, and with his positioning he made sure to capitalize on his opponents' mistakes.

"Ashton was an animal in his bracket. He took the time to work some new techniques and try some unfamiliar techniques. He's such a smart athlete, and he gets it. He's not afraid of making mistakes, and he's willing to use these live matches as a chance to work things to help him win those close matches in February when we get to the postseason."



Louisburg senior Jay McCaskill lifts an opponent Friday at Wellsville. McCaskill finished third at 165 pounds.

Sophomore Levi Cotter (106) and senior Jay McCaskill (165) each finished third in their weight class, while freshman Parker Showalter (113), senior Mika McKitrick and junior Vance

Hahn (175) took fourth.

Cotter (20-5) went 3-1 on the day, with his lone loss coming by pin in the semifinals to Onaga's Jesse Miller. He battled back and won his third place match by pin over Jayhawk-Linn's Aedin McGregor.

McCaskill (17-3) was 4-1, with his only setback coming in the semifinals in a 10-4 loss to Shawnee Mission East's Noah Jewell. He bounced back and earned a pin over Burlington's Kyzer Lehmann in the third place match.

Showalter (10-15) went 2-2 on the day with a pair of pins. Both McKitrick and Hahn were 3-2, while McKitrick had three pins and Hahn had two.

Bryce Thompson (157) and Greysen Dixon (138) each took sixth overall. It was a good ending to a tournament that lasted nine hour before all was said and done.



Louisburg sophomore Bryce Thompson works for a pin Friday at

Wellsville.

“Without a doubt, it was a long day,” Bovaird said. “We’re not used to wrestling that late at night, but that’s a good thing. It’s all about the physical conditioning and the psychological conditioning. I was really impressed with a lot of our wrestlers’ performances. Parker placed at his first varsity tournament. Mika bounced back from a controversial semi-finals loss to make it to the third place match. In the semis, the official called a defensive pin while Mika was leading by quite a bit, and the thing that impressed me the most was how he kept his composure throughout the whole thing. I told him, ‘You handled that loss much better than I did.’

“In the third place match, he was in control of his opponent on the scoreboard going into the second period. We chose down, and the kid hit him with an illegal suplex. Mika was cleared by the trainer to continue, but after another flurry of action, I saw that he wasn’t right, and I chose to default the match rather than risk any further injury.”

Louisburg is back in action Friday and Saturday as the Wildcat take part in the 2-day Blue Valley Northwest Invitational.