Wildcats win second straight regional title to advance to state tourney



The Louisburg girls soccer team celebrated with their regional championship trophy on May 21 following its 6-0 win over Baldwin.

For the second time in as many years, the Louisburg girls soccer team has found its way to the state tournament.

The No. 1 seed Wildcats hosted No. 9 Baldwin on May 21 in the Class 4-1A regional championship, and from the opening whistle, Louisburg dominated play.

Louisburg scored three goals in each half and earned a 6-0 result over the Bulldogs, and captured its second straight regional title.

“Winning regionals was an exciting moment and a great

accomplishment for the team," Louisburg coach Jordan Roquemore said. "We put ourselves in a good position from our play this season and winning this title was a testament to a lot of hard work that this group has put in. However, there is not a single one of us on this team that is ready to stop here. We are looking ahead to state."

The Wildcats advanced to the state quarterfinals with the victory and will host another Frontier League team in Eudora at 5:30 p.m. on May 26.

Louisburg was the considerable favorite going into the regional championship, especially after defeating Baldwin by the same 6-0 score last month.

However, the Wildcat players didn't want to take anything for granted and made sure they got out to a good start.



Louisburg senior Riley May looks to pass to a teammate last week against Baldwin.

“We talked before the game about being ‘hope-crushers’ this game,” Roquemore said. “In one way, we played the villain because we did not want to give Baldwin any room for hope in this game. We came out fast and aggressive and scored quickly. No one on our team was underestimating Baldwin, but we also realized that we needed to come out strong and take the game away.”

The Wildcats wasted no time getting on the board as they struck first in the match’s opening minute.

Freshman Cora Roche put the Wildcats up 1-0 in the first 15 seconds of the match. Another freshman, Kahlan Harris, scored seven minutes later on an assist from senior Baileigh Johnson.

A few minutes later, Harris struck again as she scored off a rebound on a shot from freshman Briella Diehl and the Wildcats took that 3-0 lead into halftime.

Senior Rowan Yows put Louisburg up four early in the second with her first goal. Sophomore Merritt McIntire got in on the scoring with a goal thanks to an assists from Johnson.



Louisburg's Rowan Yows (left) celebrates with Baileigh Johnson after the game's final goal against Baldwin.

Seconds later, Johnson scored to seal the win thanks to an assist from Yows.

"All due respect to Baldwin who worked hard and played with a lot of grit, but we did not play our best game," Roquemore said. "We executed really well on finishing shots and crashing the box, but we did not possess to our potential this game. Our passing and connections were very messy at times and overly-offensive. It paid off in goals, but there were many times it did not look great. Moving forward, I want to get back to some of our best passing and team play."

Defensively, the Wildcats limited Baldwin to just two shots on target and Louisburg goalie Ally Brown earned the clean sheet, which was her 11th of the season.

"We were very aggressive on offense this game and opened up a lot of opportunities in front of the goal," Roquemore said.

“Hat’s off to Baldwin’s goalkeeper with 20 saves and a few really excellent moments. Our defense did a solid job tonight turning away opportunities in our defensive third.”



The Louisburg girls soccer team pose with their regional championship trophy after their May 21 win over Baldwin.

Now, the Wildcats will try and earn a spot in the state final four on May 26 when they host Eudora in the first round of the state tournament.

Louisburg edged Eudora for a 2-1 victory back in April and the Wildcats know it will be a challenge to knock the Cardinals off again.

“We are ready for Eudora and we are looking forward to a great game,” Roquemore said. “We both have all our players healthy and I anticipate a tough game. Eudora is always competitive and we have had years of close, hard-fought games over my five seasons.”