

Wildcats take third at Fort Scott Dual Tournament



The Louisburg boys wrestling team went 4-2 at the Fort Scott Dual Tournament took third overall.

The Louisburg Wildcats used grit and late-match heroics to secure a third-place finish at the Fort Scott Dual Tournament last Friday at Fort Scott High School.

Louisburg went 4-2 on the day, opening the tournament with three straight victories.

The Wildcats started fast, edging Anderson County 42-37 in the opener – a dual that came down to the final match. Heavyweight Owen Ebenstein delivered the decisive blow, pinning his opponent to clinch the team victory.

“The boys showed up and wrestled like I know they are capable of,” Louisburg coach Shawn Crossley said. “Before we started I

told them there were three ranked teams we would wrestle and we had a chance to make a statement early in the season.”

Louisburg made another statement in round two, earning a tight 39-36 win over 3-2-1A No. 6 Jayhawk-Linn, again sealed in the final match – this time with heavyweight Hunter Brotherton, who closed the dual with a pin.

Crossley said one of the day’s most memorable performances came earlier in that dual, when freshman Sylas Weichert (120) battled the state’s No. 3 ranked wrestler, Tanner Holt, to the wire.

“Sylas wrestled him to a very close match,” Crossley said. “We had a team meeting after that dual and I could tell they were hyped. They were starting to see that if they wrestled up to their potential, we could wrestle with some of the best.”

Louisburg rolled into its third dual and handled host Fort Scott 54-27 to improve to 3-0. That dual – and the moment of the day – belonged to Tristan Weller (150).

Weller trailed 12-5 when his opponent bit him to stop the action. The officials ruled the bite incidental.

“Tristan was rightfully angry and upset,” Crossley said.

Entering the final period still down seven, Weller insisted on choosing the top position.

“He told me he wanted to choose top and he knew he could turn the kid,” Crossley said. “Coach (Shea) Cox and I liked his confidence and Tristan pinned him like he said he was going to. I was very impressed with how he handled himself – gathering himself and hitting the reset button.”

Louisburg’s momentum was halted in round four with a 56-22 loss to 3-2-1A No. 2 Atchison County, but the Wildcats still found bright spots.

At 190 pounds, Vance Hahn pushed the state's No. 2-ranked wrestler, Elijah Webb, to the ultimate tiebreaker before falling by an escape point.

"Vance came up just short, but I think he looked strong," Crossley said. "He understands what he could have done differently next time."

Louisburg bounced back with a 54-27 win over Prairie View before closing with a 50-25 loss to No. 6 in 5A, Blue Valley Southwest.

Despite the tough closing matchup, Crossley said the Wildcats proved plenty.

"All in all, the positives we took away from the Fort Scott duals is that the hard work we've been putting in at practice is paying off," he said. "We are young but experienced. The team continues to buy in and it's paying dividends. This was an early-season measuring stick, and I think we exceeded some expectations. I was extremely pleased with how we performed."

Wildcat girls compete at Olathe West

The Louisburg High School girls wrestling team stepped into one of the state's toughest early-season environments Friday, finishing 15th as a team at the Wild West Classic hosted by Olathe West.

Despite injuries and several wrestlers still settling into weight classes, the Wildcats turned in a gritty performance highlighted by multiple individual honors.

Maliya Collins led the way with a 3-2 record and three pins to place seventh at 125 pounds. At 155, Leola Eslinger also secured seventh place with a 2-2 day.

Other notable efforts included Alina Wojciechowski (120) and Brianna Caraway (140) going 2-3 for 10th, Allison Martin (145) finishing 2-2 with two pins for ninth, and freshman Mya McKitrick placing 11th at 100 with a pin. Nora Smith earned her first career pin while wrestling up a weight class at 170.

Louisburg totaled 115 points to finish 15th in a loaded 21-team field topped by Manhattan, Staley and Kearney.

Head coach Shawn Crossley said he was proud of the resilience his squad showed throughout a demanding day.

"It's a tough early season tournament," Crossley said. "Going into it, the girls were still trying to determine what weights they were wrestling. When the dust settled, they all made the weights they said they would that afternoon.

"We were a little banged up going into the tournament, but the girls gutted it out and battled all day long. Maliya and Leola both took seventh, one short of the podium. Maliya had a good day, going 3-2 with three pins. Nora Smith got her first career pin, and she was wrestling up a weight, so I was very excited for her. Mya McKitrick, as a freshman, continues to impress with her mental and physical toughness."