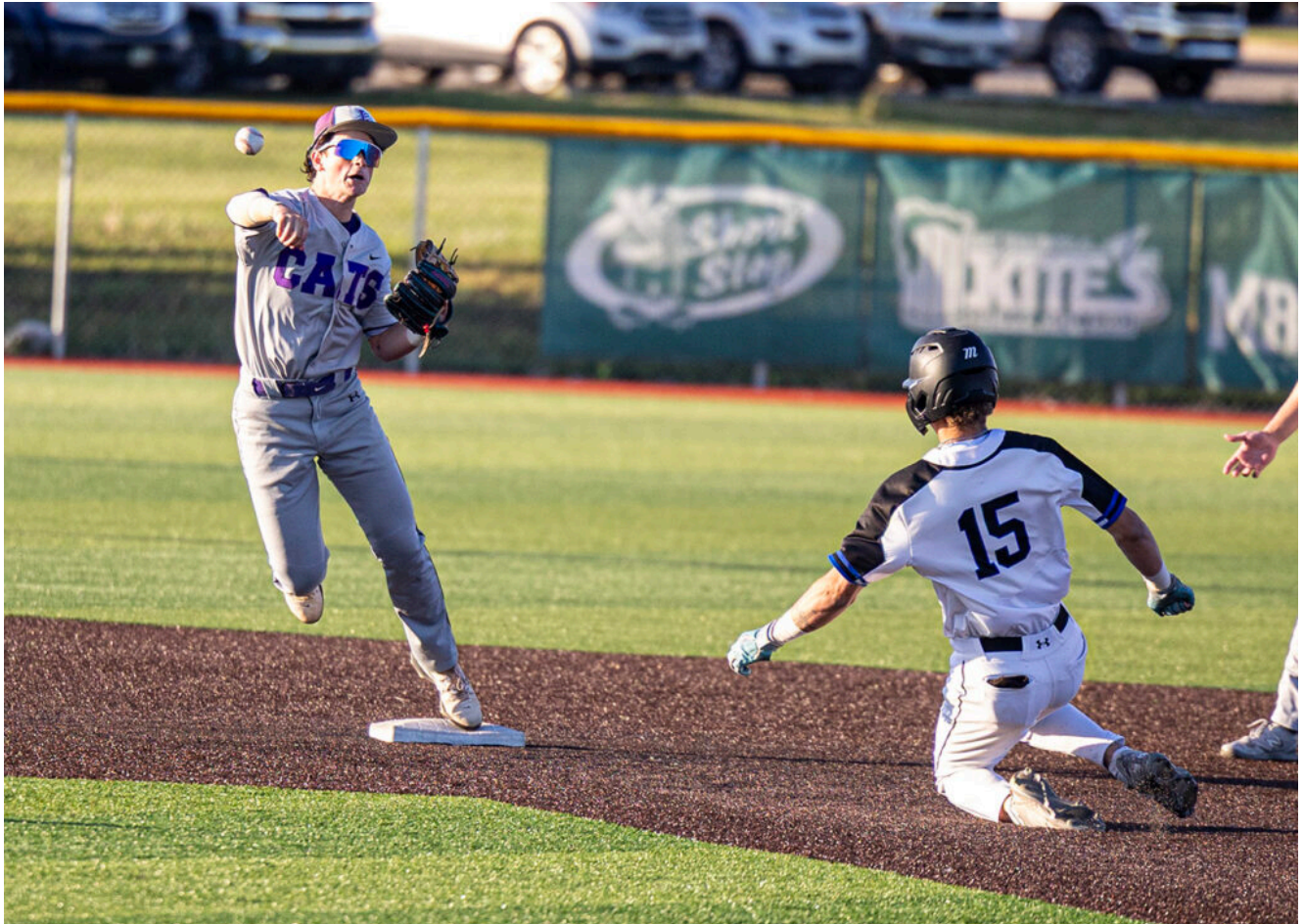


Magic runs out for Wildcats in regional title game loss to Rock Creek



Louisburg shortstop Rylan Carty turns a double play against Rock Creek on May 20 at Rock Creek High School.

ST. GEORGE – There was simply not enough magic left for the Louisburg baseball team.

After pulling off a memorable comeback against Ottawa in the regional semifinals, there was no comeback to be had in the championship game against Rock Creek on May 20.

Rock Creek, the defending state champion, scored three runs and handed Louisburg a 3-0 loss at Rock Creek High School as the Wildcats fell one win short of the state tournament.

“Obviously we didn’t reach our final goal but we did really

great things this year,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “We grew as a team and always gave ourselves a chance going into the seventh inning. I’m really proud of this group and loved the way they competed. These seniors did a great job of leading and helping the sophomores/juniors learn how to be the next group of leaders.”

Giving themselves a chance was exactly what the Wildcats did in their regional semifinal game against Ottawa.

The Cyclones took a 4-0 lead into the bottom of the seventh and the Wildcats were two outs away from elimination. Louisburg could get nothing going offensively – then all of a sudden – everything went its way.

Louisburg scored five unanswered runs to pull off a 5-4 victory over Ottawa to advance to the regional championship

“The guys did a great job of competing and giving themselves a chance,” Larson said. “They never gave up. We really couldn’t get much going offensively for most of the game against Ottawa. Their pitcher threw really well for 6 innings.

“In the seventh, the guys did a great job of trying to keep the line moving and get the next guy up. It was pretty crazy how quickly it changed and went from down 4-0 to winning 5-4. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

Sophomore Max Amren got the rally started with a bloop triple down the right field line and scored on a single from Rylan Carty.

The Wildcats’ hottest hitter came up next in Luke Schultz. The Louisburg senior, who had been intentionally walked twice in the game, got a pitch to hit this time and cranked one over the fence for a 2-run home run.

More magic came the way of the Wildcats as Meade Rutherford reached on an error on a dropped pop-up at second base. That

set up the dramatics for Bristol Barbour.



Louisburg's Bristol Barbour stomps on home plate and his teammates are there to celebrate following his walk-off 2-run home run in the regional semis against Ottawa at Rock Creek High School.

Barbour, who had doubled twice earlier, got a hold of a pitch and hit a 2-run walk-off home run to give the Wildcats a 5-4 win.

"They didn't pitch to Luke all day by intentionally walking him," Larson said. "He got an at-bat and did more than you could ask for with it. Bristol was crushing the ball all day. He really swung it well and that didn't change in his last at bat. Off the bat I thought it had a chance and was pretty surreal to see it go out."

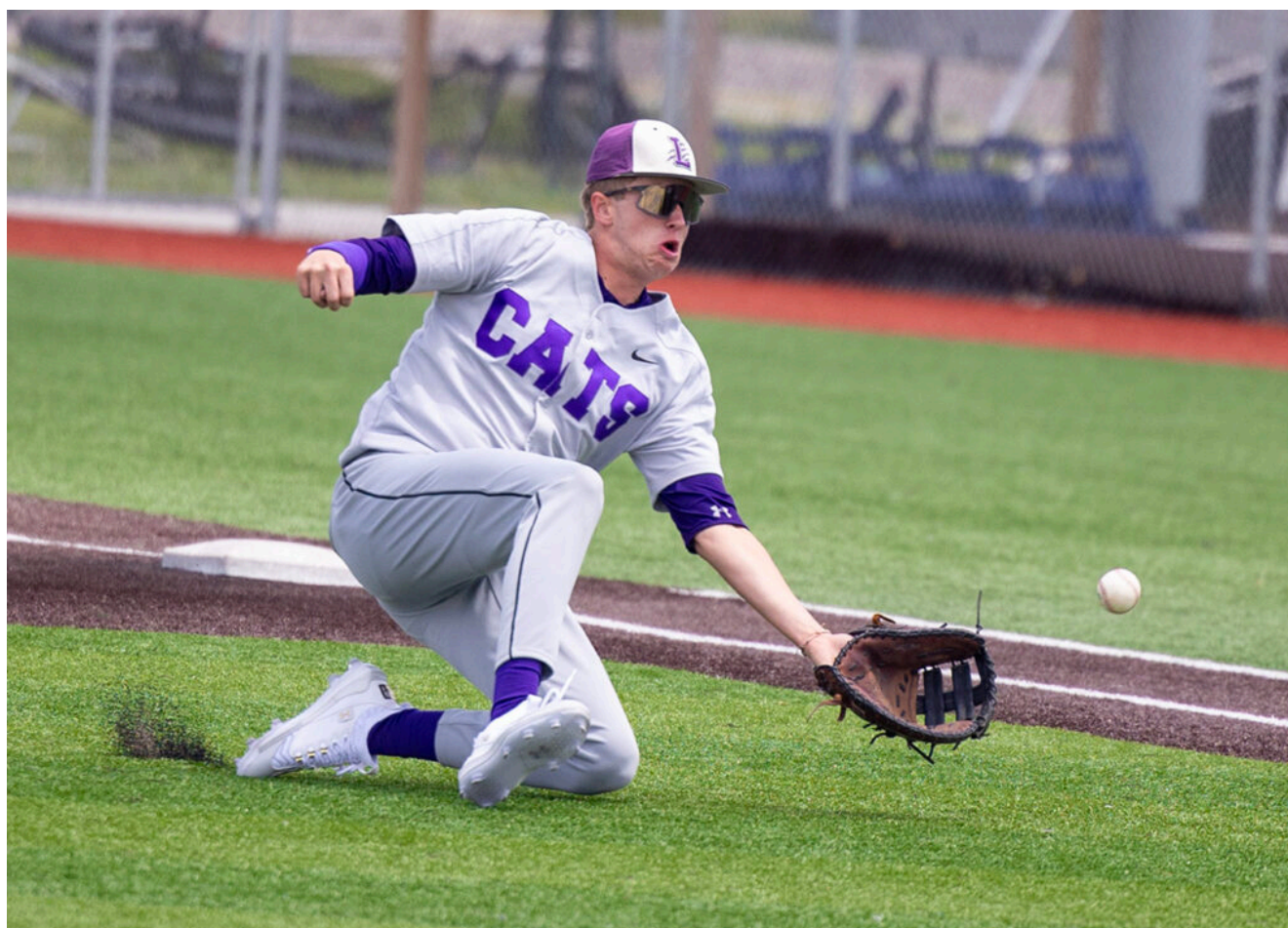
The Wildcats (18-7) also threw several arms at the Cyclones to keep the game close.

Rutherford started the game and gave up 2 earned runs in 2 2/3 innings and struck out three. Junior Christian Owens threw 3 1/3 and gave up two runs, both unearned, and also struck out three.

Senior Alex Saad pitched the final inning and gave up just one hit and a strikeout.

Saad went on to start the championship game against Rock Creek and held the Mustangs scoreless through three innings.

The Louisburg senior had to battle a tough strike zone in the top of the fourth and Rock Creek reached and scored a run on four straight walks.



Louisburg first baseman Evan Moreland slides to make a running catch on a bunt on May 20 at Rock Creek.

Owens came in for relief and was able to get out of the jam by allowing just one run. He pitched the final three innings and struck out six.

Rock Creek had just one hit the entire game, but were able to take advantage of free bases with two runs in the fourth and another in the fifth.

“I thought our pitchers battled all day,” Larson said. “Meade gave us some good innings to begin the day. Saad did really well and bridged the gap and did well keeping us in the game. Christian really threw well in both games. He never gets rattled and threw his butt off in both games to keep it close to give our bats a chance.”

The Wildcats had five hits on the contest, but couldn't get a runner across. Barbour had a double, his third of the day, and Amren had two hits to lead the Wildcat bats.

Wildcats split with rival Paola on Senior Night



Louisburg senior Luke Schultz slides into home during the second game of a doubleheader with Paola on May 13 at Lewis-Young Park.

Playoff seeding implications were at stake for Louisburg during its May 13 home doubleheader against Paola.

The Wildcats had a slim chance to host the Class 4A regional tournament with a sweep of their rival. Emotions were even higher as it was Senior Night for Louisburg as the Wildcats honored their six seniors and their families.

There was a lot to play for, and to make it more difficult, Paola was ranked No. 2 in 4A and ended the Wildcats' season at state a year ago.

All those emotions equaled out to a split between the two teams.

Paola struck first as it scored 11 runs in the first three innings and handed the Wildcats a 14-3 loss in the opener.

Louisburg was able to bounce back in the nightcap with a 9-4 victory after it jumped out to a big lead.

The Wildcats ended the regular season with a 17-6 record and earned the No. 5 seed in the regional tournament. Louisburg will travel to No. 4 Rock Creek on May 20 as the Wildcats try to get back to state.

"The guys did really well responding to a tough loss in game one," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "Being able to get the momentum early in the second game was big for us."

Louisburg jumped out to a 6-0 lead after two innings thanks to RBI singles from Jayce Toms and Carter Willey in the first. Max Amren and Carter Willey opened the second with a single and double, before Amren scored on a single from Luke Schultz.



Louisburg seniors (from left) Rylan Carty, Meade Rutherford, Alex Saad, Luke Schultz, Jayce Toms and Carter Willey were

honored on May 13 with their parents during Senior Night.

Paola committed two errors that led to two more Wildcat runs and they led 6-0. The Panthers answered with four in the top of the third, but the Wildcats added two more insurance runs in the fourth, and another in the fifth, to seal the win.

Wildcat junior Christian Owens came in for relief and struck out five over 4 1/3 innings of work to help preserve the victory. Senior Alex Saad started the game and picked up the win.

Carty led the Wildcat offense with three doubles in the contest, while Amren, Toms and Meade Rutherford each had two hits. Toms also had a team-high 3 RBIs.

"Rylan and Jayce swung it really well, which was nice to see, and Christian came in to really shut the door on the mound," Larson said.

Prior to the contest, Rutherford, Willey, Saad, Rutherford, Schultz and Carty were all honored with their parents for Senior Night. It is a special group for Larson, one that helped the Wildcats to a state tournament a year ago.



Louisburg junior Christian Owens pitched four scoreless innings of relief to help the Wildcats get the win against Paola.

"These seniors have been great leaders for us," Larson said. "They have done a great job of helping turn this program into contenders and laying the groundwork for those coming up after them."

With the regular season behind them, the Wildcats will now focus on the postseason. Louisburg will square off with No. 12 Ottawa in the first round of regionals at 2 p.m. on May 20 at Rock Creek. If the Wildcats advance, they will play for the regional championship later that night against the winner of Rock Creek and No. 13 Eudora.

Rock Creek is the defending 4A state champion and Larson knows his team is going to have to play well to come out of a difficult regional.

"The guys are ready to go for regionals," Larson said. "They

know we have a win or go home mentality and are excited to go compete for a regional championship. We're trying to take it one game at a time and find a way to win in order to get another game."

Week 7 Athlete of the Week: Bristol Barbour



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week seven of the spring sports season, sponsored by IronHorse Family and Cosmetic Dentistry.

BRISTOL BARBOUR, JUNIOR, BASEBALL

Louisburg junior Bristol Barbour had a big week on the mound

and at the plate for the Wildcat baseball team. Barbour got the victory last Friday against KC-Washington and recorded six strikeouts in three innings. He also did damage with the bat as he tallied two doubles, a home run and had 6 RBIs. On the week, Barbour had five hits, three doubles and 8 RBIs.

It was the second straight week that Barbour homered and got the victory in the same game. On May 3 against Chanute, Barbour got the complete game victory with eight strikeouts. Then at the plate he tallied three hits, including a home run, and had 3 RBIs.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the spring season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners

Week 1: Luke Schultz

Week 2: Faith Sewell

Week 3: Meade Rutherford

Week 4: Brynley Bauer

Week 5: Rowan Yows

Week 6: Kendall Crossley



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Wildcats roll KC-Washington in home victory



Louisburg senior Luke Schultz gets a base hit during a game earlier this season. Schultz broke the school record for doubles in a season during the Wildcats' home game against KC-Washington on May 9 at Lewis-Young Park.

It was just another day at the office for Louisburg junior Bristol Barbour as he made another big impact on the mound, and at the plate, for the Louisburg baseball team.

For the second time in less than a week, Barbour got the win on the mound and homered – this time it was against KC-Washington. The Wildcats scored early and often as they cruised to a 16-0 win.

Barbour pitched the three innings and struck out six. However, he made a bigger impact at the plate as he hit a home run, doubled twice and had 6 RBIs.

Louisburg scored 11 runs in the first inning and never looked back in the 3-inning victory. It also improved the Wildcats' record to 16-5 on the season.

“The guys came out and did a great job jumping on them early,”
Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “Bristol hit it well and
pitched well. He has been seeing the ball well as of late and
the team feeds off that energy.”

Wildcats senior Rylan Carty also had a big day at the plate
with two hits and 3 RBIs, while sophomore Max Amren also
finished with two hits.

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"Luke is a great hitter," Larson said. "It was awesome to see him break that record. I've told him, and others, I want to see them break every record we have, because that means we are probably doing pretty well as a team. Hopefully he continues extending the lead he now has throughout the rest of the season."

The Wildcats will try and end their season strong as they host Paola on May 13 for a doubleheader. Every win counts for Louisburg as it tries to secure a top 4 seed to host the regional tournament.

It is also Senior Night for the Wildcats as they prepare to honor their six seniors. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Wildcats settle for split at Eudora

Louisburg was hoping to leave Eudora with a pair of wins following their doubleheader on May 6.

It started out well as senior Meade Rutherford pitched a complete game shutout and led the Wildcats to a 9-0 victory over the Cardinals.

In the second game, despite getting off to a strong start, the Wildcats couldn't hang on in a 5-4 loss.

"It wasn't what we wanted leaving Eudora," coach Larson said. "We had our chances for a sweep, but a couple mistakes cost us. We had a good first inning and then couldn't find a rhythm at the plate to get much going."

Rutherford shut down the Cardinals' offense in the first game as he allowed just two hits over seven innings and struck out nine.

"Meade threw really well in game one," Larson said. "He threw a lot of strikes and let his defense work behind him."

Louisburg scored five runs in the third inning, which was more than enough for Rutherford. Senior Jayce Toms led the Wildcat offense with a double and a triple, while senior Rylan Carty and junior Bristol Barbour each had 2 RBIs.

In the nightcap, Louisburg jumped on Eudora for four runs in the first innings and took a 4-2 lead into the bottom of the fifth, where Eudora scored three runs.

Wildcat senior Alex Saad had another strong start for Louisburg as he allowed just one earned run in 4 ²/₃ innings and struck out nine. Christian Owens came in for relief and struck out three of the four batters he faced.

“Saad and Owens both pitched really well, too,” Larson said. “Saad has really done a great job pitching to contact this year and then knowing when to mix it up to get strikeouts, too.”

Junior Evan Moreland had 2 RBIs to lead Louisburg, while Rutherford and Toms each had a run batted in.

Barbour shines in Louisburg victory over Chanute



Louisburg junior Bristol Barbour earned the win on May 3 over Chanute with eight strikeouts. He also homered in the 11-3 victory.

Bristol Barbour did a little bit of everything for the Louisburg baseball team during the Wildcats' home contest on May 3 against Chanute.

Barbour not only earned the win with an 8-strikeout performance on the mound, he also collected three hits – including a home run – to guide the Wildcats to an 11-3 victory over the Blue Comets at Lewis-Young Park.

The Louisburg junior put together five innings on the mound and allowed just two earned runs on five hits to go along with the eight strikeouts.

At the plate, Barbour recorded a 3-hit performance, which not only included a home run, but a bunt single as well. He also drove home three runs.

“Bristol did really well all around,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “He threw a ton of strikes and created a ton of weak contact. He also got it done at the plate. Being able to bunt for a hit, and then hit a home run the next at bat, is pretty difficult and he made it look easy.”

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Chanute scored two runs in the top of the first to take an early lead, but the Wildcats answered right back with three in the bottom of the inning. The Blue Comets added a run in the third to tie it, but the Wildcats scored eight unanswered runs the rest of the way to seal the win.

"It was good to get out there on Saturday and fix some issues we had from the Thursday game," Larson said. "The guys responded well and found a way to get the job done."



Louisburg senior Carter Willey makes contact for a base hit against Chanute on May 3.

Louisburg pounded out 14 hits on the day and worked around three errors to get the win.

Wildcat senior Luke Schultz also had a big day with two doubles and an RBI. Meade Rutherford and Carter Willey also had two hits.

Jayce Toms and Evan Moreland each had an RBI double in the victory.

Junior Christian Owens pitched the final two innings of relief for the Wildcats and shut down the Blue Comets with just one hit allowed and had five strikeouts.

Louisburg will try and continue its winnings ways on May 6 when the Wildcats travel to Eudora for a doubleheader.

Wildcats lose home contest to Anderson County

In what was originally supposed to be a doubleheader, Louisburg's contest with Anderson County on May 1 turned into a single game due to scheduling conflicts.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, they didn't get a chance to make up for what was a tough first game. Louisburg committed five errors, which led to a 5-4 loss to the Bulldogs.

Anderson County scored the winning run in the top of the sixth inning to pull ahead for good. Louisburg had the bases loaded with no outs in the bottom of the seventh, but the Wildcats struck out twice and grounded out to end the threat.

"We have some mistakes we have to clean up," Larson said. "We didn't play a clean game and allowed them to hang around. We kept battling and gave ourselves a chance at the end but just couldn't get the job done."

Seniors Meade Rutherford and Alex Saad split time on the mound and allowed just one earned run between the two of them to go along with nine strikeouts.

Rutherford also had a big night at the plate with two hits, including a 2-run home run in the third to give the Wildcats an early 2-1 lead.

Luke Schultz and Jayce Toms also had two hits a piece for the Wildcats and both had a double.

Moreland spins gem as Wildcats shutout Santa Fe Trail



Louisburg junior Evan Moreland threw six scoreless innings on April 28 as the Wildcats shutout Santa Fe Trail at Lewis-Young Park.

There wasn't much drama or suspense for Louisburg in its game with Santa Fe Trail – Evan Moreland made sure of that.

The Louisburg junior shut down the Santa Fe Trail offense during the April 28 game at Lewis-Young Park. Moreland allowed just one hit over six innings in the Wildcats' 3-0 win over the Chargers.

In those six innings, Moreland also recorded six strikeouts as he breezed through the Charger lineup. Junior Christian Owens

came in for the save and struck out the side in the seventh.

“Evan threw really well for us,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “He threw a lot of strikes and let his defense work behind him. Christian did a great job coming in and closing the door.”

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It remained 1-0 into the bottom of the fifth, when the Wildcats were able to scratch across another run. Junior Bristol Barbour recorded an RBI single that scored Luke Schultz to double the Wildcats' lead.

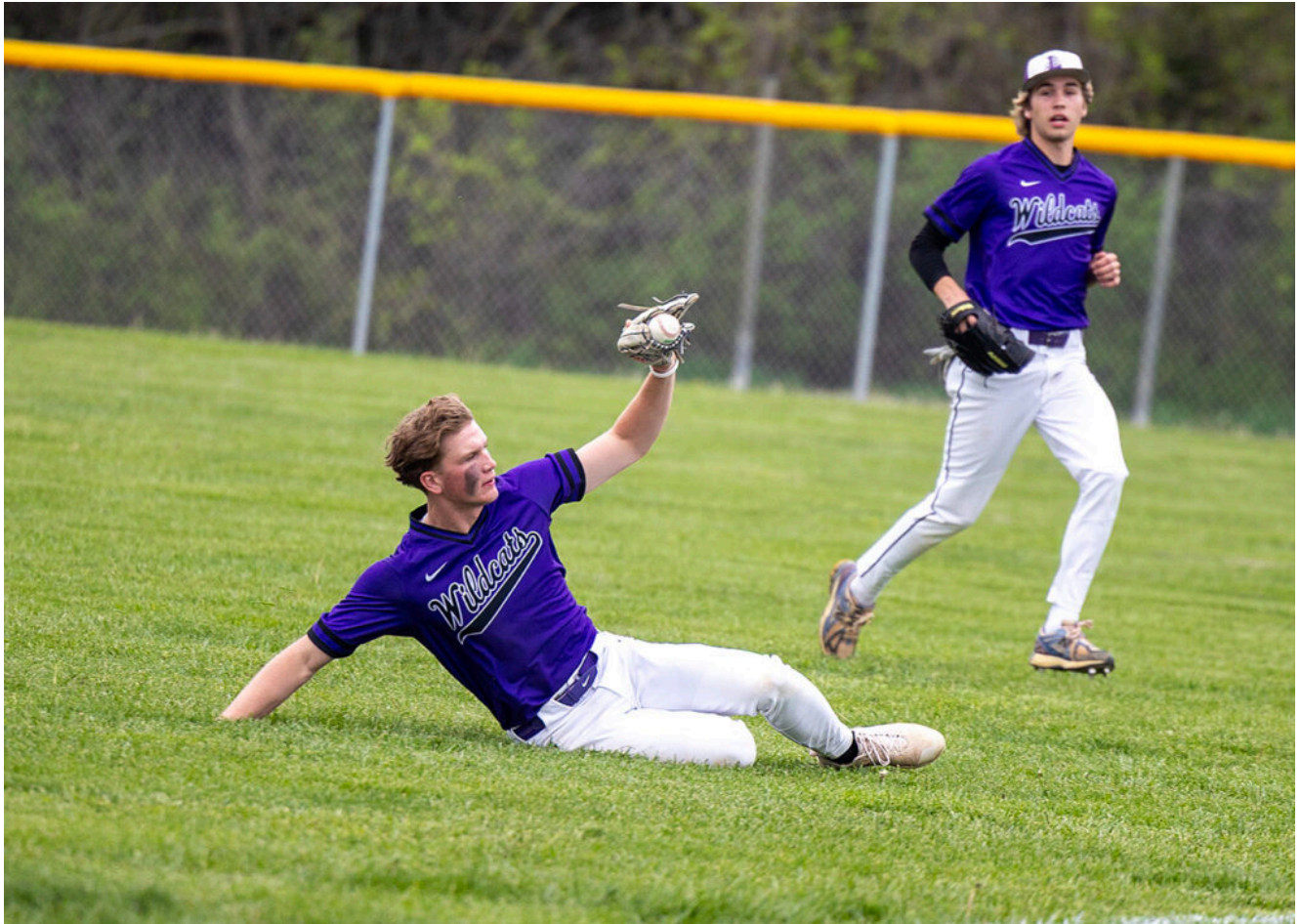
Louisburg added an insurance run in the bottom of the sixth as Amren singled home Owens to make it a 3-0 game, which was more than enough for the Wildcat pitching staff.

Amren, Schultz and Jayce Toms each led the Wildcat bats with two hits.

“We had some good team at bats and some timely hitting to get a few runs across,” Larson said. “That turned out to be all that our defense needed.”

The Wildcats will try for another win as they host Anderson County for a single game on May 1. First pitch is set for 6 p.m.

Wildcats rally past Lansing to get home win



Louisburg junior Bristol Barbour makes a sliding catch in right field during the Wildcats' April 25 game against Lansing at Lewis-Young Park.

Nothing seemed to be going right for the Louisburg baseball team in its home game with Lansing.

The Lions jumped out to a 1-0 lead and the Wildcats couldn't seem to get the key hit when they needed it. To make matters worse, Louisburg starting catcher Danny Napier had to leave the game with an injury.

However, the Wildcats rallied in his absence as his replacements – Christian Owens (with the bat) and Carter Willey (on defense) – provided the team with the spark they were looking for.

Louisburg scored four unanswered runs in its final two innings to secure a 4-1 victory on April 25 at Lewis-Young Park.

Owens had two hits in two plate appearances off the bench,

including an RBI double and he scored two runs in key moments in the game. As for Willey, he held it down behind the plate as the Wildcats snapped a mini 2-game losing skid.

The Wildcats were able to bounce back after tough losses to Tonganoxie (15-4) and Gardner-Edgerton (3-0) last week.

“That was a great team win,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “Everyone stepped up when needed and did a great job finding a way to win. Willey did really well behind the plate when Danny went down and Christian had two clutch hits for us when we needed it. They both did a great job.”

Wildcat starter Alex Saad kept his team in the game after Lansing scored a run in the first inning. Saad limited the damage as he went six innings and had eight strikeouts to go along with just three hits.



Louisburg senior Alex Saad earned the win after he pitched six innings of one run baseball against Lansing.

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“Saad kind of struggled in the first inning but after that he was great,” Larson said. “He let his defense work and threw a ton of strikes.”

Louisburg’s defense came through with several big plays as third baseman Luke Schultz and shortstop Rylan Carty made diving stops on the infield. Second baseman Bristol Barbour also made a sliding catch in shallow right field.

Barbour joined Owens as they each led the Wildcat bats with two hits. Max Amren and Meade Rutherford both recorded a double, while Owens, Barbour and Rutherford each drove home a run.

The Wildcats are back in action on May 1 as they host Anderson County for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Wildcats increase winning streak to 9 with sweep of Bonner Springs



Louisburg junior Christian Owens slides safely into third base during the Wildcats' April 15 doubleheader against Bonner Springs. Owens started the second game and struck out 14 batters to lead the Wildcats to a 6-0 win.

The Louisburg baseball team couldn't have asked for a much better start to its season.

Louisburg had won nine of its first 10 games going into the Wildcats' April 15 home doubleheader against Bonner Springs. They certainly didn't cool off any against the Braves.

The Wildcats got out to a big lead in the opener and held on for an 8-6 win. In the nightcap, Louisburg junior Christian Owens struck out 14 batters and led his team to a 6-0 shutout

to earn the sweep.

Those wins pushed the Wildcats' winning streak to nine games and they are now 11-1 on the season.

"They're playing really right now," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "Defense has stepped up when needed and the offense has too. They're worried about winning the next game they play and have done a great job focusing on getting the job done."

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“Our pitching was really good all night,” Larson said. “The guys threw a ton of strikes and let their defense work. Christian pitched really well. He did a great job for us and never let their offense get any kind of rhythm.

The bats followed suit as the Wildcats scored four runs in the first inning and never looked back.

Junior Danny Napier led the way with three hits, including a pair of doubles and 2 RBIs. Luke Schultz had two hits and double, while Bristol Barbour also had two hits and an RBI.



Louisburg shortstop Rylan Carty looks to turn a double play during the Wildcats' April 15 game against Bonner Springs.

Louisburg jumped out to a big lead once again in the first game. The Wildcats scored eight runs in the first five innings and took an 8-1 advantage.

Schultz and Barbour each had three hits. Schultz hit a solo home run, while Barbour had an RBI double.

Senior Carter Willey had two hits and an RBI. Senior Jayce Toms and Owens each drove home a run.

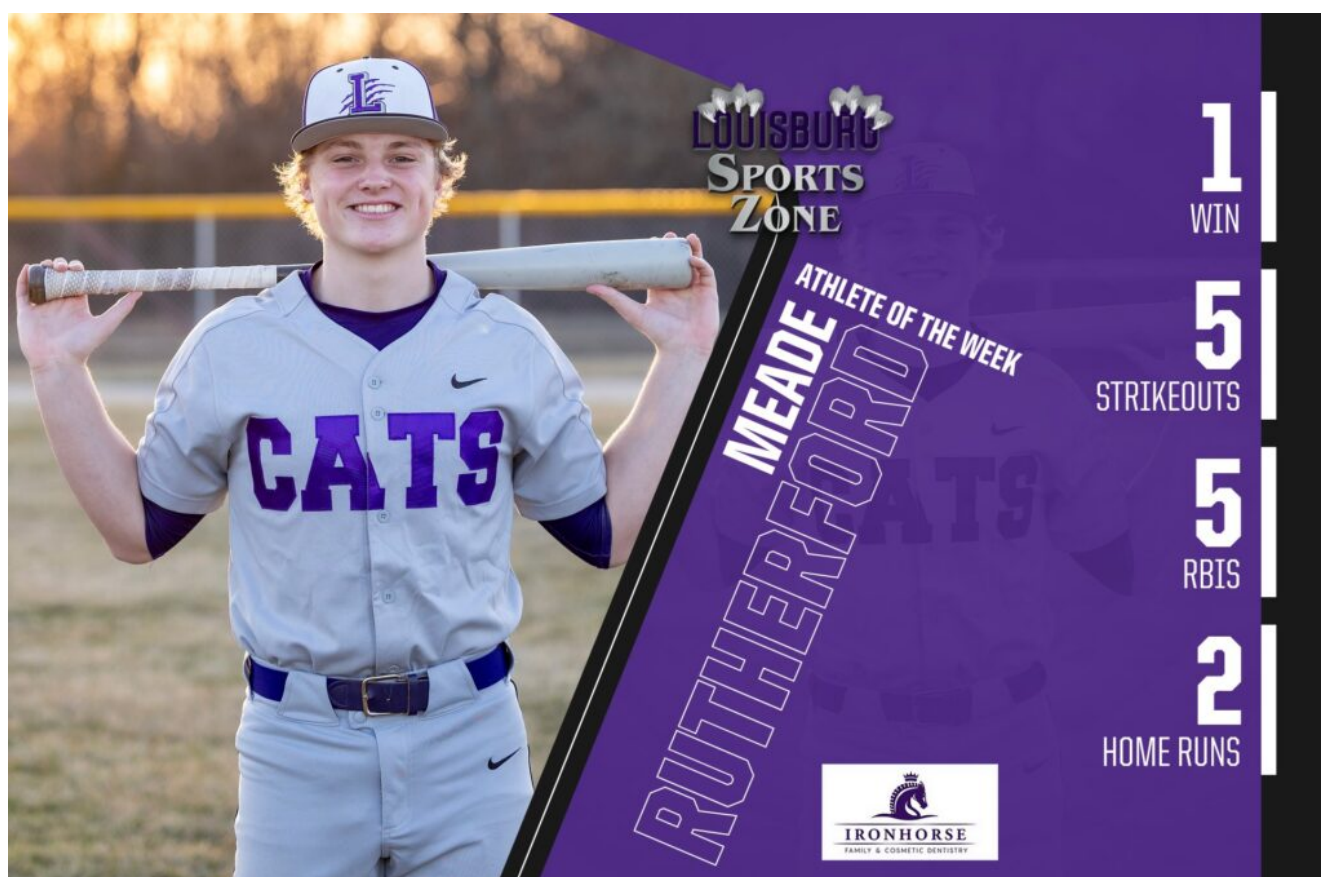
"We swung it well in both games," Larson said. " We had some really timely hits and put the ball in play to get the job done when needed."

Senior Meade Rutherford started in game one and pitched well as he allowed just two earned runs over six innings and struck out five.

Junior Evan Moreland come on in relief and didn't allow an earned run as he struck out two in his lone inning of work.

The Wildcats will try and continue their winning ways today as they host Tonganoxie for a single game at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch is set for 6:15 p.m.

Week 3 Athlete of the Week: Meade Rutherford



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week three of the spring sports season, sponsored by IronHorse Family and Cosmetic Dentistry.

MEADE RUTHERFORD, SENIOR, BASEBALL

Louisburg senior Meade Rutherford made big contributions on the mound and at the plate for the Wildcat baseball team last week. On April 8 against Spring Hill, Rutherford took a no-hitter into the sixth inning and helped the Wildcats to win a over the Broncos. He pitched six innings and gave up just two hits and struck out five.

On April 10 at Wellsville, Rutherford had a big day with a bat as he hit two home runs to lead the Wildcats to a sweep of the Eagles. On the week, Rutherford finished with three hits – two home runs and a double – to go along with 5 RBIs.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the spring season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners

Week 1: Luke Schultz

Week 2: Faith Sewell



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Wildcats crush seven home runs in sweep of Wellsville



Louisburg senior Carter Willey was one of six Wildcats to hit home runs during their April 10 doubleheader at Wellsville.

WELLSVILLE – The Louisburg baseball team ventured to Wellsville for a doubleheader that ended up turning into a home run derby.

Louisburg cranked seven home runs in the two games, including six in the second game alone, as the Wildcats cruised to a 14-1 and 18-2 victory on April 10 in Wellsville.

It was a dominant offensive showing for the Wildcats as they combined for 28 hits in the two games. They now own a 7-game winning streak and are 9-1 on the year.

“The guys saw the ball well and put a good swing on it most of the night,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “It is always great to leave with a sweep. They really fed off each other’s energy and success and did a great job of staying locked in all night.”

Louisburg senior Meade Rutherford had a big night with two home runs – one in each game – to go along with 5 RBIs and a double.

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Napier, Barbour, Evan Moreland and Rylan Carty each had an RBI of their own. Louisburg used a 7-run third inning to take a 13-0 lead and ended the game after five innings.

Senior Alex Saad was dominant on the mound for the Wildcats as he earned the compete game victory with 11 strikeouts and gave up just four hits.

Barbour did much of the same in the second game. The Louisburg junior got the victory with seven strikeouts and gave up just one run.

“Alex and Bristol both threw really well all night,” Larson said. “They did a great job of throwing strikes and mixing

pitches to keep them off balance. It was a great outing by the entire team.”

The Wildcat bats certainly did their part with six home runs in the contest. Moreland, Napier, Carty, Carter Willey, Rutherford and Barbour all had balls leave the yard.

Barbour and Napier provided the Wildcats with a bulk of the offense as they each had three hits to go along with 5 and 4 RBIs, respectively.

Louisburg will try and keep its winning streak going as the Wildcats host Bonner Springs for a doubleheader on April 15. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Lewis-Young Park.