Wildcats fall short in doubleheader at Baldwin



Louisburg starting pitcher Garrett Harding releases a pitch during the first game last Tuesday in Baldwin City.

BALDWIN CITY – It wasn't the start the Louisburg baseball team was looking for last Tuesday when it traveled to Baldwin for a doubleheader.

The Wildcats were shutout 10-0 in the first game and not many things went their way. A lot changed in the nightcap.

Although Louisburg still fell in the second game, 5-4, the Wildcats took a lot of positives from a contest that provided strong pitching and timely hitting.

"We struggled to get runners moving in the first game," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "We left a lot of runners in scoring position. We had multiple innings with runners on and no outs that we were unable to take advantage of. So, bouncing back in the second game was big. We played with better focus, but had some mistakes that came at key moments."

The first game was a tight one for the first few innings as Baldwin held just a 1-0 lead into the fourth inning and Louisburg starter Garrett Harding had kept the Bulldog hitters off-balance. Baldwin got things going with four runs in the fourth, three in the fifth and two more in the sixth to seal the win.

The Wildcats (0-4) put together seven hits, but were scattered throughout the contest.

Logan McClellan and Andrew Krause led the Wildcat offense with two hits each and Madden Rutherford had the lone extra base hit with a double.
Chase Norton and A.J. Drew each added a single in the loss

In the nightcap, the Wildcats got a good performance from McClellan. The Louisburg senior pitched 4 1/3 innings and gave up just three earned runs and struck out six batters. Krause followed it up with 1 2/3 innings of shutout relief to go along with two strikeouts.

“Logan did a great job throwing strikes,” McGhee said. “He allowed his defense to work for him and pumped from the start of the
game. He provided some solid innings and then when to the outfield and threw
a runner out that was headed to second. Not much more that we can ask for
defensively.”

Louisburg opened the second game with a two-run first inning when Harding singled to score pinch-runner Blue Caplinger and then Krause scored freshman Brandon Doles on a fielder’s choice.

The Wildcats led 2-1 going into the bottom of the third when Baldwin answered with two runs to take the lead. Louisburg tied the game with a run in the top of the fifth, but the Bulldogs scored two more runs in the bottom of the fifth and

was able to hold off the Wildcats.

Harding led the Wildcat offense with a three-hit performance to
go along with an RBI and senior Beckett Rasmussen also had a single.

In their first varsity games, freshmen Maverick Rockers and Doles each recorded a single and Rockers had an RBI in the sixth to pull Louisburg within one. Fellow freshman Kolby Kattau also got his first start in the opener.

“They came in with a great approach at
the plate and showed some quality at-bats,” McGhee said. “Doles had several
at-bats in which he worked the count and extended his at-bat with a solid two
strike hitting approach. Rockers came up with a key hit late in the game that
put us in striking distance.

“It was great to see that our younger
players can jump in and compete at the varsity level. I’m sure there were a few
jitters at first, but each of them overcame the nerves and put out great
effort.”

Louisburg will try for its first win of
the season tonight when it travels to Spring Hill. The Wildcats will host
Wellsville on Thursday in their home opener at Lewis-Young Park.

Piper sweeps Wildcat baseball in opener



KANSAS CITY, Kan. – The Louisburg baseball team had to wait a couple extra days to begin its season, but the Wildcats eventually got going Thursday when they traveled to Piper for their opener.

Louisburg got out to early leads in both games of the doubleheader at Piper High School, but the Wildcats couldn't hold on to either as they fell 9-5 and 15-5 to the Pirates.

The Wildcats were in control most of the way in the opener as they took a 5-1 lead into the fifth inning, but Piper responded for five runs in the fifth and three more in the sixth to all but seal the win.

Junior Madden Rutherford started the game for the Wildcats as he went three inning and gave up just one hit and one earned run, but the Pirates got to the Wildcat pitching staff after that.

Senior Noah Larson led the Wildcats with a single and double and junior Garrett Harding had a hit and 3 RBIs in the loss. Rutherford and seniors Beckett Rasmussen and Michael Rogers

also had hits for Louisburg, while senior Jakob Krause and Rutherford each
scored a pair of runs.

In the nightcap, it was Piper that
jumped out to an early 3-1 advantage, but the Wildcats scored three runs in the
second and another in the third to take a 5-4 lead into the fourth inning.

The Piper bats were just too much
for the Wildcats as the Pirates scored 11 runs in the next three frames to
complete the sweep of Louisburg.

Larson, senior Chase Norton,
junior Andrew Krause and senior Logan McClellan each had hits for the Wildcats
and Norton recorded a double. Larson finished the game with 2 RBIs, while Jakob
Krause, Rutherford and Rogers also drove in runs.

Louisburg will try and bounce back
today when it travels to Baldwin for another doubleheader. First pitch is set
for 4:30 p.m.

Wildcat baseball ready to take step forward this season



Louisburg junior Madden Rutherford is one of several returning starters for the Wildcat baseball team this season. Rutherford earned second team all-league honors a season ago.

The Louisburg baseball team had its ups and downs during the 2018 season as the Wildcats finished with a 7-15 record.

Although the Wildcats didn't have as much success as they would have liked, they used that time as a learning tool for a lot of underclassmen – many of which are back this season.

Louisburg lost just two starters from last year's squad and the Wildcats are poised to take a step forward in 2019 as they hope some of that youth turns into experience.

"Having this group back with another year of experience under their belt is great," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "Many had good seasons last year and are looking to improve on where they were a season ago. The experience will help us offensively and defensively. We have some versatile guys that can help us in multiple positions. They are a hard working group that is passionate about the game."

The Wildcats return a pair of

All-Frontier League players from last season, including the team’s No. 1 starter,
junior Madden Rutherford.

In six
starts, Rutherford had a 5.12 ERA and struck out 23 batters in 28 innings
pitched. He also committed just three errors in 19 games. At the plate, he had
a .408 average with 10 RBIs, three doubles, a triple, a home run and scored 15
runs.

Junior Garrett Harding also made
an impact in the Wildcat lineup last season after earning honorable mention
all-league honors and he hopes to do the same this year.



Louisburg junior Garrett Harding was one of the Wildcats’ top offensive players last season.

In 21
games, Harding led the Wildcats with a .418 average and

finished the season with 23 hits, a double, a grand slam and 20 RBIs. On the mound, he had 2.47 earned run average in 11 innings of work and defensively he committed just one error.

Several Wildcats will play multiple positions this season as seniors Beckett Rasmussen and Chase Norton will split time behind the plate at catcher. Fellow senior Noah Larson will be a regular at first base and senior Michael Rogers will see a lot of time at second base.

Rutherford, senior Logan McClellan and Rasmussen will man the shortstop position, while Harding, Andrew Krause or Rutherford will play third depending on pitching matchups.

Jakob Krause, Rutherford, Rasmussen, McClellan, Andrew Krause and A.J. Drew will all see time in th outfield.

“Offensively we are returning a majority of our run producers from last season,” McGhee said. “Garrett Harding, Madden Rutherford, and Noah Larson all did a great job at the plate last season driving in runs. Logan McClellan and Jakob Krause did a great job on the base paths and we look for them to continue to excel there. We have the potential to do some good things. As long as we take a good approach at the plate, and take advantage of fastball counts, we should do some good things.”

On the mound, Rutherford will look to lead a veteran staff that
includes Jakob Krause, Harding, McClellan and Andrew Krause. The Wildcats may also
look to some younger arms to contribute as well in junior Kaden Oehlert and
sophomores Trevin Lohse and A.J. Drew.

“We will have some younger arms joining
the group as our season progresses and we work to manage the pitch count
requirements set out by the state,” McGhee said. “Several others may see time
throughout the season as well. We are returning some quality arms that
put in a lot of innings last season and faced some challenges. These have
hopefully spurred growth and a drive to compete even more.”



Louisburg senior Noah Larson will be the team’s regular first baseman this season.

It has already been a rough start to the season for the Wildcats as they have only been able to practice outdoors twice during the first three weeks of practice due to the cold weather and snow.

“It has been a challenge this spring to get good work in,” McGhee said. “We have been able to get outside twice since the beginning the season, with Monday being our first opportunity to get on to the field and get good work in. Being indoors is never ideal, but we feel like we have gotten in good work.

“We have taken a lot of cuts in the cage and spent quality time on our mounds. Fielding is our biggest challenge when indoors, but we look for ways to work on some of the details. However the gym floor never really prepares you for the bad hop. We are ready to go, but the inability to get good reps on the field has us all a bit on edge.”

Louisburg opens its season at 4:30 p.m. today when it travels to Piper for a doubleheader and it is the first of three straight road appearances for the Wildcats to start the season. Louisburg will host Wellsville in its home opener on April 4.

McClellan signs to play

baseball at Midland University



Louisburg senior Logan McClellan is ready to take the next step in his baseball career as he recently signed to play at Midland University next season.

Playing collegiate sports had always intrigued Louisburg senior Logan McClellan ever since he was a little kid.

McClellan is now going to get his opportunity and it is a perfect fit for him as he committed to play baseball at Midland University, an NAIA program in Fremont, Neb.

He made his decision official during a signing ceremony on Feb. 6 at Louisburg High School in front of his family and friends. McClellan is now ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

“It was a pretty difficult choice for me,” McClellan said. “It was kind of a waiting game to see where I would get scholarship offers from or if I would have to walk-on somewhere. Thankfully the opportunity with Midland came along and I am really happy with the choice.

“To play any sport in college has always been a dream of mine, but you have to find the right one and I just fell in love with baseball. I am pretty excited and I am ready for my future and whatever it brings for me.”

McClellan is joining a Midland program that has recorded a lot of success in its conference in the last several years under head coach Chad Miller and the Warriors have been ranked in the top 50.



LHS senior Logan McClellan signed his letter of intent on Feb. 6 to play baseball at Midland University. Sitting next to Logan are his parents Mike and Leslie McClellan. Standing (from left) is Louisburg head coach Joel McGhee and Logan’s brother Cameron.

In the Great Plains Conference, the Warriors have reached the conference finals the last six seasons and have been a mainstay atop the standings. It is his relationships with the coaches that was one of the many reasons McClellan decided on

the Nebraska school.

“The head coach is probably one of the funniest coaches I have ever met,” he said of Miller. “He is very interested in my life outside of baseball and their assistant coaches are extremely nice as well. I think it will be good to have that diversity in the coaching staff.

“I know they won the GPAC the last four years and have been in the finals for the last six. They are a pretty good program and they recruit a lot of players out of state. There are a lot of California kids and I am probably one of the few Kansas kids on the roster right now.”

The Midland coaches told McClellan they see him fitting in at second base, shortstop or in the outfield and the Louisburg senior knows his is going to have plenty of time to grow during his time there. The Warriors have three different levels in their program and McClellan likes the opportunity to learn as he goes.

Midland was also a good fit for McClellan in the classroom as well, which made the decision a lot easier when it came down to it

“The first thing I like about Midland is they have my major in athletic training and I am able to get my masters there as well, which is really nice,” he said. “As far

as the program,
it was a good fit because they have three teams I can play. I will start at the
bottom and work my way up and it gives me a lot of room for development.

“I just want to prove myself that
I am out there for a reason. My biggest expectation for myself is just to finish
school with the major that I want so I can start my life. I am going to have to
hang up my cleats at some point. I can play a little boy’s game for a while and
then it is time to start my life.”

Rasmussen excited for chance to play baseball at Rockhurst



Louisburg senior Beckett Rasmussen made it official last week when he signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Rockhurst next year.

Baseball has always been a passion
for Beckett Rasmussen and it is something that he has found a lot of success.

Since he began playing T-Ball in

kindergarten, Rasmussen has always considered baseball his favorite sport,
despite being involved in others.

“I have a lot of great friends
that play football, and it is a lot of fun to play, but baseball is just my
happy place,” Rasmussen said. “I can get away and just enjoy myself.”

Rasmussen will get to do just that next year as he signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Rockhurst University. He made the commitment public on Jan. 16 during a signing ceremony in front of family and friends at Louisburg High School.

Rockhurst, which is a Division II
program in Kansas City, Mo., presented Rasmussen with an offer of a lifetime
and he just couldn’t pass it up.

“I am super excited,” he said. “It is a great university, both academically and they also have a great baseball team. Being able to work hard from a young age to now, and see it all pay off is just amazing.”

Rasmussen, who has been a member
of the Louisburg varsity baseball team the last two years, will play his final
season for the Wildcats and has filled several roles for the Wildcats. Along
with playing catcher, he has played several other positions around the diamond.

It is ability to play multiple spots,
and his leadership in the dugout, that has allowed him to find success with the
Wildcats.

“We are very happy for Beckett,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “He will take a great attitude, work ethic, and team mentality to the Rockhurst program. His multi-sport background, leadership in the classroom, and school involvement are essential to developing a quality program. We wish him the best as he continues on to next level, and are looking forward to what he will bring to our program in his senior season.”



On Jan. 16, Beckett Rasmussen signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Rockhurst. Sitting next to Beckett are his parents, Mike and Mercedes, and his brother Greyson. Standing is Louisburg baseball head coach Joel McGhee.

Last season, Rasmussen had 67 plate appearances for the Wildcats and finished the year with 13 hits, eight RBIs and scored 12 runs. Although his favorite position is catcher, he is willing to do whatever

it takes to see the field.

“My main position is catcher, but I like to play other positions as well,” Rasmussen said. “For high school, I probably played close to eight different positions all year. I look forward to catching there, but if they need me to play other positions I would be happy to. As long as I am on the field I don’t really care.

“The goal is to get playing time, whether it is behind the plate or in the field. I just want to be able to play as a freshman. They have a junior varsity team and I think that is a good way to get reps. Hopefully I can play there for a couple of years and then hopefully make varsity.”

Last season, Rockhurst finished with a 20-29 record overall and were 10-18 in the GLVC Conference. But when Rasmussen, who plans to major in communications, made his official visit, he liked everything he saw – from the school to the coaching staff.

“The coaches are amazing,” Rasmussen said. “I had a personal interview with the head coach and he was the nicest guy. He was just short, sweet and to the point. He was very straight forward and direct. He told me that he liked what he saw out of me and I think it will be a good fit.

“Being able to face kids that have

the same desire and passion that you do in a sport is awesome because you know
they are going to try just as much as you are. It is going to make me better as
a player and a person.”

Top 10 Stories of 2018

It was a successful, and eventful, 2018 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware to Louisburg.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2018, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can’t wait for 2019 to begin. Looking forward to it!



10. Dillon medals at state golf for second straight year

EMPORIA – All season,
Calvin Dillon had been atop or near the front of leaderboard and that didn't
change in what was his biggest tournament of the season.

The Louisburg High School sophomore went up against the state's best during the Class 4A state golf tournament on May 19 at the Emporia Municipal Course and did more than old his own. Dillon earned a state medal as he finished 11th overall with a 3-over par 74.

It was the second consecutive state medal for Dillon
after he finished 10th overall last season at
Wamego as a freshman.

"It is a real honor
to earn another state medal, especially with the quality players that were at

the state tournament," Dillon said. "There were lots of good players and lots
of good teams."

It
was another notch on Dillon's list of accomplishments that included a Frontier
League title and six straight tournament victories during the 2018 season.



Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein



Louisburg girls soccer coach Kyle Conley

9. Conley, Ebenstein named Class 4A Coach of the Year

Louisburg
girls soccer coach Kyle Conley and Wildcat football coach Robert Ebenstein both
led their respective teams to special seasons.

Those seasons were special enough for both coaches to earn two big awards.

Conley was rewarded for all his hard work in June when it was announced that he was named as the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association’s Girls Coach of the Year for Class 4-1A.

He guided the Wildcats to a 14-7 record and a spot in the state championship match, where the Lady Cats finished second overall. The

finish was something to remember for Wildcat fans as that was accomplished in
just the program’s third year of existence.

He has posted a
41-18-2 record during his time as the Wildcat girls head coach and also guided
the Louisburg boys soccer team to its best finish in program history in 2017
with a fourth place finish at state.

As for Ebenstein, he
guided the Wildcats to 10 straight victories and a regional championship to
start the 2018 season, before getting knocked out in the sectional round
against eventual state champion, Bishop Miege.

Following the season, the Kansas Football Coaches Association named Ebenstein as the Class 4A Coach of the Year. Ebenstein, who is just in his second season as head coach, has a 16-4 record with the Wildcats as he guided his team to a Frontier League championship this year.



8.
Holtzen finishes Louisburg career with 12 varsity letters

Once Isabelle Holtzen
received her diploma and walked out of Louisburg High School for the last time
as a student, she officially became one of the most decorated female athletes
in school history.

No, she doesn’t have any individual state championships, or even
one as part of a team. Holtzen’s decorations aren’t ones in the form of
trophies or all-state honors, but instead, they can be found on the front of

her letter jacket.

Holtzen became the first female athlete in at least 20 years to earn 12 varsity letters, which means she lettered on the varsity level in three sports in each of her four years of high school.

In research done by Louisburg Sports Zone, it was unable to find
the last athlete to accomplish the feat, which could mean Holtzen could be the
first Lady Cat to do so. She competed in cross country, basketball and track
and field

The last athlete to come close was in 2001 when Krystal Bowes earned 10 varsity letters before moving on to a collegiate track career at
Wichita State.

“The biggest thing that it means to me is to just have an opportunity to participate in three sports at a school like Louisburg,” Holtzen
said. “The bigger the school that you go to, the harder it is to play multiple
sports at the varsity level and I think Louisburg is unique in that fact. The
best part of this whole journey was I think my freshman year because there was
no pressure and no one was expecting anything from me. It was surprising and
exciting to be able to letter in all three sports.”

Holtzen is currently at
Northern Iowa, where she received a scholarship to pole vault for the Panther
Track and Field Team.



7.
Dixon earns All-American, Player of the Year honors, signs with Kansas State

Louisburg
senior Anna Dixon led the Lady Cat volleyball program all season and she was recognized
for her play on the court.

Dixon was named to the Under Armour Volleyball All-American team as she received a spot on the honorable mention squad when the list was released in November.

Dixon, the 6-foot-3 outside hitter, was recently named the Class 4A Player of the Year by the Kansas Volleyball Association, and along with that was also selected to the all-state first team.

It was the second year in a row Dixon was named player of the year, as she had to share the honor last season with Rose Hill’s Gracie Van

Driel.

The honors certainly didn’t stop there as Dixon was all named to the All-Frontier League first team as she helped guide the Lady Cats to an undefeated league season.

Dixon led the Lady Cats in kills with 584 in 105 sets played. She also finished with 325 digs, as she played all six rotations and also had 50 aces and 42 blocks.

In her four years with the program, Dixon finished with 2,003 kills, which would place that total among the best the school has ever seen.

All that success resulted in a dream come true for Dixon as she made it official last November when she signed to play volleyball at Kansas State.

“I have always known Kansas State was going to be my home,” Dixon said. “Even since I committed as a sophomore, I always wanted to go up to Manhattan and see the girls and spend time with the team. K-State is where I need to be.”



6. Louisburg wrestling sends six to state, Holtzen earns first state medal

SALINA – As the final whistle sounded in his blood round match, Cade Holtzen looked up into the rafters of the Tony's Pizza Events Center and smiled.

He had finally reached his goal.

Holtzen defeated Columbus' Gabe Porter by a 6-0 decision Saturday during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships in Salina and secured his state medal.

"It is one of the best feelings that I have had in my life," Holtzen said. "Just knowing that I'm going to place – you just can't match that with anything else."

It certainly wasn't

easy for the Louisburg freshman as he faced a win or go home with nothing scenario heading into his match with Porter. Holtzen pulled out the victory and eventually finished sixth overall at 113 pounds to give Louisburg a state medalist for the third consecutive season.

“It is pretty cool,” he said. “I have been working for this all season, so to get a state medal is great. It may not have been as high as I wanted, but any state medal is pretty amazing.”

Holtzen had a special year for the Wildcats as he finished with a 45-6 record and broke the school record for most wins in a single season. He won four different tournaments and was a Frontier League and regional tournament runner-up.

To add to his resume, he became only the second freshman in school history to earn state medal – second to only Austin Hood, who would go on to with three state titles.

Austin Moore finished one victory shy of earning his first state medal, while Ryan Adams, Thad Hendrix and Blue Caplinger also picked up wins at the state tournament.



5. Moore, Johnson finished in top 10 at state cross country, girls qualify for second straight year

WAMEGO – It was going to be hard for the Louisburg High School girls cross country team to duplicate its magical season of 2017.

Not only did the Lady Cats qualify their team for state for the first time in program history, but they also had a top five finisher in Trinity Moore.

Fast forward to 2018, Louisburg wasn't able to match that successful run – the Lady Cats took it a step further.

Moore, along with freshman Reese Johnson, each had a top 10 finish during the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships at Wamego Country Club, and it is the first time

in school history that two female runners had medaled at a state meet. Louisburg added on to that as the girls finished fifth in the team standings with 154 points, which is also the highest finish in school history.

Moore, who finished
fifth at state a year ago, bested her performance by one place as she took
fourth with one of her better performances of the season. Johnson was right
behind her as she crossed the finish line in sixth.

Shaylor Whitham, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Delaney Wright and Kennady Wilkerson were also members of the Lady Cats' team to run at state. Emily Williams was a member of the regional team that finished second overall.



4. Louisburg track earns six state medals, Gassman state runner-up in

300 hurdles

WICHITA – Carlee Gassman had broken the Louisburg High School 300-meter hurdle record three different times in 2018 prior to the state track meet.

She picked the perfect time to make it a fourth.

Gassman broke her own school record in the 300 hurdles in May at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita as she ran a time of 45.68 seconds to earn a silver medal as she was the Wildcats' top performer on the weekend. Andale's Abby Smarsh, who is a senior, won the event in 44.73.

It was the Louisburg sophomore's first time competing at the Kansas meet as she transferred in from Iowa last year, where she qualified for
the state meet there in the 400 hurdles.

Gassman's medal in the 300 hurdles was just one of six the Wildcats were able to bring home following the two-day meet. Those six medals
were the most Louisburg has earned since 2011, when the Wildcats combined to
medal in 10 events and the boys won their first team state title.

The 300 hurdles wasn't the only event Gassman found success in as she also medaled in the long jump. Gassman, who hadn't competed in the event
prior to this year, finished fifth with a mark of 17 feet, 0.25 inches.

Isabelle Holtzen
would go on to finish sixth in the pole vault, the boys 4×400 team of Chris
Williams, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins went on to take
seventh. Williams finished eighth in the 400-meter run and

Trent Martin medaled
eighth in the boys pole vault.



3. Louisburg volleyball takes runner-up at state for second straight season

HUTCHINSON – The
feeling was much of the same.

The pride of finishing as a state-runner up was a popular one among the members of the Louisburg volleyball team. At the same time, the
frustration of taking second in state in back-to-back seasons was just as
prevalent.

Louisburg wasn’t quite sure what to feel following its 25-13 and 25-14 loss to Bishop Miege in the championship game of the Class 4A state tournament Saturday at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

In 2017, the Lady
Cats fell to Rose Hill by two points in the championship

match, and fast forward to the present, they were in the same spot – holding the state runner-up trophy. It was the 15th time in program history that Louisburg finished in the top four at state.

The Lady Cats rattled off four straight wins to start the tournament, including knocking off No. 1 seed Independence, and defending state champions Rose Hill and Topeka Hayden. Louisburg then battled back to defeat Andale in the state semifinals.

“The loss was tough,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “To come so close to a state title two years in a row, only to come up short is tough. But with that being said, it is a huge accomplishment for this team to get back to the state championship and make it two years in a row. Finishing second is nothing to hang our heads on. Last year’s finish fueled the fire for the team this year, and I challenged the returning players to use this loss and feeling to fuel them for next year.”

Louisburg has been one of the more dominant teams in Class 4A in the last decade as the Lady Cats have made the state tournament seven out of the last nine years and have finished as a state runner-up on three different occasions, along with several third and fourth place finishes. They finished 2018 with a 36-9 record.



2. Louisburg girls soccer advances to title game, has best finish in program history

NORTH NEWTON – The obstacle seemed insurmountable – and it was.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team found itself in the Class 4-1A state championship match in the program's third year of existence, but if they wanted to take it another step further, the Wildcats were going to have to knock the defending state champion of its perch.

Unfortunately, Bishop Miege wasn't about to be moved.

In a state title game that was played in the sweltering heat in late May at Bethel College, the Wildcats couldn't stay with the Stags in a 5-0 defeat. It was the third consecutive title for Bishop Miege, while Louisburg earned a state plaque for the first time in its short history.

It was special season for the Wildcats as the night before they knocked off Topeka Hayden, 1-0, in the state semifinals to secure the program's first state plaque. In 2017, Louisburg

both games in its state tournament appearance and finished fourth.

The road to this state championship appearance has been an interesting one for the Wildcats. More than three years ago, a group of Louisburg parents and citizens raised enough money to begin the girls soccer program and fund it for three years.

Louisburg was in the final year of that funding, and while the program isn't going away, the team realized they needed to play for more than themselves.

"We played for the community tonight," Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher said after the Hayden win. "We have to remember that when they raised money for this program, it was just through this year, so I think we owed it to them to play well. I really think it might have helped with how we played and I think it was one of the best games we played all season."

"It is a third-year program with 41 wins, three regional championships, two state final fours and now a state runner-up," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said after the title game. "We just have kids who come in and work their butt off. They are not soft, they aren't weak and from top to bottom they are going to work hard.

"We worked hard, but we just played Miege. That is one of the best teams in the state, and that stinks, but our kids played hard, worked

their tail off and it was a great year. We had people criticize us for how we
got there, but we won games and that really motivated the kids. It got them
fired up to go do something bigger than themselves. I couldn’t be more proud of
they stuck together and what they accomplished.”



1. Football wins 10 straight, takes Frontier League title and regional championship

It had been almost two
months since Louisburg and Piper squared off on the football field in what was
one of the more entertaining games on the Wildcats’ schedule.

Back in early
September, Louisburg left Piper High School with a seven-point win – a victory
that would help propel them to a Frontier League championship and a perfect
regular season.

The two teams squared off again and the stakes were a bit higher. The game, at least for Louisburg anyway, was even more exciting.

The Wildcats dominated action from the opening kickoff and never looked back in a 48-0 win over the Pirates. In the process, Louisburg won the school's first regional championship since 2016 and are off to a 10-0 start for the first time since 2010.

Louisburg advanced to the sectional round where it fell to eventual state champion Bishop Miege, 55-21, and finished its season with a 10-1 record.

It was as season marked with special moments, including a 28-7 victory over then-undefeated Paola late in the year to secure a league title.

"Being 10-0 and then having that first loss of the season was very disappointing," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "Losing always sucks, but losing in the playoffs and having to wait until next August is the worst. At the end of the day, Miege is a very good team and we did some good things. We got them to fourth down on multiple drives in the first quarter, we just couldn't make the plays on those big downs. Then we got behind a little and started pressing.

"Overall it was a great year. I am very proud of our guys and excited for them that they were able to get double digit wins for only the third time since 2000, and

there was a
lot of really good football played during that time period. It was a lot
fun to be a part of.”



Austin Moore was named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl and was a first-team all-state player for the Wildcats. Moore was also named as the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity.

With all that success, honors
started to roll in for its players as running backs Austin Moore and Blue
Caplinger, along with linemen Brayden White and Kiefer Tucker all earned
all-state honors.

Moore and White went on to be
semifinalists for the Simone Awards and Moore was also selected to participate
in the Kansas Shrine Bowl in the summer of 2019. Ebenstein was also named as
coach of the year by the football coaches association.

Most recently, Moore was
named the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year and Running Back of the Year by
810varsity.com, while White was named the Small-Class Lineman of the Year.
Ebenstein was also named Kansas Small-Class Coach of the Year by 810 Varsity.

Hinkle ready to take on role as LHS activities director



Walking into Scott Hinkle’s office, it doesn’t appear he started a new job two weeks ago.

The moving boxes are mostly gone. His desk is organized with everything in its place, along with a calendar crammed full of upcoming events.

Hinkle is not shy to tell people about his love for the Boston Red Sox. Sitting on one wall are two older chairs from Fenway Park, along other memorabilia.

The one thing that Hinkle hasn’t caught up on is his efforts to get some purple gear. An avid Kansas Jayhawk fan, he hasn’t had need to purchase any purple flair in the past. Seems like that will change shortly as he was hired as the new activities director and assistant principal at Louisburg High School

earlier this summer.

“I have been a Jayhawk fan all my life,” Hinkle said. “It will be a little weird to wear purple that is for sure, but I am sure I will get used to it. Before I left my old job, people found out where I was going so they started giving me little gifts with purple on it, like markers and stuff like that. They definitely got a kick out of that.”

Hinkle takes over for Jeremy Holloway, who was promoted to principal at LHS and becomes the third activities director in as many years to take over that spot.

“My wife has family in Kansas City and I have family in Wichita and so we were looking to come this way,” Hinkle said. “I had a couple friends that told me that the Louisburg position had opened up. I had heard of Louisburg a long time ago. I actually coached at Ottawa University in the early 90s and was familiar with the area. I came up, interviewed and here I am. It has obviously worked out well.

“Everyone has been so helpful and friendly and it is a good time to be coming to Louisburg. I am excited to be here.”

Before taking the job in Louisburg, Hinkle had spent the last 22 years in the Liberal school district in a variety of roles. He served as the boys high school basketball coach, along with nine years as an activities director, a year as the head girls basketball coach at the local community college and last year he served as assistant principal at the high school.

Hinkle graduated from Valley Center High School, and went on from there to earn his bachelor’s degree from Friends University, where he played basketball, and his master’s from the University of Kansas.

Basketball has always been a passion for Hinkle, but during his time as activities director at Liberal, he had a chance to learn the life of other sports as well.

“Liberal changed a lot from when I first got there in the mid 90s when they were a football and track powerhouse,” Hinkle said. “There were just athletes galore, but the culture kind of changed. We were really good in soccer and decent in track and volleyball. We still had good kids and good athletes, but it was a big transition as far as sports go when I first got there. My kids grew up there and being involved and being able to watch their events was something that has always appealed to me.

“Basketball has always been in my blood. Other than my nine years as athletic director, I have coached in some capacity and I am a big basketball fan. Obviously, being an athletic director I am just a big sports fan in general.”

Still new in town, Hinkle is still trying to get to know his coaching staff, but he is excited about the situation he is walking into with the Wildcats finishing as state runner-ups in volleyball and girls soccer last season. Several cross country, golf, wrestling and track athletes also earned state medals.

However, if there is one thing he wanted to relay to everyone is that he wants to give his coaches the freedom to run their programs.

“I want to let the coaches, coach,” he said. “I am not going to be the guy that says this is how we did things in Liberal and I am not that type of leader. If it comes to the point where they need some advice, I want to be a resource for them. I don’t want to be someone that is looking for something.

“I have met a few of the coaches. I have let them know that I am here if they need anything. I have stopped by the weight room to speak to a few coaches and some have stopped by to introduce themselves. I am still learning names and faces. We have a coaches meeting on the 10th and I will see and learn a lot more about them then.”

With all the success the Wildcats had last season in the sports arena, Hinkle is happy to be a part of the LHS family and is learning new things about the town every day.

“I have heard all types of things,” he said. “I have heard they take football pretty seriously here. I know they were state runner-up in volleyball and girls soccer last year and that is an exciting thing to walk into. I think expectations are obviously high in those sports, but I think everyone always has high expectations. I am not going to do anything different than normal and I am just going to sit back and observe for a while and take it all in.”

Hinkle will experience some different things along with his new position. This season, the Frontier League will welcome three new teams – Bonner Springs, Piper and Tonganoxie – and will say goodbye to De Soto.

Another big change will be the postseason formats with several sports as the Kansas State High School Activities Association reshuffled their classification system, eliminating Class 4A-Division II.

“With the changes in the league, the classification system and being a new AD, it is probably a good time to be coming on,” Hinkle said. “The learning curve is going to be the same for all of us.

“I walked into a good situation for scheduling because (Holloway) already had everything all taken care of,” he said. “I think the dynamics of the league are going to change. Liberal’s former girls basketball coach is the coach at Piper and I know a little bit about them. As far as the programs and rivalries, that is something that is going to come with time.”

Even with all the changes in his life – moving, starting a new job, getting to know new faces – Hinkle is ready for what lies ahead and the staff at Louisburg has helped with that transition.

“It has been a whirlwind and it has been information overload,” he said. “It is a lot of the same things I did in Liberal as athletic director, I just haven’t done it for the last five years. Being an assistant principal at Liberal last year, I think, helped me prepare for the principal side.

“People have just gone out of their way to be helpful. From the administration to the custodial staff to the secretaries, everyone has been super helpful. When I was out around town, people have welcomed me and it has been a friendly feel everywhere I have been.”

Three Wildcats named to all-league baseball team



Louisburg sophomore Madden Rutherford earned second team All-Frontier League honors for his efforts this past season. Rutherford was the Wildcats’ No. 1 starter and among the team leaders in batting.

The Louisburg High School baseball team had its ups and downs during the 2018 season as it finished the year with a 7-15 record after a loss to state tournament qualifier, Paola, in the regional tournament.

Still, a few Wildcats were recognized for their efforts when it was all said and done.

When the All-Frontier League Baseball Team was released last week, three Louisburg players found themselves among those honored.

Sophomore Madden Rutherford was the highest honored Wildcat with second-team honors, while senior Garrett Caldwell and sophomore Garrett Harding each finished with honorable mention selections.

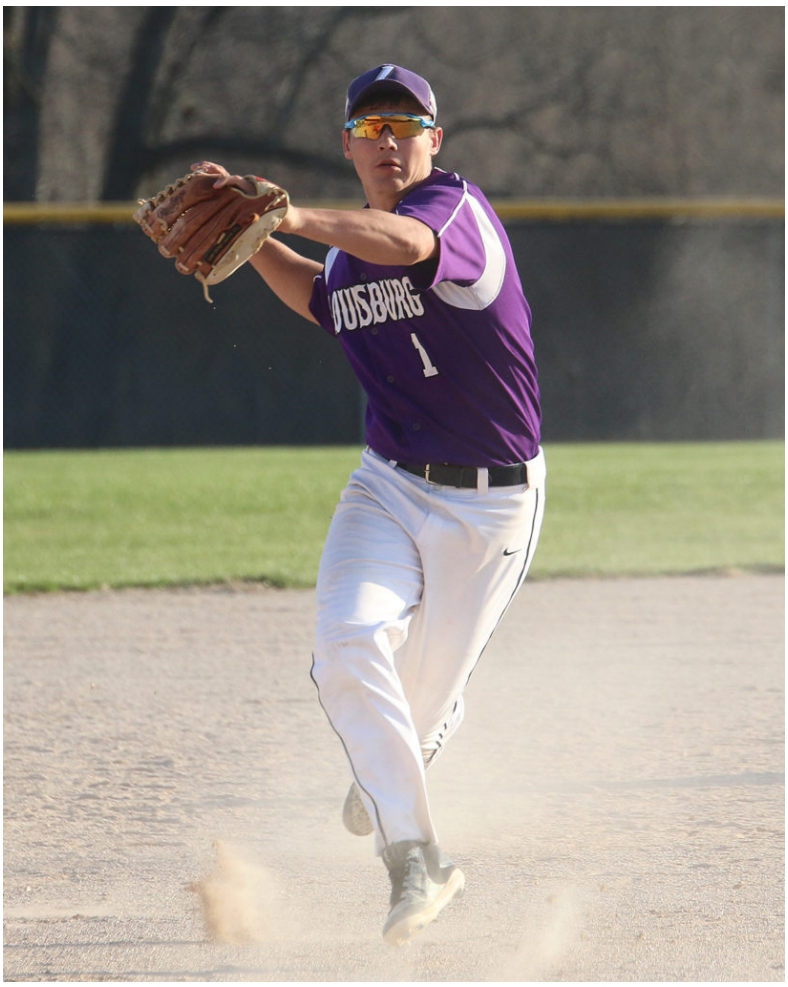
“Our league is always very competitive and has a number of quality players,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “Each year we nominate our top performers and see how other coaches in the league viewed the competition throughout the season. This will be an even more elite group to join in the following seasons as we add the new teams to the league. We were represented well and are happy to see that our underclassmen are being noticed throughout the league.

“These three provided great at bats throughout the season. All three guys were in the middle of our lineup and they did a great job getting timely hits and driving in runs.”

Rutherford was named to the all-league second team in the outfield, but also served as the team’s No. 1 starter. In six starts, he had a 5.12 ERA and struck out 23 batters in 28 innings pitched. He also committed just three errors in 19 games.

At the plate, Rutherford had a .408 average with 10 RBIs, three doubles, a triple, a home run and scored 15 runs.

“Rutherford was our ace and consistently filled up the strike zone, keeping us competitive in a challenging league,” McGhee said. “He was extremely valuable on defense, playing multiple positions in the infield and outfield.”



Senior Garrett Caldwell ended his Wildcat campaign with an honorable mention all-league selection.

Caldwell earned all-league honors for the second straight season for his work at third base. He was a fixture in the Louisburg lineup as he batted .329 on the season and had 23 hits, three doubles, two triples, two home runs and had 22 RBIs.

“Garrett had a solid performance at third base this year and provided good leadership for our team,” McGhee said. “He showed great hustle on the base path and was willing to do what was necessary to win games. He put together a very good season in his final year at Louisburg.”

Harding also spent time in a few different spots for Louisburg as he served as the team’s first baseman, designated hitter and pitcher, which garnered him an all-league selection at the

utility spot.



Sophomore Garrett Harding recently earned honorable mention all-league honors as a utility player.

In 21 games, Harding led the Wildcats with a .418 average and finished the season with 23 hits, a double, a grand slam and 20 RBIs. On the mound, he had 2.47 earned run average in 11 innings of work and defensively he committed just one error.

“Harding was another versatile tool, but spent a majority of his time at designated hitter,” McGhee said. “He pitched very efficiently in his outings throughout the season and provided us with quality defense at first base. He performed very well at the plate, which is what earned his honorable mention spot on the all-league team. He did not hit a lot of extra base hits, but got very timely hits that plated a significant number of runs.”

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL

FIRST TEAM

INFIELD: Darren Winans, senior, De Soto; Kurt Golubski, senior, Paola; Chad Bones, junior, Ottawa; Kaleb Shaffer, senior, Ottawa

OUTFIELD: Khalil Thrasher, senior, Eudora; Jackson Burrell, senior, Spring Hill; Nick Modes, senior, Paola

CATCHER: Chandler Bloomer, senior, Ottawa

PITCHER: Conner Mackay, senior, De Soto; Jared Parenti, senior, Ottawa

UTILITY: Anthony Slaughter, senior, De Soto

SECOND TEAM

INFIELD: Bryce Mohl, senior, De Soto; Cody Lucas, senior, Spring Hill; Nash Dreiling, senior, Paola; Chris Wilks, senior, Baldwin

OUTFIELD: Jack Barger, senior, De Soto; Peyton Garvin, senior, Eudora; **Madden Rutherford, sophomore, Louisburg**

CATCHER: Evan Peuser, sophomore, Paola

PITCHER: Tyler Barkemeyer, junior, De Soto; Jake Schrock, senior, Baldwin

UTILITY: Michael Daggett, sophomore, Paola

HONORABLE MENTION

INFIELD: Conner Mackay, senior, De Soto; Bryce Towles, senior, Spring Hill; Luke Angermayer, senior, Paola; Owen LaMar,

senior, Ottawa; Jake Schrock, senior, Baldwin; **Garrett Caldwell, senior, Louisburg**

OUTFIELD: Connor Strouse, senior, De Soto; Zade Barker, sophomore, Spring Hill; Wyatt Johnston, senior, Paola; Garrett Owings, senior, Baldwin

CATCHER: Corbyn Meyers, sophomore, Spring Hill; Garrett Borth, senior, Baldwin

PITCHER: Jayden Pierce, junior, Eudora; Garret Trimmer, junior, Paola; Chance Crowley, senior, Ottawa

UTILITY: Cameron Reynolds, junior, Ottawa; Ty Bennett, junior, Baldwin; **Garrett Harding, sophomore, Louisburg**

2018 Male Athlete of the Year Nominees



For the past two years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements and highlight them a little bit. So this year, I wanted to take it a step further.

This year Louisburg Sports Zone will be handing out an Athlete of the Year honor to a male and female athlete at Louisburg

High School. I wanted the opportunity to recognize those who exemplify what it means to be an “athlete.”

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female and then I will tabulate the results and determine the winner. In the next couple of weeks, I will announce this year recipient.

Below are the male nominees for this year’s award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!

2018 LOUISBURG SPORTS ZONE

MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



Blue Caplinger – Junior – Football, Wrestling, Track and Field

Caplinger played a big role for the Wildcat football team as he shared quarterback duties to start the year and then moved over to the tight end spot, but his biggest impact came on defense where he earned honorable mention all-Frontier League honors. He finished the season with 32 tackles and two interceptions from his secondary spot.

On the wrestling mat, Caplinger was a state qualifier for the Wildcats at 160 pounds and finished his season with a 34-14 record. He won titles at two different tournaments and holds the team record with most career reversals with 71.

Caplinger also fared well on the track where he ran sprints and relays for Louisburg. Caplinger was a member of the 4×400-meter relay team that finished seventh in the state in Class

4A, and also ran on the 4×100-meter relay team that qualified for the Kansas Relays.



Cade Holtzen – Freshman – Cross Country, Wrestling, Track and Field

Holtzen thrived on the wrestling mat this past season as he earned the Wildcats' lone state medal. He finished sixth overall at 113 pounds and became the second freshman in school history to place at state with a 45-6 record.

He also broke two team records in the process. Holtzen currently holds the mark for most wins in a season (45), most nearfall-2 (23). He also led the Wildcats in five other statistical categories.

Holtzen was a Frontier League and regional runner-up and won tournament titles at four different competitions.

He also ran on the Louisburg varsity cross country team and ran distance races for the Wildcat track team.



Austin Moore – junior – football, wrestling, track and field

On the football team, Moore was named a team captain and had success on both sides of the ball. As a running back, he recorded 1,215 yards and 15 touchdowns. Defensively, he tallied more than 70 tackles from the linebacker spot.

Moore was named to the all-Frontier League first team on both sides of the ball and was an honorable mention all-state selection by the Topeka-Capital Journal and Wichita Eagle. He was also named an all-state, all-purpose player by K-Preps. Moore was also selected as the team's Offensive Player of the Year and recipient of the BAC Award.

On the wrestling mat, he was also a team captain and recorded a 43-7 record. Moore was a state qualifier at 195 pounds and was a regional runner-up. He won the team's Workhorse Award and set a program record with 38 pins. Moore also had the highest GPA on the team.

Moore threw the javelin for the Wildcat track and field team as recorded a season best throw of 151 feet in the regional meet and finished eighth.



John Wyatt Reece – Senior – Cross Country, Track and Field

Reece became the first state cross country medalist in several years for Louisburg High School. He finished 11th overall at the Class 4A meet in Wamego to earn a medal and also earned

all-state honors for his effort.

He also finished runner-up in the Frontier League meet and currently holds the third fastest time in school history. He earned first-team all-league honors. Reece also competed at the CCCNC National Race where he medaled individually and was a part of the second place team.

In track, Reece qualified for state in the 1,600 and 3,200-meter runs and finished ninth at state in the 3,200. He was also a regional runner-up in both events.

Reece was a Kansas Relays qualifier and medalist in the 2,000-meter steeplechase and currently holds the school record.

Reece has signed with Southwest Minnesota State next season and will run for the Mustangs starting next fall.



Madden Rutherford – Sophomore – Football, Basketball, Baseball

Rutherford took over the starting quarterback role as a sophomore for the Wildcat football team and became a dual-threat athlete at that position. He finished with 670 yards through the air and had eight touchdowns. On the ground, he racked up 318 yards and two more touchdowns. His performance helped him to a second-team honor on the all-Frontier League team.

On the baseball diamond, Rutherford was the Wildcats' top pitcher on the season and also did his job out on in the field as he earned second team all-Frontier League honors as an outfielder. Rutherford started six games this season and pitched 28 innings with a 5.12 earned run average and struck out 23 batters. At the plate, he finished the season with a .408 average, three doubles, a triple, a home run and had 10 RBIs. He also ended the year with only three errors in 19 games.

Rutherford also saw a lot of varsity time for the Wildcat basketball team as he played in 17 games.



Grant Ryals – Senior – Soccer, Golf

Ryals led the Louisburg boys soccer team as he garnered first team all-league and all-state honors this past season. He served as team captain the past two seasons and scored seven goals and had 11 assists from the midfield spot.

His 11 assists put him fourth in the all-time Louisburg single season record and his 23 career assists place him second all-time.

Ryals will continue his soccer career at William Jewell College next season.

Ryals was also a member of the Louisburg varsity golf team and was a part of several runner-up team finishes with the Wildcats.

All-Frontier League Baseball, Girls Soccer and Softball teams

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL

FIRST TEAM

INFIELD: Darren Winans, senior, De Soto; Kurt Golubski, senior, Paola; Chad Bones, junior, Ottawa; Kaleb Shaffer, senior, Ottawa

OUTFIELD: Khalil Thrasher, senior, Eudora; Jackson Burrell, senior, Spring Hill; Nick Modes, senior, Paola

CATCHER: Chandler Bloomer, senior, Ottawa

PITCHER: Conner Mackay, senior, De Soto; Jared Parenti, senior, Ottawa

UTILITY: Anthony Slaughter, senior, De Soto

SECOND TEAM

INFIELD: Bryce Mohl, senior, De Soto; Cody Lucas, senior, Spring Hill; Nash Dreiling, senior, Paola; Chris Wilks,

senior, Baldwin

OUTFIELD: Jack Barger, senior, De Soto; Peyton Garvin, senior, Eudora; **Madden Rutherford, sophomore, Louisburg**

CATCHER: Evan Peuser, sophomore, Paola

PITCHER: Tyler Barkemeyer, junior, De Soto; Jake Schrock, senior, Baldwin

UTILITY: Michael Daggett, sophomore, Paola

HONORABLE MENTION

INFIELD: Conner Mackay, senior, De Soto; Bryce Towles, senior, Spring Hill; Luke Angermayer, senior, Paola; Owen LaMar, senior, Ottawa; Jake Schrock, senior, Baldwin; **Garrett Caldwell, senior, Louisburg**

OUTFIELD: Connor Strouse, senior, De Soto; Zade Barker, sophomore, Spring Hill; Wyatt Johnston, senior, Paola; Garrett Owings, senior, Baldwin

CATCHER: Corbyn Meyers, sophomore, Spring Hill; Garrett Borth, senior, Baldwin

PITCHER: Jayden Pierce, junior, Eudora; Garret Trimmer, junior, Paola; Chance Crowley, senior, Ottawa

UTILITY: Cameron Reynolds, junior, Ottawa; Ty Bennett, junior, Baldwin; **Garrett Harding, sophomore, Louisburg**

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER

FIRST TEAM

Caitlin Countryman, junior, Baldwin

Josie Boyle, sophomore, Baldwin

Mackenzie Mohl, sophomore, De Soto

Jordan Zade, freshman, De Soto

Morgan Laplante, junior, De Soto

Bailey Belcher, senior, Louisburg

Mackenzie Scholtz, sophomore, Louisburg

Sara Watson, senior, Spring Hill

Mallory Smith, junior, Spring Hill

Anna Watson, senior, Spring Hill

GOALIE: Taylor Rogers, senior, De Soto

SECOND TEAM

Anna Burnett, sophomore, Baldwin

Caitlin Walton, senior, De Soto

Alexa Rosetta, senior, De Soto

Alex Schemmel, senior, De Soto

Kate Erpelding, freshman, Eudora

Alex Pascua, freshman, Eudora

Erin Lemke, sophomore, Louisburg

Amanda Wray, senior, Ottawa

Jasmine Diaz, senior, De Soto

Kaylen Dawson, sophomore, Spring Hill

GOALIE: Emery Mounce, sophomore, Spring Hill

HONORABLE MENTION

Lauren Russell, freshman, Baldwin

Samantha McKinney, senior, Baldwin

Ashley Panagakis, junior, De Soto

Krista Rush, junior, De Soto

Nicole Whitten, senior, Eudora

Kaitlyn Lewer, junior, Louisburg

Trinity Moore, sophomore, Louisburg

Savannah Reinhart, senior, Louisburg

Lexi Dillon, freshman, Spring Hill

GOALIE: **Shay Whiting, senior, Louisburg**; Britney Smith, senior, Ottawa

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOFTBALL

FIRST TEAM

INFIELD: Kamryn Shaffer, senior, Ottawa; **Molly Rison, junior, Louisburg**; Betsy Parmley, senior, Baldwin; Sierra Smith, sophomore, Eudora

OUTFIELD: Sienna Hall, senior, Baldwin; Audrey Flowers, junior, Baldwin; Elizabeth Hays, senior, Spring Hill

CATCHER: Gaige Pinkerton, freshman, Spring Hill

PITCHER: Jordan Johnson, senior, Paola; Kyla Etter, junior, Eudora

UTILITY: Regan Smith, senior, Spring Hill

SECOND TEAM

INFIELD: Jenna DeVore, senior, Ottawa; Hannah Menefee, junior, Paola; Paige Cooper, sophomore, Spring Hill; Kennedy Doherty, senior, Eudora

OUTFIELD: Justine Kennington, junior, Ottawa; Aubrey Weatherbie, sophomore, Paola; Devin Pucell, senior, Eudora

CATCHER: Emma Grossoehme, freshman, Baldwin

PITCHER: Layney Steging, junior, Spring Hill

UTILITY: Hannah Pearce, senior, Paola

HONORABLE MENTION

INFIELD: Halle Schindler, junior, Paola; **Kayla Willey, sophomore, Louisburg**; Avery Karlin, freshman, De Soto; Kellee Wiggins, senior, Baldwin; Megan Kennedy, junior, Eudora

OUTFIELD: Alli Kerns, junior, Ottawa; Jordan Diehl, sophomore, De Soto; McKInley Markley, senior, Baldwin

CATCHER: Jocelyn Woods, senior, Ottawa; Josie Bedford, senior, De Soto; Alaina Howe, senior, Eudora

UTILITY: **Karson Griggs, junior, Louisburg**