

Big hit evades Louisburg in sweep



Louisburg senior Mitchell Caldwell looks in a throw at second base as he tries to tag a runner out during a game earlier this season. The Wildcats fell to Baldwin on Tuesday, 7-2 and 4-3.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg baseball team had a lot of momentum going into Tuesday’s doubleheader with Baldwin and for good reason.

The Wildcats had won four straight going in and had a chance to build on it even more against the Bulldogs. Unfortunately for Louisburg, it couldn’t find the big hit in the 7-2 and 4-3 losses to Baldwin and the Wildcats are now 5-5 on the season.

“We were two very even teams according to the stats,” Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. “Baldwin was able to come up with a few timely 2-out base hits that scored runs for them. I thought we actually played pretty good in both games, but we weren’t as mentally focused as I would like to have seen.”

In the opener, the Wildcats jumped on Baldwin early as they scored two runs in the first inning.

Senior Mitchell Caldwell reached on a fielder’s choice, stole second, went to third on a wild pitch and then scored on a RBI

single from Austin Henderson. Henderson later scored on a single from Grant Harding.

Baldwin answered right back in its half of the first inning with two runs off Harding and the Wildcats were not able to find the holes against the Bulldog pitchers. Louisburg managed just five hits in the final six innings.

Junior Cole Kramer reached base in all four plate appearances as he walked twice and had two singles.

The Bulldogs, on the other hand, took the lead with a run in the second and then blew the game open with five runs in the third to all but seal the win.

Louisburg battled in the nightcap, and after it fell behind early, rallied to take the lead in the second inning. Harding led off with a triple and later scored on a single from Colton Smith. Smith came around to score on a fielder's choice from Ethan Caldwell.

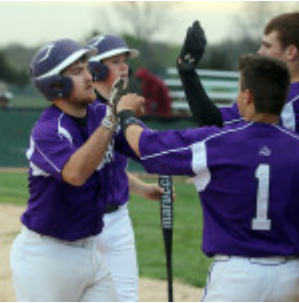
It didn't take long for Baldwin to take the lead back as it scored two runs in the third to take the lead for good. The Bulldogs added a run in the fourth to take a 2-run lead.

The Wildcats tried to rally in the seventh as Kramer tripled and came around to score, but they couldn't get the tying runner on base.

Harding led the Wildcat offense with a pair of hits, while Dalton Stone singled and walked twice.

Louisburg will try and get back on track today when it travels to Osawatomie. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Louisburg puts it all together in sweep



Louisburg's Alex Dunn (left) is congratulated by Mitchell Caldwell (1) and Grant Harding on Tuesday after scoring one of the Wildcats's 26 runs in their sweep of Eudora at Lewis-Young Park. The Wildcats have now won four straight games.

Everything was working for the Louisburg baseball team during Tuesday's home contest with Eudora.

The Wildcats got good pitching, strong defense and some timely hits that led to some big innings. It all resulted in a 14-0 and 12-2 doubleheader sweep over Eudora.

After beginning the season with a tough schedule and a 1-3 start, the Wildcats have now won four straight games as they are getting production from everyone in their lineup.

"Being able to play some good baseball and win a few games now has given us a lot of confidence going into the middle part of our season," Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said.

Louisburg (5-3) wasn't lacking much confidence Tuesday as the Wildcat offense exploded in both games. The Wildcats scored five runs in the first three innings, but the flood gates opened in the fourth as Louisburg scored nine runs in the frame to go up by 14 runs.

Six players had at least two hits for the Wildcats and every player reached base one time or another. If they didn't get a hit, they got a free base as the Wildcats were walked six times.

Junior Colton Smith had a good day at the plate with two hits, including a bases-loaded triple that drove home three runs and also had two stolen bases. Sophomore Grant Harding also had a double and a triple to go along with 2 RBIs

Senior Ethan Caldwell had a pair of hits, including a double and 2 RBIs. Juniors Cole Kramer and Austin Henderson also had RBI doubles.

Lucas Smith, who started the game on the mound, helped his cause with a pair of RBIs as well.



Senior Lucas Smith delivers a pitch during Tuesday's home contest in Eudora. Smith pitched a complete game shutout and struck out five batters

"I thought we had great approaches at the plate in both games," Lohse said. "We were able to move runners and then drive them in. We have been stressing that a lot in practice lately and it is good to see us come through in those situations."

Lucas Smith, a senior, picked up his first win of the season as he pitched the complete five-inning game. Smith gave up just three hits and struck out five batters.

When runners did reach base, the Wildcat defense was there to back him up. Catcher Alex Dunn threw out three runners trying to steal and caught two more in the second game.

“Lucas’ performance is what I expected from him all season,” Lohse said. “He was able to use all his pitches effectively today and keep them off balance while our defense was solid behind him.”

The Wildcats got another strong pitching performance in the nightcap as Harding pitched his second straight complete game to go to 2-0 on the year. Harding gave up two runs on six hits and struck out five Eudora batters.

Louisburg actually trailed 1-0 in the first inning, but Kramer led the bottom of the inning off after he was hit by a pitch. He then went on to steal two bases and score on an error.

Kramer led the Wildcat charge again in the second as he helped manufacture two runs. He drove home Blake Ruder on an RBI single and then scored himself later on a wild pitch.

Louisburg went on to score four runs in the fourth and five more in the fifth to complete the sweep.

Ruder, a sophomore, led Louisburg with three hits and scored twice. Kramer also had a pair of hits, including a triple.

Henderson had two hits that included a 2-run double and Dalton Stone had a pair of RBI singles as well.

“I thought we came out and were focused in game two,” Lohse said. “Once again, Grant did a very nice job on the hill. We had several guys step up at the plate and carry over where we left off from game one. We aren’t satisfied and still have a lot of things to work on.”

Louisburg will try and continue its win streak Tuesday when it travels to Baldwin for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Louisburg gets sweep of Prairie View



Louisburg senior second baseman Mitchell Caldwell makes a throw to first base after making a diving stop Thursday in the Wildcats' home opener with Prairie View.

It will take a sweep whenever it can get it, but for the Louisburg baseball team, Thursday's sweep of Prairie View couldn't have come at a better time.

After losing three of their first four games, the Wildcats' offense came alive for an 11-1 and 13-12 victory in their home opener over Prairie View at Lewis-Young Park. Louisburg had just come off two, run-rule losses at the hand of Fort Scott earlier in the week in which it was shutout of both games.

"It is always good to win two games, no matter who you play," Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. "We did everything we could

to hand them the second game. The game should have never gotten to where it was at the end if we would have competed through the elements and made routine plays that we make every day in practice.”

The elements were a factor for both teams as gusty winds and cold weather moved in shortly before first pitch and it only got worse as the night wore on. Although it wasn't ideal playing conditions, the Wildcats were still able to plate plenty of runs.

Everyone contributed offensively in the first game. All nine players in the starting lineup each had a hit but none was bigger than senior Ethan Caldwell.

Caldwell finished with three hits to go along with 5 RBIs to spark the Wildcats from the No. 9 spot. Fellow senior Mitchell Caldwell had a pair of hits, while juniors Cole Kramer and Matt Risenhoover had 2 RBIs each.

“Ethan had a nice game at the plate,” Lohse said. “It is good to get some production down in the lower part of the line-up. We, as a team, did some good things but we left way too many runners on base when we had chances to drive them in.”

The Wildcats (3-3) batted around in the five-run third inning that eventually spotted them an 8-1 lead and tacked on a few more runs later to complete the run-rule win in the sixth inning.

Louisburg got a complete game performance on the mound from Grant Harding. The Wildcats sophomore allowed just one run, struck out six batters and worked around six walks to get the win.

“I thought Grant had a great outing,” Lohse said. “He is a competitor out there and doesn't ever want me taking the ball out of his hand. I think he will tell you that he walked too many guys but overall he did a great job for us.”

The nightcap got interesting late for both teams. Louisburg held an 8-2 lead going to the sixth inning, but several Wildcat errors led to seven Prairie View runs in the sixth and the Buffalos took a one-run lead.

Louisburg was able to take the lead back with five runs in its half of the sixth and hold on after Prairie View scored three runs in the seventh.



Louisburg junior Cole Kramer follows through on a pitch Tuesday

against Prairie View. Kramer recorded eight strikeouts in the nightcap.

“I am proud of the way we persevered and kept battling,” Lohse said. “The weather conditions were not ideal for baseball and I thought that affected us mentally which lead to some uncharacteristic errors on defense. We just need to clean up a few things and we will be OK.”

The Wildcats got a strong performance from Kramer on the mound. Kramer pitched five innings in which he allowed only two runs, but his defense didn't help him in the sixth when Prairie View took the lead back.

Kramer allowed eight runs, but none of them were earned and he also struck out eight. Sophomore Sam Guetterman came on in relief and got the win.

“Cole did a very nice job for us as well,” Lohse said. “Unfortunately, we didn't help him out defensively and I had to take him out when he was cruising right along for the first five innings.”

Kramer and sophomore Korbin Hankinson led the Wildcat offense with two hits and a double each. Kramer also finished the game with three stolen bases and 2 RBIs, while Colton Smith led the team with three runs scored.

Louisburg will try and continue its winning ways Tuesday when it hosts Eudora at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Wildcats help open new Fort Scott ballpark



Louisburg's Matt Risenhoover throws a pitch during the Wildcats' season opener last week. The Wildcats traveled to Fort Scott on Tuesday and played in the new Dave Regan Stadium at the LaRoche Baseball Complex.

FORT SCOTT – When the Louisburg baseball team entered the newly-constructed Dave Regan Stadium at the LaRoche Baseball Complex on Tuesday at Fort Scott, the Wildcats couldn't believe their eyes.

Louisburg was about to play in a stadium that not only seated more than 500 fans in chairback seats, but it was also a state of the art facility that featured a bullpen, indoor batting cages, a clubhouse and artificial turf.

It was a welcoming experience for the Wildcats, at least until the game started anyway.

Fort Scott made sure the debut game on its new field was a good one as it downed Louisburg 10-0 in the first game of the doubleheader and followed it up with a 15-0 victory in the nightcap.

"To be honest, we didn't play real well down there," Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. "It was an incredible atmosphere and

the field is one of the best that I have ever been on, but for some reason we just didn't execute in any phase of the game."

The LaRoche complex was funded by 11-year Major League Baseball veteran Adam LaRoche, who is currently a first baseman for the Chicago White Sox. LaRoche, a Fort Scott High School graduate, put down more than \$2 million of his own money for the project.

LaRoche was also in attendance for the stadium unveiling along with famous friend Willie Robertson, from the television show "Duck Dynasty." LaRoche even met with the Louisburg squad.

"Willie kind of stayed down the left field line, but Adam LaRoche came over and talked to us after the game," Lohse said. "He is a real class act and what he did for that school/community is absolutely amazing. I am happy for our guys that they got to be the first team to play on that field and be a part of their opening ceremonies."

In fact it was a Louisburg player who recorded the first ever hit at Dave Regan Stadium. Junior Austin Henderson smacked a single in the first inning against Fort Scott starter Mason Knopp.

The base runners would be few and far between, however.

Louisburg (1-3) scattered just five hits off Knopp who pitched a complete game with seven strikeouts. Junior Alex Dunn led the charge with a pair of base hits, while Mitchell Caldwell and Matt Risenhoover also added singles.

The nightcap was even rougher for Louisburg as Fort Scott scored 10 runs in the first inning. Cole Kramer, Caldwell and Dalton Stone all had base hits.

Louisburg will try and get back on the winning track today when it hosts Prairie View in its home opener at Lewis-Young Park. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Wildcats rally for split against Paola



Louisburg third baseman Colton Smith tags out a Paola runner Thursday during the Wildcats' season opener in Paola. The Wildcats earned a split after getting a 9-7 victory in the nightcap. Louisburg lost the first game 9-5.

PAOLA – All it took was one swing of the bat and a little lightning to prevent what could have been two straight losses to start the season for the Louisburg baseball team.

During Thursday's season opener in Paola, Louisburg junior Alex Dunn hit a bases-clearing double that led to a four-run sixth inning in the nightcap and helped give the Wildcats a 9-7 victory against the Panthers. Lightning in the area shortened the game by an inning and cemented Louisburg's first win of the year.

The Wildcats battled in the opener, but fell 9-5 after Paola scored five runs in the second inning thanks to a few Louisburg miscues with two outs. The Panthers are the defending Class 4A Division I state runner-up.

“Paola is a very good team and I was proud of the way we kept our composure after we gave up the lead,” Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. “I was happy to see us compete and find a way to win. We really didn’t play too bad in game one, but Paola did a nice job of putting some runs together with two outs.”

Louisburg (1-1) scored 14 runs in the two games but it got clutch hitting from several different areas in the second game. Mitchell Caldwell, Austin Henderson and Lucas Smith each finished with three hits, while Caldwell added an RBI double, Henderson a double and Smith an RBI single.

The Wildcats held a 5-2 lead in the fourth inning, but Paola answered with four runs in the fourth to grab a 6-5 lead. In what turned out to be the final inning, Caldwell and Henderson led the sixth inning off with a pair of walks and Smith reached on an error to load the bases for Dunn.

Dunn’s double brought home three runs to take the lead back and the Wildcats added another when Dunn scored on a squeeze bunt from Grant Harding. Paola added a run in its half of the sixth, but the Wildcats were able to hold on.

Dalton Stone added an RBI single early in the game as several players got involved in the offense. Caldwell scored three runs, while Henderson and Smith each scored twice. Ethan Caldwell also had a single and a run scored.



Louisburg junior Alex Dunn came up with a big hit in the nightcap with a 3-run double Thursday in Paola.

In the two games combined, Louisburg scored 14 runs on 22 hits against some strong arms from Paola.

“In past seasons, we have always struggled against guys with plus arms, especially early in the year,” Lohse said. “We have changed some things at practice to help us prepare for those

kind of pitchers and I think it is working for us.”

Cole Kramer picked up the win for Louisburg as he came on to pitch three innings of relief after Harding started the game. Each pitcher gave up three earned runs and had two strikeouts.

Louisburg struck first in the opener as Kramer singled, stole second, went to third on a wild pitch and scored on a fielder’s choice from Mitchell Caldwell.

Paola tied the game with a run in the first, but the Panthers broke the game open in the second inning with five runs. Paola had two outs and no one on in the frame, but the next Panther batter was hit by a pitch, then two more walks led to two big hits to give Paola a 6-1 lead.

The Wildcats didn’t give up as they tried to chip away at the lead several times, but they couldn’t dig out of the hole.

Kramer and Mitchell Caldwell each finished with a pair of hits and Caldwell added 2 RBIs on two doubles. Ethan Caldwell also had a run batted in and Matt Risenhoover added a double.

Smith started for Louisburg and gave up the six runs in two innings, but only two of them were earned. He also had five strikeouts in those two innings. Risenhoover and Colton Smith each came on in relief.

“For the first outings of the year, I thought our guys did fine,” Lohse said. “There were some pitches that we would have liked to have back, but for the most part we did OK on the hill. We will get better as the season goes, but our depth out there definitely is a plus.”

Louisburg returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Fort Scott. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. on the Tigers’ newly-constructed field.

Louisburg JV splits with Paola

The Louisburg junior varsity baseball team took advantage of a big inning as it won its first game of the season 11-8 against Paola on Tuesday at home. The Wildcats lost the second game 21-5.

In the opener, the Wildcats used a seven-run third inning to pull away from Paola. Louisburg walked five times in the inning and got RBI hits from Joseph Allen and Joseph Hannah to take an 8-0 lead.

Hannah finished the game with a team-high three hits, while Allen and Garrett Caldwell also had a pair of hits.

The second game was a different story as the Panthers jumped out to a 5-2 lead and then scored 11 runs in the fourth inning to pull away.

LHS baseball learns from tough season



Unfortunately for last season's version of the Louisburg baseball team, the Wildcats spent a lot of time cutting their teeth in what was one of the toughest leagues in Class 4A.

Two Frontier League members battled it out for the Class 4A-

Division I state crown, while Louisburg finished with five wins with what was a young, inexperienced group.

This season, the Wildcats hope to dish out some lumps instead of taking them.

Louisburg returns nine players that saw significant varsity time a year ago and the Wildcats have plenty of depth behind them. They have seven pitchers who will see time on the mound this season and return several position players as well.

“Going into last season, with no seniors and a very young team, we knew that we might take our lumps at times,” Louisburg coach Jeff Lohse said. “We are expecting to be much improved from last season with the leadership we have and all the experience coming back.”

That leadership starts on the mound with senior Lucas Smith as he was the Wildcats’ top hurler last season and an honorable mention all-Frontier League player. Smith will look to lead a group of young and experienced pitchers. Including the junior varsity program, Louisburg will have 17 to 18 different pitchers who will have the opportunity to see time.

“There are several underclassmen who have a bright future on the mound if they continue to work hard and get better,” Lohse said. “Lucas will be our No. 1 again this year and after him we have a bunch of players who could fill the rotation. I don’t think we will be real overpowering, by any means, but all these guys will throw strikes and compete.”



Louisburg senior Lucas Smith is the Wildcats' top returning pitcher this season. Smith was an honorable mention all-league selection as season ago.

Along with Smith, the Wildcats will feature several pitchers that all saw varsity time on the mound to go along with one newcomer. Grant Harding, Cole Kramer, Colton Smith, Matt Risenhoover and Ethan Caldwell will fill out the Wildcat rotation along with freshman Dalton Stone.

In the field, juniors Alex Dunn and Kramer will provide solid defense up the middle. Dunn, who was an honorable mention all-league catcher a year ago, will handle the pitching staff.

Kramer, on the other hand, will man centerfield when he is not on the mound. He also was an honorable mention all-league outfielder last season.

Also returning for the Wildcats is second baseman Mitchell Caldwell and Austin Henderson will be back at first base after missing half of the season last year with an injury. Lucas Smith and Risenhoover will share the shortstop position.

Colton Smith and Stone will alternate at third base, while Harding and Ethan Caldwell will play in the outfield. Korbin Hankinson, Blake Ruder and Mitchell Drew will also provide some depth off the bench.

Although the Wildcats have several returning players, their schedule will present a tough challenge just like a year ago. A schedule that includes state champion De Soto and runner-up Paola.

“Our league is a very good baseball league as well,” Lohse said. “My expectations are to go out and compete while giving ourselves a chance to win. We have got to do the little things to manufacture runs and be very solid pitching and defensively.”

Louisburg will get its season started Thursday when it travels to Paola. First pitch is slated for 4:30 p.m.

LOUSBURG HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL SCHEDULE

Apr. 2			@
Paola		4:30 p.m.	
Apr. 7			@ Fort
Scott		4:30 p.m.	
Apr. 9			Prairie
View		4:30 p.m.	
Apr. 14			
Eudora		4:30 p.m.	
Apr. 21			@
Baldwin		4:30 p.m.	
Apr. 23		@Osawatomie	

4:30 p.m.

Apr. 28
Soto

De

4:30 p.m.

Apr. 30
Chanute

4:30 p.m.

May 5
Ottawa

4:30 p.m.

May 11
Hill

@ Spring

4:30 p.m.