

# Battle named Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year



***Louisburg senior Declan Battle had a special season in his final year at Louisburg as he was voted the Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.***

Declan Battle has become synonymous with winning – more this past year than ever.

Battle was the starting quarterback for the Louisburg football team that won back-to-back Frontier League titles. Then during the baseball season, he helped lead the Wildcats to a league and regional championship.

It was certainly a year to remember for him and those were just some of the reasons Battle was named the 2024 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.

“This award means the world to me,” Battle said. “It is such an honor to be named Athlete of the Year. I couldn’t have done this without my amazing teammates, coaches and community pushing me to be my best.”

Battle was one of the best in the state when it came to his performance under the lights on Fridays and on the diamond.

Last fall, Battle was a first team All-Frontier League quarterback and defensive back. He was also an all-state selection from multiple media outlets and was a finalist for the Frank Fontana Award, which is given annually to the best all-around small school player in Class 1-4 on the Kansas and Missouri sides of the metro.

In 10 games for the Wildcats, Battle completed 105 passes for 1,364 yards and had 16 touchdowns to just two interceptions. He also did a lot of damage on the ground with 1,009 yards rushing and 16 more touchdowns. As a defensive back, Battle finished with 36 tackles and also had an interception for a touchdown.

His efforts earned him a spot in the Kansas Shrine Bowl, which will be played Saturday (June 29) at Emporia State University. Battle also signed his letter of intent to join the Washburn University football team.



***Declan Battle is pictured with Louisburg head coaches Kade Larson and Drew Harding after receiving the athlete of the year award.***

"Declan is certainly deserving of this award," Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. "He was a standout athlete in both football and baseball. Besides that though he always represented himself and Louisburg in the right way."

"Declan was fantastic to coach. Obviously anyone who watched him play could see he was a tremendous athlete. However, Declan was also a great leader for us. He always approached things the right way and was dedicated to making himself, and his teams, better."

Battle and the Wildcats also had a memorable season in baseball.

Louisburg captured its first Frontier League championship since 2002 and later went on to qualify for its first state tournament since 2009.

Battle was a big part of that group as well. He led the team in triples, stolen bases and runs scored that earned him first team all-league and first team all-state outfield.

He was atop the Wildcat lineup all season and set the tone in several games. Battle finished with a .378 average to go along with 34 hits, five doubles, three triples, a home run and had 23 RBIs.

Battle also led the team with 41 runs scored, which is a school record and had a team-high 15 stolen bases. He holds three individual career team records for runs scored (102), triples (8) and stolen bases (47).

“Declan was a great leader for us,” Louisburg baseball coach Kade Larson. “He found a way to get the job done all year long. It didn’t matter if it was hitting, pitching or fielding, Declan always made a big play when we needed it.”

Now that his Wildcat career has come to a close, Battle had some time to reflect on what was a special time at Louisburg High School – one he won’t soon forget.

“Playing at Louisburg was always great, knowing no matter what happened, the community was there supporting us,” Battle said. “Playing sports at Louisburg was a great experience and I wouldn’t change it for anything.”

#### **Previous winners:**

2018: Austin Moore

2019: Blue Caplinger

2020: Garrett Rolofson

2021: Weston Guetterman

2022: Tom Koontz

2023: Mason Dobbins



# Four Wildcats named to all-state baseball team



***Louisburg seniors Declan Battle and Nathaniel Lamm, along with junior Luke Schultz and sophomore Danny Nappier were recently named to the KABC all-state team.***

Winning a league and regional championship brought a lot of recognition to the Louisburg baseball team this past season and it continued at the state level.

After earning their first league title in 22 years and their first state tournament appearance in 15 years, several Wildcats were found on the all-state team.

The Kansas Association of Baseball Coaches released their all-state teams earlier this month, and four Wildcats made the list – including three on the first team.

Louisburg senior Declan Battle (outfield), senior Nathaniel Lamm (DH) and junior Luke Schultz (third base) were all

selected to the first team. Sophomore Danny Napier (catcher) was an honorable mention selection.

"We were really well-represented on the all-state team," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "We play in a tough league and had guys play at a high level all year against great competition and teams around the state took notice."

Battle was atop the Wildcat lineup all season and set the tone in several games. He finished with a .378 average to go along with 34 hits, five doubles, three triples, a home run and had 23 RBIs.

He also led the team 41 runs scored, which is a school record and also had a team-high 15 stolen bases. As the team's centerfielder, he committed just four errors on the season.

Lamm was one of the team's best hitters all season. He led the Wildcats with 37 hits, which is the second most in program history.

He also had a team best .411 batting average and he tied for the team high with five home runs and 12 doubles. He also had a team-high 36 RBIs to go along with two triples.

Schultz, the team's starting third baseman, had a big season with the bat. Along with five home runs, he had a .381 batting average, 32 hits, two doubles and three triples.

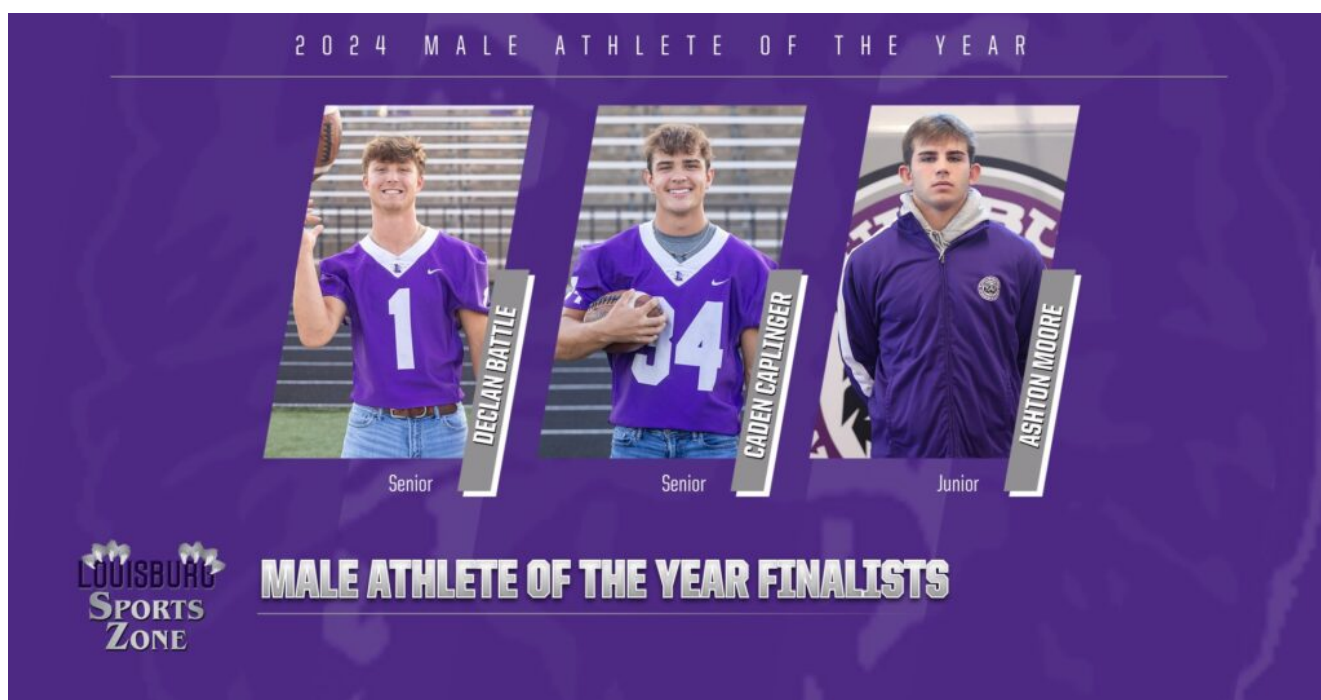
He also finished with 26 RBIs on the season in the No. 2 spot and scored 32 runs.

Napier was behind the plate for all 26 games as the Wildcat catcher and was the workhorse behind the Louisburg pitching staff that recorded a program record 172 strikeouts.

He also provided the Wildcats with a big bat in the middle of the lineup. Napier had a .367 average, to go along with 29 hits, 12 doubles and two home runs. He also finished with 26 RBIs.

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# 2024 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year Finalists



***Louisburg seniors Declan Battle and Caden Caplinger, along with junior Ashton Moore, are the three finalists for the 2024 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year award.***

For the seventh consecutive 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 be 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. Then they voted for their top 3 male and female athletes and I tabulated the results and determined the winner. The winner will be

announced in the coming days.

Below are the three finalists for the Male Athlete of the Year award in alphabetical order by last name.



## **DECLAN BATTLE — SENIOR — FOOTBALL, BASEBALL**

Declan was a three year starting quarterback for the Wildcats and this year became the school's leading passer and fifth on the list for leading rusher as a team captain. Battle guided the Wildcats to their second straight Frontier League title and an undefeated league record.

Declan was a 1st team All-Frontier League quarterback and defensive back. He was an all-state pick from multiple media



outlets and was a finalist for the Frank Fontana Award, which is given annually to the best all-around small school player in Class 1-4 on the Kansas and Missouri sides of the metro.

In 10 games for the Wildcats, Battle completed 105 passes for 1,364 yards and had 16 touchdowns to just two interceptions. He also did a lot of damage on the ground with 1,009 yards rushing and 16 more touchdowns. As a defensive back, Battle finished with 36 tackles and also had an interception for a touchdown. He will join the Washburn University football team next season.

On the baseball diamond, Battle helped the Wildcats to its first league title since 2002 and first regional championship since 2009. He led the team in triples, stolen bases and runs scored that earned him first team all league and first team all state outfield. He was also the team's best reliever earning multiple saves on the mound.

Battle was atop the Wildcat lineup all season and set the tone in several games. He finished with a .378 average to go along with 34 hits, five doubles, three triples, a home run and had 23 RBIs.

He also led the team with 41 runs scored, which is a school record and also had a team-high 15 stolen bases. He also holds three individual career team records for runs scored (102), triples (8) and stolen bases (47).



## **CADEN    CAPLINGER    —    SENIOR    — FOOTBALL, TRACK**

Caden was a team captain for the Wildcat football team this past season and was a big piece of back-to-back Frontier League championship teams. Caplinger was an all-league selection on both sides of the ball, as a wide receiver and defensive back. He also holds the most career receptions in Louisburg football history.

Caplinger was named to the All-Frontier League second team at wide receiver and defensive back. He led the Wildcats with 33 catches, 510 yards receiving and four touchdowns. On defense, he finished with 41 tackles, 1.5 sacks, six pass breakups and an interception.

On the track, Caplinger is a two-time pole vault champion and a state medalist in the 4×100 relay. He was set to try for a third straight, but suffered a knee injury that ended his season. Caplinger won the season opening meet at the Ottawa Invitational, before having to sit out with the injury. He will be joining the Washburn University track team next season.



## **ASHTON MOORE – JUNIOR – FOOTBALL, WRESTLING, TRACK**

Ashton put together a memorable football season for the Wildcats. Moore was one of the leaders of the Wildcat defense this past season. As a first-team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball, he posted a team-high 125 tackles,

including eight for a loss. He also had four forced fumbles and two sacks. He was named a finalist for the Bobby Bell Award, which is given annually to the best Class 1-4 offensive lineman/defensive lineman or linebacker in the KC metro area.

Moore was also the team's starting running back and made things difficult on opposing defenses. He carried the load for the Wildcats as he carried the ball 151 times for 1,110 yards and had 15 touchdowns. He also finished with 292 yards receiving and three more scores to earn first team honors.

On the wrestling mat, Moore was a state medalist as he took fourth at 190 pounds after making it to the state semifinals with an injured knee. He finished the season with 38 wins. He leads the program in the following categories: Career takedowns (117), career nearfall-3 (34), career escapes (57), career team points (510), season takedowns (51), season team points (229), and season pins (27). He led the team this year with most wins (38), most nearfall-2 (8), and the fastest pin (7 seconds).

Moore was also a returning state qualifier for the Louisburg 4x100-meter relay, but saw his track season come to an early end due to an injury.

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## **Nine Wildcats named to all-league baseball, four earn first team**



## 2024 POSTSEASON BASEBALL HONORS



First Team - Catcher

DANNY NAPIER



First Team - Outfield

DECLAN BATTLE



First Team - Outfield

JACK ANDERSON



First Team - Infield

LUKE SCHULTZ



### ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE FIRST TEAM

Four Wildcats earn first team honors



***Louisburg's Danny Napier, Declan Battle, Jack Anderson and Luke Schultz each earned first team All-Frontier League honors.***

The Louisburg baseball team won its first league title in 22 years this season, and with that, comes postseason honors and several Wildcats were recognized for their special 2024 campaign.

Louisburg earned four spots on the All-Frontier League first team that was released last week. In all, eight Wildcats were named to the all-league list.

Senior Declan Battle (outfield), sophomore Danny Napier (catcher), junior Luke Schultz and senior Jack Anderson (outfield) were all first team selections.

Senior Nathaniel Lamm (utility) and junior Alex Saad (pitcher) were named to the second team, while junior Meade Rutherford (pitcher), sophomore Bristol Barbour (infield) and senior Jackson Howard (infield) earned honorable mention honors.

"We were really well represented on the all-league team," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "The other coaches around the league definitely took notice of how well we played this year. We play in a tough league and had guys play at a high

level all year against great competition.”

Battle was atop the Wildcat lineup all season and set the tone in several games. He finished with a .378 average to go along with 34 hits, five doubles, three triples, a home run and had 23 RBIs.

He also led the team 41 runs scored, which is a school record and also had a team-high 15 stolen bases. As the team’s centerfielder, he committed just four errors on the season.

“Declan had a great season for us,” Larson said. “He started a lot of our games off with a big at bat that got us going. Declan also set the season runs record, career stolen bases, career triples and career runs scored record.

Anderson was alongside Battle in the outfield as the Wildcat right fielder had a big season. He finished with a .370 average to go along with five home runs, eight doubles and three triples.

He was second on the Wildcats with 32 RBIs on the season and scored 23 runs. Anderson also finished with just five errors on the season.

“Jack had an outstanding year for us this year,” Larson said. “Every ball he hit was hit hard. He had a chance to go yard every time he stepped to the plate.”

Anderson was one of three Wildcats to hit five home runs on the season and one of the others was Schultz.

Schultz, the team’s starting third baseman, had a big season with the bat. Along with five home runs, he had a .381 batting average, 32 hits, two doubles and three triples.

He also finished with 26 RBIs on the season in the No. 2 spot and scored 32 runs.

“Luke came in clutch for us more times than once this season,”

Larson said. "He had a great year at the plate and hit some of the farthest balls hit this year."

Napier was behind the plate for all 26 games as the Wildcat catcher and was the workhorse behind the Louisburg pitching staff that recorded a program record 172 strikeouts.

He also provided the Wildcats with a big bat in the middle of the lineup. Napier had a .367 average, to go along with 29 hits, 12 doubles and two home runs. He also finished with 26 RBIs.

"Danny was lights out behind the plate for us this season," Larson said. "He worked really well with our pitchers and was one of the best catchers in the state all season long."



Lamm was a second team selection as was one of the team's best hitters all season. He led the team with 37 hits, which is the second most in program history.

He also had a team best .411 batting average and he tied for the team high with five home runs and 12 doubles. He also had a team-high 36 RBIs to go along with two triples.

"Nathaniel swung it well all year," Larson said. "He was one of the toughest outs in the state."

Saad also earned second team honors as the Wildcats' No. 1 pitcher. He led the Wildcats with 45 strikeouts and had a 4.20 ERA. Saad also had seven wins on the season, which is the third most in Louisburg history.

"Alex had a great season on the mound for us," Larson said. "He competed well and gave us a chance to win every time he stepped on the mound."

Howard, Barbour and Rutherford were all honorable mention selections for the Wildcats.

Howard, the team's starting first baseman, had a .294 average with 25 hits to go along with five doubles and 24 RBIs.

Rutherford was the Wildcats' No. 2 starter and had a successful season on the mound. He tallied 26 strikeouts on the season with a 4.51 ERA in six starts.

Barbour was the Wildcats' starting shortstop and made big plays at the plate and in the field. He ended with a .386 average with 27 hits, four doubles and 10 RBIs.

"Jackson really became a leader throughout the year," Larson said. "He did a great job staying locked in and keeping us in the game. Meade was a great pitcher for us this year. As the season went on, he really found his groove and became one of our top arms."

"Bristol was one of the smoothest infielders I have ever seen. He made some amazing plays at shortstop and backed it up with his bat. He really came on at the end of the season with some great at-bats for us."



# ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL

## FIRST TEAM

CATCHER: Danny Napier, Louisburg, sophomore

PITCHER: Merek Davenport, Tonganoxie, sophomore; Owen Blaine, Ottawa, senior

INFIELD: Holden Lough, Spring Hill, senior; Brock Gibbs, Tonganoxie, junior; Luke Schultz, Louisburg, junior; T.J. Kerns, Ottawa, senior

OUTFIELD: Declan Battle, Louisburg, senior; Jack Anderson, Louisburg, senior; Holden Miller, Spring Hill, senior

UTILITY: Trevor McGraw, Tonganoxie, senior

## SECOND TEAM

CATCHER: Jagger Dey, Baldwin, junior

PITCHER: Tristen Kapelle, Baldwin, senior; Alex Saad, Louisburg, junior

INFIELD: Keaton Neal, Spring Hill, sophomore; Hunter Loethen, Paola, junior; Brett Davidson, Baldwin, junior; Eden Myers, Bonner Springs, junior

OUTFIELD: Brendan Briley, Tonganoxie, senior; Kaden Kerr, Eudora, senior; Blake Costlow, Paola, freshman

UTILITY: Nathaniel Lamm, Louisburg, senior

## HONORABLE MENTION

CATCHER: Braeden VanDonge, Eudora, junior; Brandon Reynolds, Ottawa, senior; Brock Fish, Bonner Springs, junior

PITCHER: Jasper Logan, Paola, junior; Hunter Loethen, Paola, junior; Caden Stewart, Spring Hill, senior; Keaton Neal,

Spring Hill, sophomore; Xavier Raygoza, Bonner Springs, junior; Dakota Pringle, Eudora, senior; Kelton Ford, Eudora, senior; Meade Rutherford, Louisburg, junior

INFIELD: Jack Cline, Eudora, sophomore; Bristol Barbour, Louisburg, sophomore; Jackson Howard, Louisburg, senior; Carter Hepner, Ottawa, junior; Keegan Roemer, Ottawa, senior; JD Troutman, Paola, junior

OUTFIELD: Caden Campbell, Bonner Springs, senior; Boston Bloomer, Ottawa, junior; Ashton McCurdy, Ottawa, junior; Xander Meinig, Paola, junior; Cavin Meade, Spring Hill, senior

UTILITY: Caleb Hepner, Ottawa, junior; Jasper Logan, Paola, junior

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## **Wildcats fall in first round of state tournament to rival Paola**



***Louisburg senior Jackson Howard tags out a Paola runner at first base Thursday during the Class 4A state baseball tournament in Salina.***

SALINA – It had been 15 years since Louisburg played in the state baseball tournament, and in its first game back, the Wildcats played an all-too-familiar opponent.

Louisburg squared off with Paola on Thursday in the first round of the Class 4A state baseball tournament in Salina. The two teams – a mere 10 miles from each other – traveled nearly three hours to play the most important contest in their rivalry matchup.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, Paola made a couple more plays down the stretch as Louisburg fell in a pitcher's dual, 3-0, at Dean Evans Stadium.

Paola starter Hunter Loethen kept the Wildcat hitters off-balance most of the contest as he pitched a complete game. He

gave up five hits and struck out nine.

"It was a tough loss," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "Paola was a really good team. Loethen threw really well and kept us off balance all day. When you get to state, you're going to play a good team and that's exactly what Paola was."



***Louisburg junior Alex Saad dives to the first base bag to beat a Paola runner, while senior Brody McGreer celebrates the play Thursday in Salina.***

Louisburg got a good performance out of its starter, Alex Saad. The Louisburg junior went five innings and gave up just one unearned run and had five strikeouts.

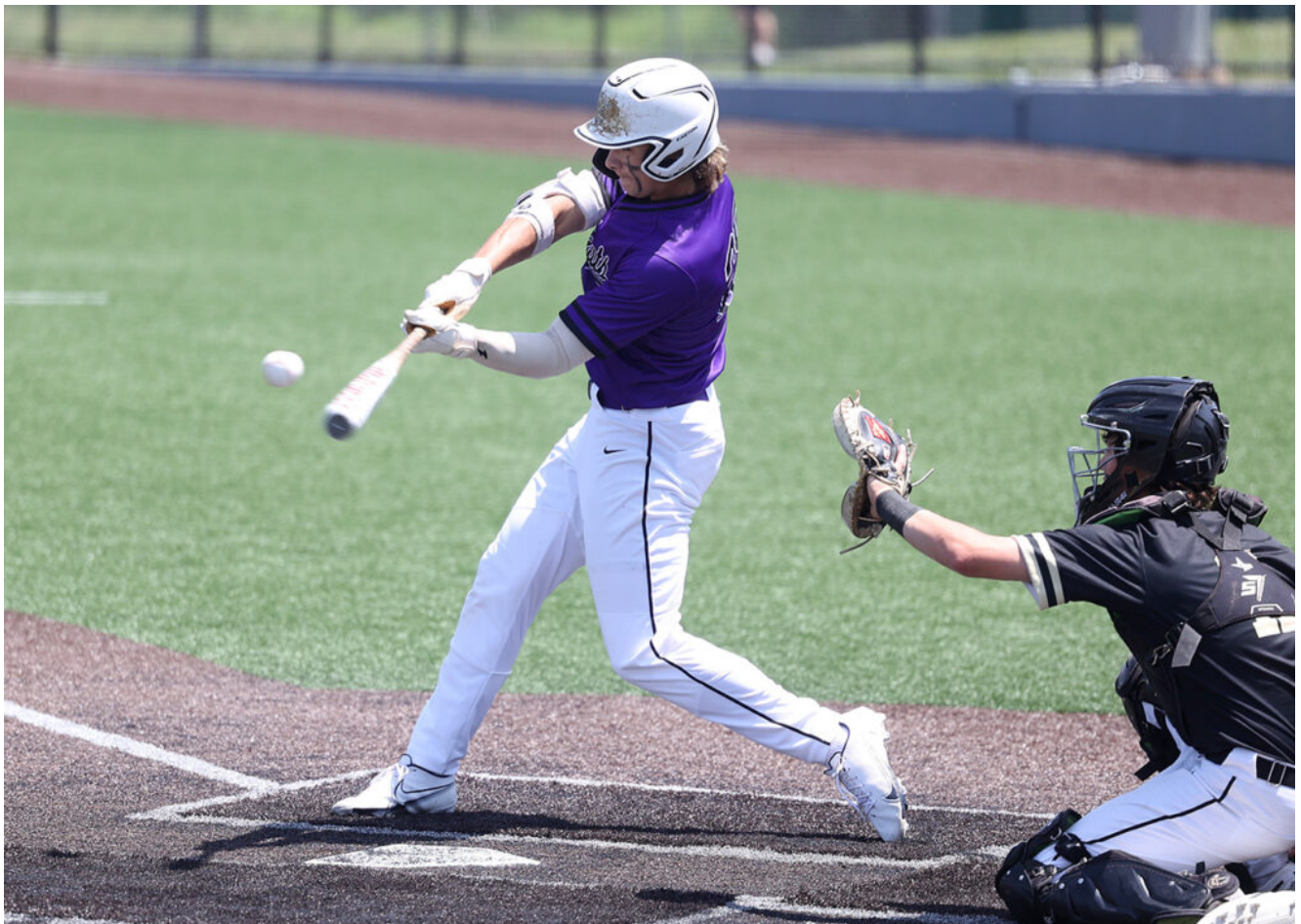
He had to work around trouble in a couple of the innings as the Wildcats committed six errors on the day, but Paola had just the one run through five innings.

Offensively, the Wildcats had a few chances against Loethen, but Louisburg couldn't get the big hit to break the game open.



“Alex threw really well for us,” Larson said. “He came out ready to go and kept us in the game. We had a few chances on offense to get ahead, but just couldn’t get the timely hit.”

The game was scoreless until the fourth inning, when Paola scored in the top of the frame that was aided on a pair of Louisburg errors.



**Louisburg senior Jack Anderson makes contact with a pitch Thursday against Paola.**

The Wildcats got things going offensively in the bottom of the fifth when junior Meade Rutherford and senior Brody McGreer hit back-to-back singles, but were erased on an inning-ending double play.

Louisburg senior Declan Battle came in for relief in the top of the sixth inning and got out of a bases loaded jam with a pair of strikeouts.

It was still a 1-0 game in the top of the seventh, when the

Panthers scratched a pair of runs across to all but seal the win.

Senior Nathaniel Lamm doubled for Louisburg in the bottom of the seventh to try and get something started, but the rally stalled out.



***Louisburg senior Declan Battle pitched the final two innings Thursday against Paola.***

McGreer had two of the Wildcats' five hits to lead the team offensively, while senior Jack Anderson, Lamm and Rutherford had the other four hits.

Paola went on to face the eventual state champion, Rock Creek, in the semifinals, before losing to the Mustangs and then again to Abilene in the third place game.

As for Louisburg, it was a special 2024 season that included its first Frontier League championship since 2002 and its first regional title since 2009. The Wildcats also recorded

the most wins in team history with a 19-7 record.

“We had a great season this year,” Larson said. “We really had a blast throughout the season and did some things that haven’t been done for a long time in Louisburg. It was definitely a memorable one that none of us will ever forget.”

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## Week 9 Athlete of the Week: Alex Saad



**LOUISBURG SPORTS ZONE**

**ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**

**ALEX SAAD**

**2**  
HITS ALLOWED

**8**  
STRIKEOUTS

**40**  
SEASON K'S

**7**  
SEASON WINS

**LANDMARK NATIONAL BANK**

Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week nine of the spring sports season, sponsored by Landmark National Bank.



# ALEX SAAD, JUNIOR, BASEBALL

Louisburg junior Alex Saad put together his best performance of the season when his team needed him the most. The Wildcat starting pitcher got a complete game shutout over Parsons last Tuesday in the Class 4A regional semifinals. Saad pitched seven innings and gave up just two hits and struck out eight as the Wildcats advanced to the Class 4A state tournament.

On the season, Saad has been the Wildcats' No. 1 starter. He leads the team with a 7-1 record to go along with a team-high 40 strikeouts. Saad also has a 3.83 earned run average 38 innings pitched. He and the rest of the Wildcats will compete at the state tournament Thursday when they face off with Paola in the first round. It is the Wildcats' first state tournament appearance since 2009.

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: Jack Anderson

Week 2: Nathaniel Lamm

Week 3: Derek Frederick

Week 4: Izzy Moreland

Week 5: Maddy Carpenter-Ross

Week 6: Jaden Bentz

Week 7: Cooper Wingfield

Week 8: Sabra Brueggen



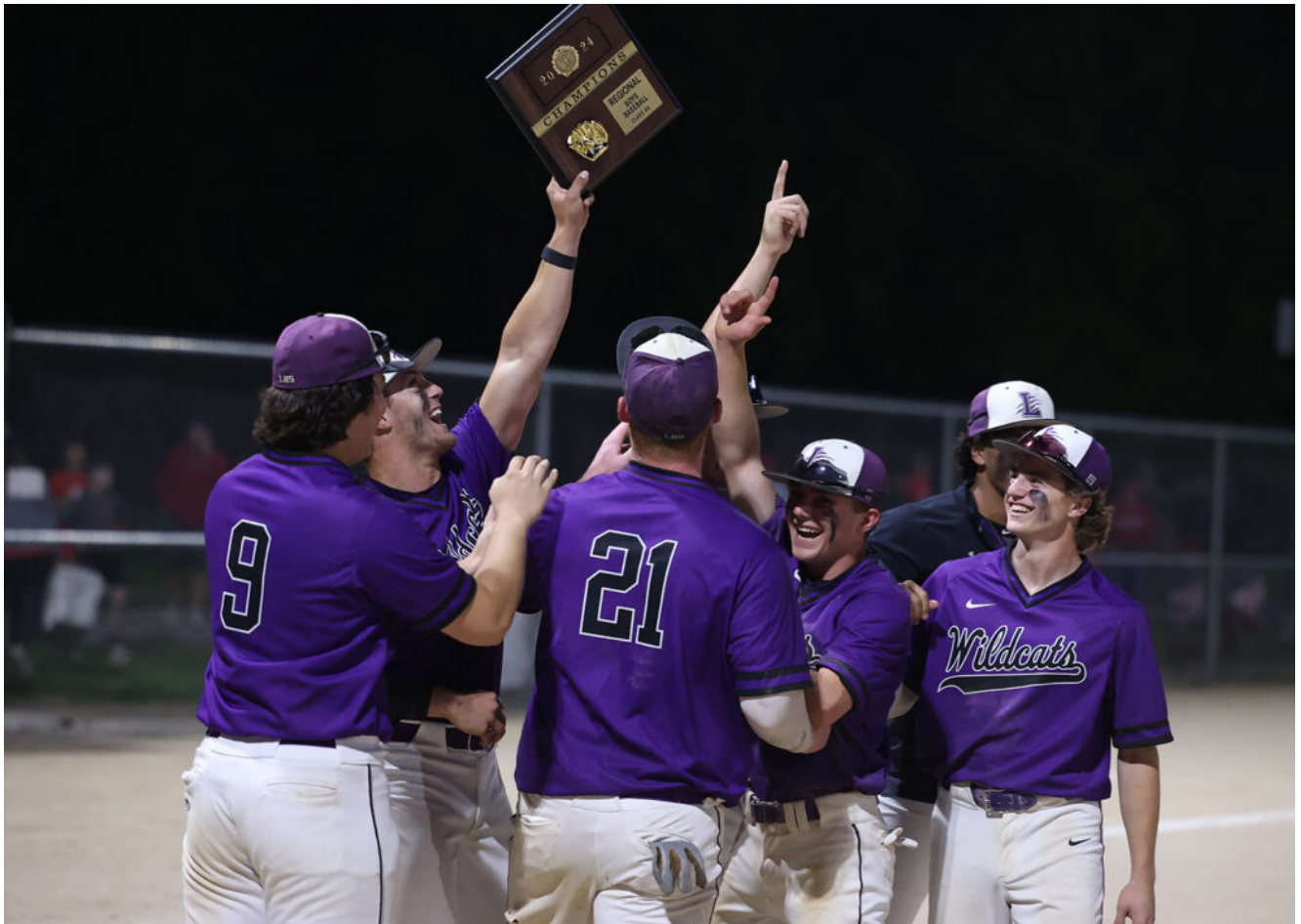


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**STATE BOUND: Wildcats win regional title for first time in 15 years**



***Louisburg senior Declan Battle hoists the regional championship trophy last Tuesday following the Wildcats' 10-3 win over Wamego in Class 4A regional championship game.***

The current members of the Louisburg baseball team couldn't remember the last time the Wildcats made the state tournament even if they tried.

That's because they were just wee toddlers the last time the Wildcats earned a spot a state – 2009 to be exact.

These players are going to have a hard time forgetting this one.

For the first time in 15 years, Louisburg is headed back to the state tournament after the Wildcats put together a convincing 10-3 victory over Wamego in the Class 4A regional championship last Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park.

The Wildcats also defeated Parsons, 8-0, in the regional semifinal to put together what was a dominating performance

from top to bottom.

“This is just amazing,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “To see how much work these guys have put in, then to come out and get the job done, it is pretty surreal. We had a bunch of guys step up and do exactly what they needed to do. They played great defense, pitched great and everyone in the dug out was into the game. It was a great win.

“It has been awhile and it has been a long time coming. We have had some great teams and this team finally pushed through and got it done.”

Although the Wildcats pounded out 18 runs in the two games, it all started on the mound.

Junior Alex Saad got the start for the Wildcats against Parsons and gave his team the performance they needed to advance. Saad pitched a complete game shutout, gave up two hits and struck out eight.



***Louisburg junior Alex Saad pitched a complete game shutout in the Class 4A regional semis against Parsons.***

"I think I threw pretty good," Saad said. "My last couple of outings have been kinda rough and I haven't been throwing enough strikes. My goal was to just throw some strikes and let my defense work behind me and we got some good results. Won the first game and it couldn't be better."

Another junior, Meade Rutherford, got the start in the championship game against Wamego and gave the Wildcats the performance they were hoping for. Rutherford pitched 5  $\frac{2}{3}$  innings, gave up one earned run, allowed five hits and struck out five.

"I threw very relaxed," Rutherford said. "I wanted to go deep into the game, and I knew that if I just threw strikes that my defense would have my back. My 2-seamer worked really well, and although my velocity wasn't where I wanted it, I thought I had good movement and it was working. (Catcher) Danny (Napier)



and I were on the same page and he did a great job behind the plate. Even if I gave up a couple runs, I knew our hitters were going to get some runs for me.

“I wasn’t nervous at all. Based on the energy we had from our last game, I knew if we played our game that we had it. I knew that if I come and do my job, the offense would do their job and they did.”

Although it took a couple innings to get going, the Wildcat bats heated up against Wamego at the perfect time.

Wamego took a 1-0 lead into the bottom of the third inning, before the Louisburg bats broke through with three runs in the third and then six more in the fourth inning to all but put the game away.



***Louisburg junior Luke Schultz slides safely into home last Tuesday against Parsons.***

Junior Luke Schultz and senior Jackson Howard each had two

hits and 2 RBIs to lead the way for Louisburg, while Declan Battle and Danny Napier each had RBI hits as well.

Taking a 3-1 lead into the fourth inning, Battle brought his teammates together in the dugout pleading for more runs and they answered the call.

“Wamego had a ton of energy and then they scored first and we didn’t have the energy they did for those first couple of innings,” Battle said. “Then we were able to score three and that definitely set the tone I think. I brought the guys together in the dugout the next inning and told them we need to score more and we just put it on them. Then all of a sudden we got 10 runs and we are going to state. It is pretty cool.

Sophomore Bristol Barbour opened the fourth inning with a single and a stolen base, but then faced with two outs, the Wildcats came through in a big way.

Battle got it started with an RBI single and stole second. He later scored on a Schultz single, who would score on a double from Napier. Howard added a single and pinch-runner Rylan Carty scored on a Wamego error.



***Louisburg sophomore Danny Napier celebrates his RBI double against Wamego.***

The Wildcats ended the inning with a bang as senior Jack Anderson hit a 2-run home run that inched over the right field fence to give Louisburg a 9-1 lead.

"I honestly didn't think it was going out," Anderson said. "I thought it was going to get caught, but I guess I back spun it enough for it to carry a little further. I will take it for sure. It was very exciting. To see everyone hyped for me at home plate, it was just a great feeling."

After Rutherford exited with two outs in the sixth, Battle came in for relief and got a strikeout for the final out. He got two quick outs in the seventh, before running into a little trouble, but got the strikeout for the final out of the game and the celebration ensued.

"It was great to be able to come in with two outs and strike that first batter out," Battle said. "Then I got two outs



easy, but then I kind of lost it a little bit. It definitely felt good to be able to finish the game with Danny and striking that last guy out. It just felt great.”

It took a little while for the Wildcat bats to get going against Parsons, but they eventually whittled away at the Vikings with two runs in the third and fourth innings, three in the fifth and another in the sixth to all but seal the win.

Barbour had a big day at the plate with two doubles and an RBI, while Battle finished with an RBI triple. Senior Brody McGreer contributed an RBI double, while senior Nathaniel Lamm and Howard also had RBI base hits. Rutherford also had a double and a run scored.



***Louisburg head coach Kade Larson gets nice ice bath from Luke Schultz following the Wildcats’ regional title.***

After capturing a Frontier League title and a regional championship, the Wildcats have their eyes set on a state title.



Louisburg (19-6) earned the No. 4 seed at the state tournament and will meet a familiar foe in Paola as the Panthers are the No. 5 seed. The game will take place at 1:15 p.m. on Thursday at Dean Evans Stadium in Salina.

The winner will advance to play two more games on Friday.

“Everything stays the same,” Larson said. “You throw strikes, play great defense, have great team at-bats. Ever since we lost to Basehor to end the year, we just told the guys you go win a game, then you get another. That is our motto going into state and we will see what happens.”

Win or lose, it will be a memorable experience for the entire Wildcat team and they are looking forward to the challenge.



***Louisburg will play Paola at 1:15 p.m. on Thursday in a Salina in the first round of the Class 4A state tournament.***

“I have played baseball for as long as I can remember,” Anderson said. “Growing up, you have tournaments and stuff, and you would win them every now and then, but they don’t

really mean a whole lot. But being with the team that we have now, being able to put our year up on the wall where it says 'Regional Champions,' is a very good feeling. I really think we can go all the way and I know that we can do it.

"Every team (at state) is there for a reason. I believe if we play our best that we can beat anyone in the state, but that is what we are going to have to do – play our best."

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**Schultz homers twice in same  
inning to power Wildcats to  
split of Paola**



***Louisburg junior Luke Schultz homered twice in the same inning last Tuesday in Paola. Schultz also earned a complete game win on the mound.***

PAOLA – Fresh off clinching its first league title in 22 years, the Louisburg baseball team had to quickly put that behind them and focus on the task at hand.

The Wildcats traveled to rival Paola last Tuesday for a doubleheader in their final road contest of the season and needed to leave with at least one win to assure themselves a spot to host a regional tournament.

Despite an 11-4 loss in the first game, the Wildcats got the win they needed in the nightcap. Louisburg used a 13-run second inning to cruise to an 18-3 victory over the Panthers.

That win earned the Wildcats the No. 3 seed and will be one of four teams to host the Class 4A regional tournament Tuesday.

"We always want a sweep, but being able to come back and get a win in game 2 was big for us," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "That win locked us into the 3 seed and the guys played hard all season to get that opportunity to host regionals."

Junior Luke Schultz provided one of the best games of his high school career in the nightcap to help the Wildcats earn the split.

Schultz hit two home runs in that second inning, including a grand slam and a 3-run home run to give Louisburg that big lead.

He also did the work on the mound. Schultz got the complete game four-inning victory as he struck out six and gave up just three hits.

"Luke really swung it well for us," Larson said. "He opened up the game and really got us rolling. Hitting two home runs in the same inning is unheard of. He also threw really well for us on the mound. He threw a lot of strikes and let his defense work behind him."





***Louisburg senior Declan Battle slides safely into second base last Tuesday in Paola.***

The Wildcats took a 1-0 lead into the second inning before they had their 13-run outburst, and they added four more runs in the fourth to seal the win.

Senior Nathaniel Lamm also had a big day with three hits, including a double, and 2 RBIs. Another senior Declan Battle, had an RBI triple and scored four runs.

Senior Brody McGreer had a hit and 2 RBIs, while seniors Jackson Howard and Jackson Anderson each drove home a run.

In the first game, the Wildcats got off to a tough start as Paola scored nine runs in the first two innings and they couldn't muster enough offense to catch up.

Lamm and Battle each led the way offensively with two hits,

while Lamm had a double and Battle scored two runs.

Louisburg will now get ready for the postseason as the host the Class 4A regional tournament Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park. The No. 3 seed Wildcats will face No. 14 Parsons at 4 p.m. in the opening round game, and if they advance, will meet the winner between Wamego and Eudora for the championship immediately after.

“We have some great potential to do some damage in the postseason,” Larson said. “It’ll come down to us playing solid defense and throwing a lot of strikes on the mound. We will have to stay consistent at the plate and continue having great team at-bats, as well.”

## **Wildcats fall in regular season finale to Basehor-Linwood**

In its final game of the regular season, Louisburg hosted Basehor-Linwood on Wednesday, but fell short to the Class 5A team, 10-4.

The Wildcats held a 4-3 lead going into the fifth inning, but the Bobcats exploded for five runs in the fifth to pull away. Errors didn’t help the Wildcat cause as they committed seven for the game.

Jackson Howard and Bristol Barbour each had two hits to lead the Wildcat offense, while Barbour also had 2 RBIs. Jack Anderson also had an RBI double.

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# Wildcats secure first league championship since 2002



***The Louisburg baseball team defeated Baldwin on Friday at Lewis-Young Park to secure its first league title in 22 years. It has been a long while since the Louisburg baseball team had won a Frontier League title – 22 years to be exact.***

Although the Wildcats had already clinched at least a share of the title prior to Friday's home game with Baldwin, they wanted to be selfish.

The Wildcats made sure they got it all to themselves.

Louisburg jumped out to an early lead and never looked back in a 12-6 victory over the Bulldogs to secure its first league title since 2002.

"That is pretty crazy that it has been this long," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "We have had some good teams over the



years, and this team top to bottom has been awesome. Everyone knows their role and they are laying the groundwork for success in the future as well.”

Pitching played a big role for the Wildcats on Friday as junior Meade Rutherford gave the team five innings and allowed zero earned runs and struck out six.



***Junior Meade Rutherford picked up the win for Louisburg as he struck out six over five innings.***

Senior Declan Battle got the final two innings of work as he struck out two and gave up just two hits. All six of Baldwin's runs were unearned thanks to some Louisburg errors.

“Meade came out and threw really well,” Larson said. “He gave us five solid innings and Declan came in and shut the door. We took great approaches at the plate and we were able to jump on them early and we never looked back. We probably gave up a



couple runs that we shouldn't have, but at the end of the day we locked them down when we needed to."

The Wildcats got out to an early lead as they scored one in the first and three more in the second inning. Baldwin cut the Louisburg lead to 4-3 in the top of the fifth, but the Wildcats responded with five runs in their half of the fifth to pull away.

Louisburg sophomore Danny Napier was big at the plate for the Wildcats all night. Napier led the Wildcats with three hits, including a pair of doubles, to go along with 5 RBIs.



***Louisburg senior Nathaniel Lamm celebrates with his teammates Friday following his home run.***

Senior Nathaniel Lamm had a solo home run in the contest, while seniors Jack Anderson and Battle each drove home two runs. Senior Jackson Howard and junior Luke Schultz each had

an RBI as well.

Sophomore Bristol Barbour had two hits. Senior Brody McGreer scored three runs and another senior, Conner Heston, scored twice.

The Wildcats are now 16-4 on the season as they have put together big victories throughout the year and Friday against Baldwin was no exception.

“It is huge,” Larson said of the league title. “The guys worked really hard for this. Everyone on the team had a job to do, and they came together and they got it done. We found a way to win and the guys have done that over and over this season.”

Now that a league title is out of the way, the Wildcats now have their eyes focused on the final week of the regular season and the postseason. Louisburg will play its final league contest tonight when it travels to Paola for a doubleheader.

The Wildcats will then host Basehor-Linwood for a single game Wednesday, before focusing on the regional tournament.



***Louisburg coach Kade Larson gets the celebratory water bath thanks to catcher Danny Napier following the Wildcats' win Friday over Baldwin.***

It is a group that has pulled together at different times throughout the season and Larson believes they still have more left in them.

"We are starting to play some really good ball right now," Larson said. "We still have some things we need to clean up. I don't think we have played our best game yet, and that is what the guys continue to strive for, is to play their best game. We are starting to peak at the right time and hopefully we can roll that into regionals and put a little playoff run together.

"It is a really tight knit group. Everyone is for everyone and they don't care who gets the job done, as long as it gets done. It starts with the seniors, all the way down to our freshmen on junior varsity. Everyone is for the team and that



is all we can ask for.”

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## Wildcats clinch share of league title with Senior Night win over Eudora



***Louisburg senior Declan Battle celebrates with his teammates after scoring a run Tuesday against Eudora.***

It's been 22 years since Louisburg baseball had found itself atop the Frontier League standings.

That long wait is finally over.

The Wildcats clinched at least a share of the Frontier League



title Tuesday as they used a big second inning to propel them to a 16-5 victory over Eudora. Add in the fact it was Senior Night, and it was an emotional night all the way around.

“Clinching a share of the league title is huge for this program,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “This was one of the goals they set at the start of the year and they’ve worked their butts off to make it happen.”

It wasn’t the best start for the Wildcats as they found themselves down five runs after the top of the first inning. It didn’t take long for them to turn it around.

Louisburg (15-4) scored 12 runs in the bottom of the second inning and took a 13-5 lead. It was lead it wouldn’t relinquish.

“We really battled back in that game,” Larson said. “These guys knew they could do it and took a great approach up to the plate. We had some really great team at-bats that got the job done for us.”



***Louisburg senior Brody McGreer slides safely into third base Tuesday against Eudora.***

The Wildcats got big hits from up and down their lineup. Senior Brody McGreer had two hits and 4 RBIs to help lead the way, while senior Jack Anderson had two hits, including a double and 3 RBIs.

Senior Jackson Howard, junior Luke Schultz and sophomore Danny Napier each drove home two runs, and Schultz added a 2-run triple in the second inning.

Junior Meade Rutherford had an RBI double and senior Nathaniel Lamm also recorded an RBI. Sophomore Bristol Barbour finished with two hits, while senior Declan Battle scored three runs.

Despite getting off to a rocky start in the first, Louisburg starter Alex Saad settled in and pitched three scoreless innings after that. Battle pitched the final inning to secure the win.



***Louisburg senior Jackson Howard tries to put the tag on a Eudora runner Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park.***

“Saad had a tough first inning, but it was really great to see him bounce back the way he did,” Larson said. “He pitched really well after that. Once we got him a lead, we knew he wasn’t going to give it back.”

Clinching a league title was the perfect way for the Wildcats honor their six seniors. Battle, Lamm, Howard, McGreer, Anderson and Conner Heston were all recognized with their parents following the contest.

“These seniors have been great for this program,” Larson said. “They have always done things the right way and have been great role models for the underclassmen. They will definitely be missed.”





***Louisburg seniors (from left) Jack Anderson, Conner Heston, Declan Battle, Jackson Howard, Nathaniel Lamm and Brody McGreer were all honored Tuesday on Senior Night.***

The Wildcats were scheduled to play a doubleheader with the Cardinals, but the second game was canceled due to severe weather.

Louisburg will try and win the outright league title Friday when it hosts Baldwin in a makeup contest. First pitch is set for 6 p.m. at Lewis-Young Park.

## **Home run barrage leads to split at Chanute**

Louisburg traveled to Chanute on Saturday for a pair of games against the Blue Comets and Prairie View.

After a tough 10-6 loss to Chanute, the Wildcat bats came alive in a big way with a 19-3 win over Prairie View.



The Wildcats hit four home runs in the win over the Buffaloes, including two off the bat of senior Jack Anderson. Sophomore Danny Napier and junior Rylan Carty also homered in the win.



***Louisburg sophomore Danny Napier was one of three Wildcats to homer against Prairie View.***

Junior Alex Saad also had a big day at the plate with three hits, including a double and triple, to go along with a team-high 4 RBIs. Junior Meade Rutherford had a double and 2 RBIs.

Anderson also started for Louisburg and picked up the win. He pitched four innings and gave up just one earned run and had four strikeouts. Howard pitched the final inning and struck out the side.

In the first game against Chanute, five Wildcat errors led to four unearned runs for the Blue Comets, which turned out to be the difference.

Chanute jumped out to a 5-1 lead and the Wildcats were unable to play catchup.

Junior Luke Schultz had a big day at the plate with three hits, including a solo home run. Declan Battle, Napier, Anderson, Schultz and Nathaniel Lamm each had a double in the loss.