Week 1 Athlete of the Week: Jack Anderson



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

JACK ANDERSON, SENIOR, BASEBALL

Louisburg senior Jack Anderson couldn’t have asked for a better start to his season last week. In the first game of a doubleheader against Harrisonville, Anderson had a memorable performance at the plate that included 7 RBIs in the Wildcats’ season opening victory.

Anderson was clutch the entire game as he finished 4-for-4 with those seven runs batted in, which included a 3-run home run and a double. The Louisburg senior also scored twice in the Wildcats’ sweep of Harrisonville.

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.



Lamm excited to join Camp Community College baseball program



Louisburg senior Nathaniel Lamm is excited to take the next step in his baseball career as he signed with Camp Community College.

Nathaniel Lamm set a goal for himself when he was younger and he didn't stop working until that goal became a reality.

Playing baseball in college was something Lamm had wanted to do, and when he got the opportunity, he snatched it up.

Lamm recently signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Paul D. Camp Community College in Franklin, Va.

"I started playing baseball when I was 10 and fell in love with the sport, so by the time I was 13 I set a goal to make it to the college level someday," Lamm said. "It means a lot to play in college as I've done a lot of practicing and played in a lot of games to get to the next level."

Although his baseball opportunity will be on the other side of the country, Lamm is excited to have the opportunity with the Hurricane program. It will also have a sort of a hometown feel to it.

“Paul D Camp was a good fit for me because it’s a small town similar to here in Louisburg so that made me feel like home when I visited,” Lamm said. “The coaches really thought I would fit right in with being ready to win and ready to grind everyday.”



Louisburg senior Nathaniel Lamm signs a national letter of intent to play baseball for Paul D. Camp Community College in Franklin, Va. Pictured with Nathaniel are (in front, from left) Max Sortore, his mother, Carol Sortore, and his father, Michael Lamm; (standing) his step-father, Brook Sortore, and Louisburg baseball coach Kade Larson.

Lamm had a big junior season for the Louisburg baseball team as he earned honorable mention All-Frontier League honors after finished with a .422 average and had 15 RBIs to go along

with 19 hits.

He is hoping for the same type of success in his final year with the program as the Wildcats try and earn that bid to state after finishing with their first winning season in more than decade.

“I’m really looking forward to this season in Louisburg as we can build off our season last year,” Lamm said.

As for what his college future holds, Lamm is looking forward to joining the Hurricane program and taking that next step.

“My expectations when I get to campus is to go at it in practice everyday and hopefully build chemistry with my new teammates,” he said.

Wildcats put up 26 runs to roll past Harrisonville in opener



Jack Anderson is greeted by his teammates Tuesday after his 3-run home run in the first game against Harrisonville at Lewis-Young Park.

It may have just been one outing, but the Louisburg baseball team couldn’t have asked for a better start to its season.

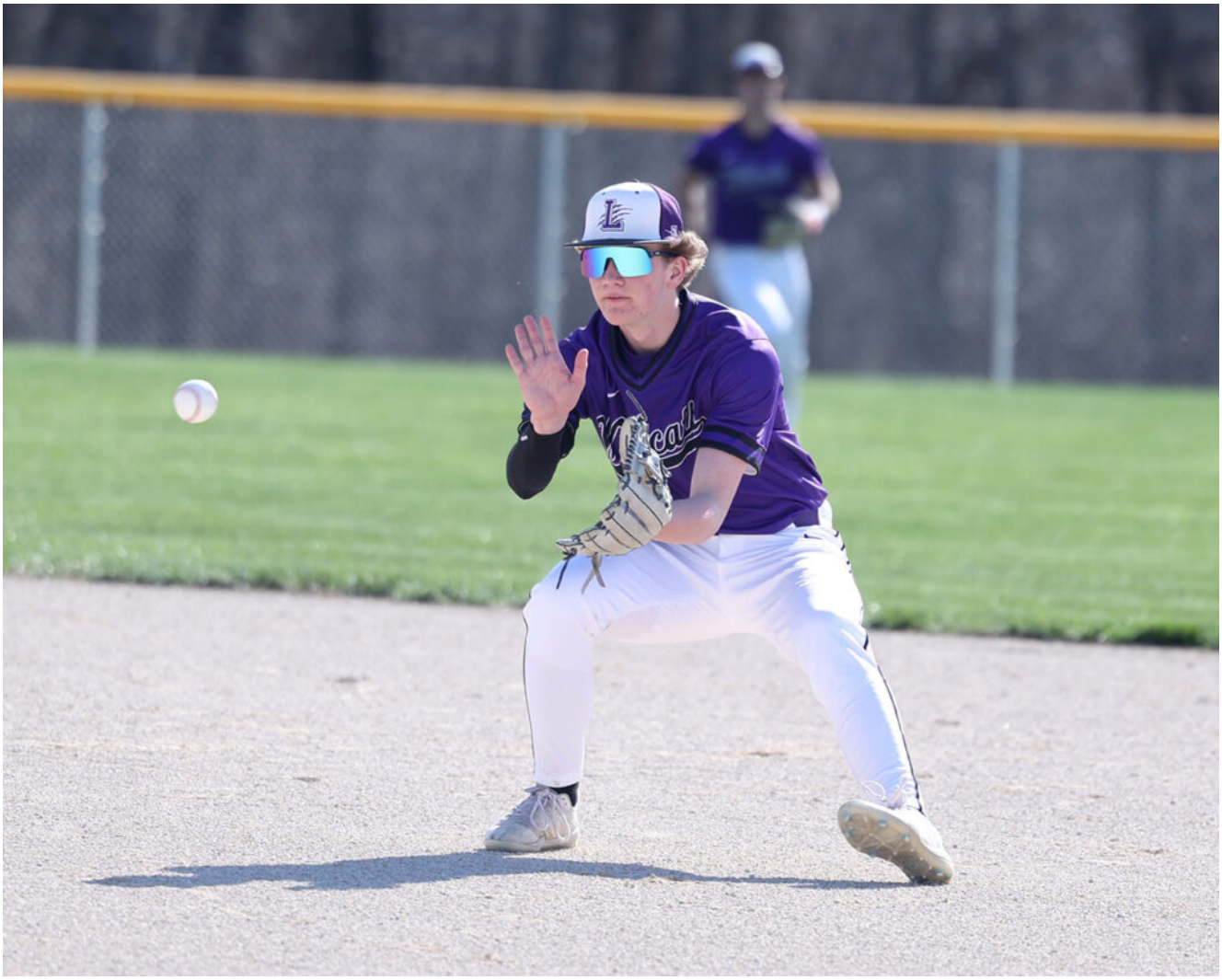
The Wildcats scored 26 runs and came away with a pair of 13-3 and 13-1 victories Tuesday over Harrisonville at Lewis-Young Park. It was the type of performance they were hoping for to start their 2024 campaign.

“It’s always great to win your first two games of the season,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “I thought we hit the ball really well and pitched well all night. We have a few things we will clean up in practice that come with that first game of the season.”

Two Louisburg seniors came up big for the Wildcats in each

game and it was Jack Anderson that got it all started in the opener. Anderson was 4-for-4 at the plate with 7 RBIs, that included a double and a 3-run home run.

In the nightcap, it was Declan Battles turn. The Wildcat centerfielder had three hits, including a double, and had 6 RBIs in the 12-run win.



Sophomore Bristol Barbour fields a grounder Tuesday against Harrisonville.

“Jack saw the ball really well all night,” Larson said. “He hit the ball hard and good things usually happen when you do that. Declan started seeing the ball well, too. He picked us up in some big situations and got the job done.”

Junior Alex Saad started the first game for Louisburg as he went four innings and gave up just one hit to go along with nine strikeouts. Harrisonville struck for three runs on him,

but all three were unearned.

It was a tough third inning for Louisburg in which it committed three errors and led to three Harrisonville runs that tied the game. The Wildcats settled down after that as it took the lead with a run in the bottom of the inning, then scored five in the fourth and fifth innings.

“After that one inning, we played a pretty clean two games,” Larson said. “It was great to see the guys not let one bad inning turn into another. They played really well and moved on from it nicely.”



Junior Meade Rutherford slides back into first base Tuesday against Harrisonville.

In that first game, senior Jackson Howard added a pair of hits, including a double, to go along with 2 RBIs. Junior Luke Schultz had two hits and a run batted in, while sophomore

Bristol Barbour also had an RBI.

Schultz started the second game for the Wildcats as he was given a nice cushion. Louisburg scored eight runs in the first and four more in the second to pull away early. Schultz allowed one run in three innings and struck out five.

Along with Battle’s strong performance with the bat, sophomore Danny Napier had a double and 2 RBIs. Saad also had an RBI double to help the Wildcat offense.

Louisburg will try and keep its winning ways going Thursday when it travels to Spring Hill for one game. First pitch is set for 6 p.m.

Wildcat baseball has high hopes for 2024 season



Louisburg senior Declan Battle is the Wildcats' top returning player after earning all-league and all-state honors last season.

Louisburg baseball had a young team in 2023, but that didn't stop the Wildcats from finding success.

They put together their first winning record in more than a decade and played their best toward the end of the season.

Now, the Wildcats return most of their starting lineup from a season ago and are ready to take another step forward, which they hope is a deep run in the postseason.

"Practice has started off really well," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "We've had some great senior leaders step up in the short time we've been together. This team has a lot of potential and I am excited to see what we can do. We return quite a few pieces from last year's team and I think we can

make another good jump in the right direction.”

Louisburg will have some extra opportunities to make that jump. In the offseason, the Kansas State High School Activities Association approved the increase in the number of games played.

Teams across the state can now play a maximum of 26 games, up from the previous mark of 20. The Wildcats have taken full advantage, and while it has some drawbacks, Larson believes this will help his team in the long run.

“We’re all really excited to make the jump to 26 games this season,” he said. “We have a full schedule and that leaves little to no time for makeup games, so we are hoping for some great weather this season. With rainouts happening every year I feel having 26 games gives us the best shot at playing as many games as possible.”

Although the Wildcats still have several underclassmen on the varsity roster, they will be led by a six-member senior class that is headed by returning all-league and all-state player, Declan Battle.

Battle will lead the Louisburg bats at the top of the lineup after hitting .429 last season to go along with 17 stolen bases. He will also be the team’s top returning outfielder.



Louisburg sophomore Danny Napier led the Wildcat bats with five home runs last season.

Joining Battle are seniors Brody McGreer and Nathaniel Lamm, who were both honorable mention all-league selections last season. Jack Anderson, Jackson Howard and Conner Heston will also play big roles for the Wildcats.

Junior Luke Schultz and sophomore Danny Napier, who were also all-league honorable mention selections last season, return to lead the top of the Louisburg lineup. Schultz hit .368 with 16 RBIs, while Napier led the Wildcats with five home runs and 30 RBIs last season.

“On the offensive side, we return quite a few pieces,” Larson said. “Anytime you have experience coming back is great, but with how much we have returning, the excitement and expectations are pretty high.”

Like with every season, success starts on the mound and the Wildcats have several arms with experience.

Junior Alex Saad, sophomore Bristol Barbour, along with Battle and Schultz, each return to lead the Louisburg staff. Newcomers Meade Rutherford, Jayce Toms and Anderson will also see plenty of innings throughout the season.



Louisburg junior Alex Saad is one of the team's top returning pitchers this season.

Defensively, Napier will handle a bulk of the team's catching responsibilities. Schultz, McGreer, Barbour, Toms and Rylan Carty will see time in the middle infield, while Anderson and Howard will split time at first base.

Battle, Anderson, Saad, Rutherford, Lamm and Heston are the team's outfielders.

Louisburg opens its season Tuesday when it hosts Harrisonville for a double header as the Wildcats begin their quest to what they hope ends in a state tournament appearance.

“We return quite a few this year and this group has some pretty high expectations,” Larson said. “We have the potential to take another step forward this year and see where we land at the end of the season to give us a shot to make it to state.”

Hamman excited for opportunity to grow with Avila baseball



Louisburg’s Corbin Hamman is ready to continue his baseball career this upcoming season at Avila University.

Corbin Hamman spent a lot of springs and summers doing what he loves – playing baseball.

The older Hamman got, the more the sport became a bigger part of his life. So much so, that he wasn’t ready to be done with it when his high school career came to a close.

So before the end of his senior year at Louisburg, Hamman took some time to find his next baseball family and he found the right fit.

Last spring, Hamman signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Avila University this upcoming season. Playing on

the college stage was always a goal.

“It’s an amazing feeling to get the opportunity to play baseball at the next level,” Hamman said. “It’s been something that I’ve wanted to do, like most baseball players, from the first time I started playing it.”

Avila become the perfect fit for Hamman as he had familiarity with the program and what it could provide.

“I know the Avila baseball staff and I also have a couple buddies I grew up with going to Avila for baseball,” Hamman said. “And since it’s so close to home, it pretty much all just works perfect.”

Hamman helped the Louisburg baseball team to its first winning season in more than a decade and played an important role.

He was the Wildcats’ top starting pitcher and he kept his team in the game for most of his nine starts.

Hamman had a team-best 3.25 earned run average and also had three wins on the season.

He added 51 strikeouts to just 12 walks. At the plate, he batted .289 with 11 hits and 11 RBIs.



Louisburg's Corbin Hamman signed his letter of intent last spring to play baseball at Avila. Sitting next to Corbin are his parents Rueben and Alison Hamman, and his sister Naomi. Standing (from left) is Louisburg assistant coach Jeff Lohse, head coach Kade Larson and Avila head coach Matt Carpenter.

That success led All-Frontier League honors following the season. Now, Hamman hopes to use that momentum to get better at Avila.

"As a freshman next year, the coaches have told me that I'm going to start out as a two-way player," Hamman said. "So I'd play infield and pitch. That would go on until I find the right fit, which I am assuming will be pitching, but we'll just have to wait and see. But like all programs, no spot is guaranteed so who ever earns it gets it."

Hamman played a big role for the Wildcat baseball team the last couple of seasons and he enjoyed being a part of the Louisburg program.

"Louisburg baseball has blessed me with a lot," Hamman said. "We have amazing coaches, lifelong friends/ teammates, and new traditions. I did most of my growing and learning with the Louisburg program and I probably don't end up the same way

with the majority of other teams. I always hope they grow and get better every year.”

Hamman hopes to continue to grow with the Avila program and he is ready to get started with the Eagles.

“I, of course, hope to always get better everyday, and I am very excited to get to work with the pitching staff all fall to get ready for the spring,” Hamman said. “I cant wait to get to Avila and see how it all works out.”

2023 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year Nominees



For the sixth 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. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female athletes and then I will

tabulate the results and determine the winner. The winner will be announced in the coming days.

Below are the nominees for the Male Athlete of the Year award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!



Kaven Bartlett – Senior – Wrestling and Soccer

Kaven Bartlett competed on the Louisburg wrestling and boys soccer team, but Bartlett was a fixture on the mat for the Wildcat wrestling program.

Bartlett qualified for state at 138 pounds and became a 3-time state qualifier for Louisburg and was a state medalist in 2022. He finished with a 119-45 career record and was a two-time team captain and four-year letter winner. Those 119 wins are fifth in program history and he has 158 career takedowns and 726.5 career points, which is both third in team history. He was named the 2023 LHS Wrestler of the Year.

Bartlett was also a defender on the Wildcat soccer team his past season. The Wildcats advanced to the regional championship game.



Declan Battle – Junior – Football and Baseball

Declan Battle had big seasons for both the Wildcat football and baseball programs.

Under the lights on the football field, Battle was the Wildcat starting quarterback as he led his team to an undefeated Frontier League championship. The dual-threat quarterback scored 23 total touchdowns and totaled more than 1,700 yards. That performance led him to a first-team All-Frontier League, along with all-state honors.

On the diamond, Battle was the Wildcats' starting centerfielder and leadoff hitter. He scored 32 runs on the year, which is a Wildcat program record. Battle also recorded

a .429 average to go along with five doubles and three triples. He also stole 17 bases. His performance also earned him second team All-Frontier League and all-state honors.



Mason Dobbins – Senior – Football, Basketball and Track and Field

Louisburg senior Mason Dobbins was a fixture for three Wildcat programs this past season. Dobbins was the starting wide receiver on the football field, starting forward on the basketball team and a state medalist for the track program.

Dobbins stood out the most in the track and field arena. He qualified for state in four events and medaled in all four as he helped the Wildcats to a state runner-up finish this past May.

Dobbins won the state championship in the high jump, and earlier in the year, broke the school record with a jump of 6 feet, 7 inches. He was a state runner-up in the 110-meter hurdles and also took third in the 200-meter dash. He was also a part of the 4×100-meter relay that also medaled third and

set a new school record earlier in the year. In all, Dobbins has won nine state medals in his Wildcat career.

On the football field, Dobbins earned first team All-Frontier League honors at wide receiver with 25 catches, 382 yards and four touchdowns. He also earned honorable mention all-state honors.

On the basketball court, Dobbins was named to the All-Frontier League defensive team. He led the Wildcats with 7.6 rebounds a game to go along with 1.5 steals and 1 block per contest.



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Cade Gassman – Senior – Soccer, Basketball and Track and Field

Cade Gassman was a starter, or key contributor, for three Wildcat programs during 2022-23 school year. Gassman was the starting midfielder and captain for the soccer team, starting guard on the basketball court and a jumper for the track and field program.

Gassman made his biggest impact on the pitch for Louisburg. As a midfielder, Gassman drew a lot of attention from the opposition as he finished with five goals and four assists on the season to lead the Wildcats to the regional title match. In his career, he is one of the more prolific scorers in school history.

The Louisburg senior finished with 47 career goals, which is second in program history and was third in school history with 26 career assists. His 120 career points is also second in Wildcat history. He is a four-time all-state and all-Frontier League first team selection.

On the hardwood, Gassman was the starting guard for the Wildcats and he recorded 39 rebounds and had 22 assists to go along with 14 steals. On the track, Gassman was a state qualifier in the high jump for Louisburg and finished 11th overall at state.



Nathan Vincent, Senior, Football and Track and Field

Louisburg senior Nathan Vincent played big roles for both the Wildcat football team and track and field program. Vincent was a starting lineman for the Wildcat football team and a state medalist in track.

On the football field, Vincent started on both sides of the ball as he earned all-state and all league honors. He finished with 80 tackles as a defensive end to go along with 6.5 sacks and 8.5 tackles for a loss. Vincent was a key member of the offensive line as he helped the Wildcats to more than 33 points per game. He earned first team all-league offensive league honors and second team-defense. He also recorded first team all-state honors and was selected to play in the Kansas Shrine Bowl.

Vincent was the Wildcats' top thrower for the track and field program. Vincent recorded three state medals as he helped Louisburg to a state runner-up team finish. At state, Vincent medaled third in the shot put, fifth in the discus and sixth in the javelin. In all, Vincent has won five career state medals, with three coming in the javelin.



Colyer Wingfield, Senior, Basketball, Track and Field

Louisburg senior Colyer Wingfield had a big season for both the Wildcat basketball team and track program. Wingfield was the leading scorer for the Wildcat basketball program, and was a part of two state relays in track.

Wingfield earned a lot of success on the hardwood as he was named to the All-Frontier League second team. He led the Wildcats in scoring at 17.4 points per game and pulled down nearly six rebounds a contest.

On the track, Wingfield helped the 4×100 relay and 4×400 relay to state medals as both finished third at the state meet last month. The 4×100 relay set a new school record in the process. He also did the long and triple jumps for the Wildcats.

Wildcats place seven on all-league team; Battle earns all-state honors



The Louisburg baseball team earned seven spots on the All-Frontier League team, including second team selections Declan Battle, Cade Driskell and Corbin Hamman. Battle was also named second team all-state.

The Louisburg baseball team had a successful season that ended with a 13-8 record, which was its first winning season in more than decade.

Several Wildcats contributed to that success and the Frontier League coaches took notice.

Seven Wildcats were selected to the All-Frontier League team that was released last week, including three second team selections in Declan Battle, Cade Driskell and Corbin Hamman.

Danny Napier, Luke Schultz, Brody McGreer and Nathaniel Lamm were all named to the honorable mention team.

Along with his all-league honor, Battle was also named to the Class 4A all-state second team by the Kansas Association of Baseball Coaches.

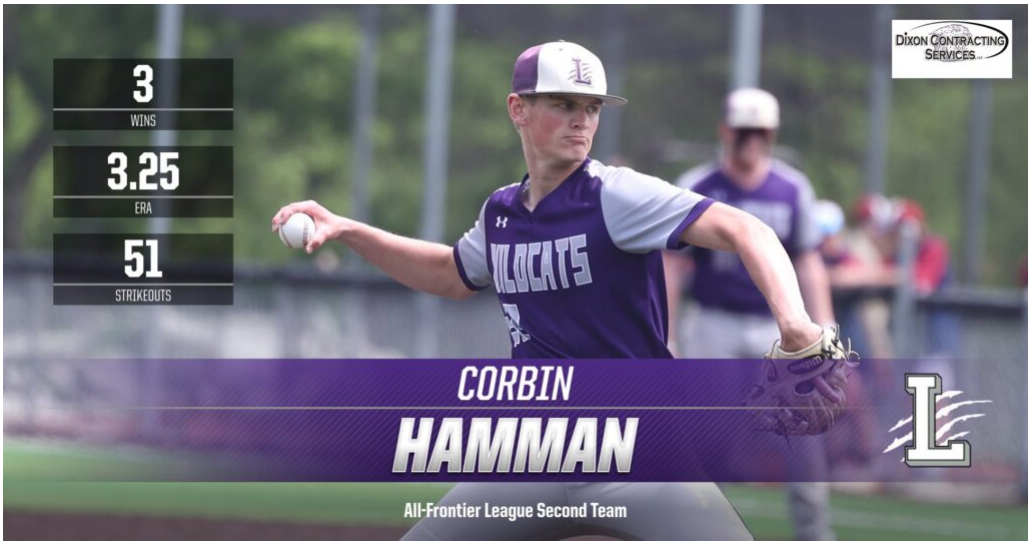


“I felt we were represented really well this year in the all-league voting,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “Everyone in the league knew we had a great team and they were going to have to play well to beat us. There are a ton of great players throughout the league.”

Battle had a big season for the Wildcats as he took over the leadoff spot and put himself in a position to allow his teammates to knock him in. He led the team with a .429 average and tallied 30 hits.

Once he got on the base paths, Battle was dangerous as he scored 32 runs and had 17 stolen bases. He also played centerfield for Louisburg.

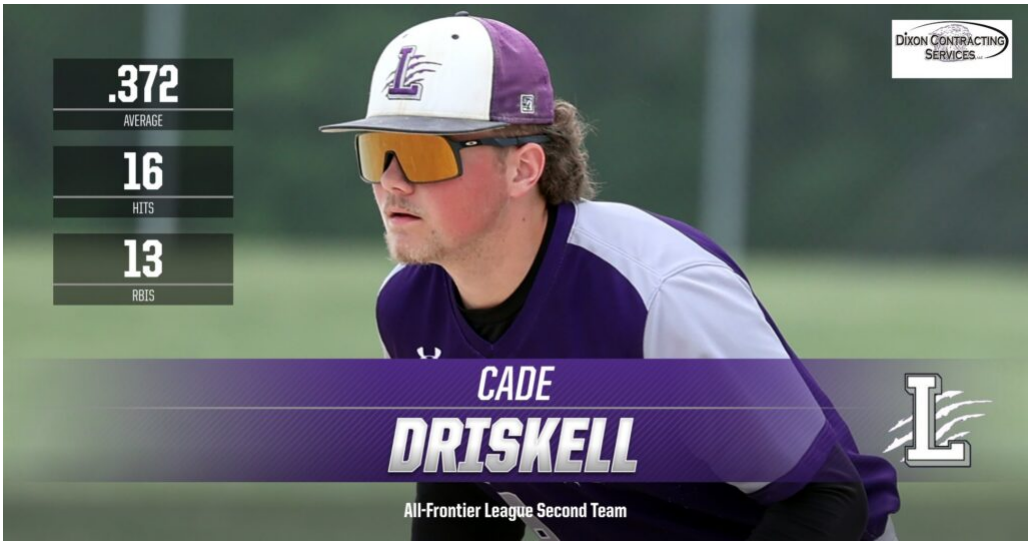
“Declan was an outstanding outfielder for us as well as leadoff hitter,” Larson said. “Teams knew he had the power for extra base hits and the speed to leg out infield singles. That’s a tough spot to be in on defense. He also was a menace on the base paths.”



Hamman was the Wildcats' top starting pitcher and he kept his team in the game for most of his nine starts. He had a team-best 3.25 earned run average and also had three wins on the season.

He added 51 strikeouts to just 12 walks. At the plate, he batted .289 with 11 hits and 11 RBIs.

"Corbin had a great year for us on the mound," Larson said. "He threw a ton of strikes all season long and that led to a lot of wins for us."



As for Driskell, his senior season ended prematurely due to injury, but he made a big impact for the Wildcats while he was in there.

Driskell finished with a .372 average and had 16 hits and 13

runs driven in. He also added three doubles on the season, while playing first and third base for the Wildcats.

“Cade was another leader for our team all year,” Larson said. “He was a tough out every time he stepped up to the plate. It was a tough loss for us when he broke his arm. Even with that, he continued being a great leader for us.”



Napier caught all 21 games for the Wildcats this season behind the plate and he was one of the team’s top hitters in the process. The Louisburg freshman had a .322 average, and he had an OPS of 1.235.

The led the team with five home runs to go along with 30 RBIs. Napier also finished with seven doubles and a triple.

“Danny was awesome behind the plate for us this year,” Larson said. “He was great at calling games and held runners in check all season long. He also swung it pretty well, which helped us a ton.”



Schultz was the team's starting shortstop for most of the season, and also played third base. He swung the bat well with a .368 average, 25 hits, three doubles, three triples, a home run and 16 RBIs.

"Luke was another big bat for us in the lineup," Larson said. "He did a great job of getting on base and moving runners when needed."

McGreer shifted between shortstop and second base this season and the Louisburg junior was solid up the middle with just four errors on the year and a .902 fielding percentage.

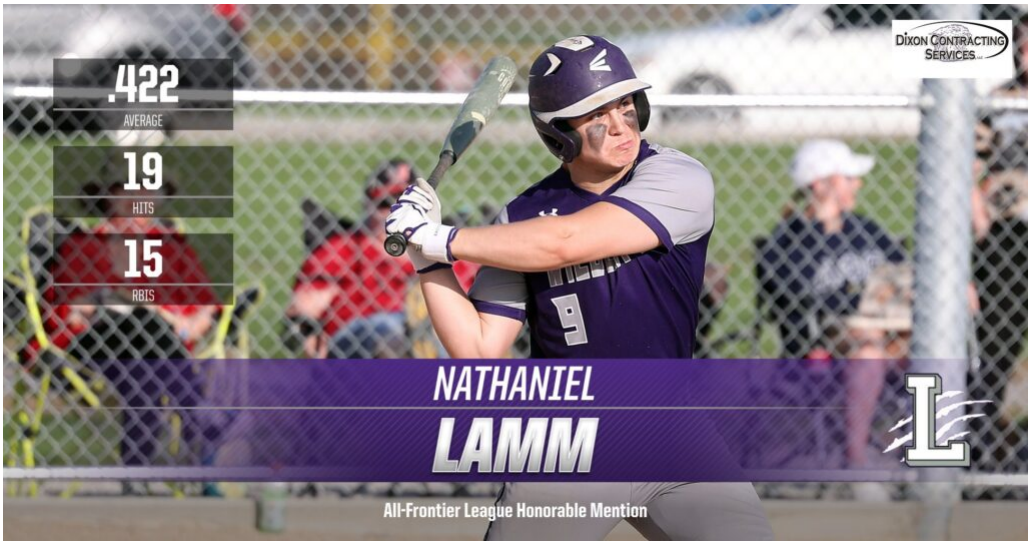


He also tallied 15 hits on the year and scored 16 runs to go along with a .288 average.

"Brody played really well for us all season," Larson said. "He

was a steady bat in the lineup and you always knew he was going to make the play in the field when it mattered. He did a great job at second base and shortstop for us all season long.”

Lamm also found a lot of success at the plate for the Wildcats. He was second on the team with a .422 average and had 19 hits and 15 RBIs.



“Lamm was a kid that worked hard all season and it paid off in some big situations,” Larson said. “He was always on base, and drove in some key runs for us down the stretch.”

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL

FIRST TEAM

CATCHER: Logan Wake, senior, Tonganoxie

PITCHER: Trevor McGraw, junior, Tonganoxie; Donovan Johnson, senior, Spring Hill

INFIELD: Trevor McGraw, junior, Tonganoxie, Eden Myers, sophomore, Bonner Springs; Hunter Loethen, sophomore, Paola; Brett Davidson, sophomore, Baldwin

OUTFIELD: Caden Campbell, junior, Bonner Springs; Kaden Kerr, junior, Eudora; Boston Bloomer, sophomore, Ottawa

DH/UTILITY: Jagger Dey, sophomore, Baldwin

SECOND TEAM

CATCHER: Brandon Richardson, senior, Spring Hill

PITCHER: Corbin Hamman, senior, Louisburg; Owen Blaine, junior, Ottawa; Keaton Matlick, senior, Paola

INFIELD: Carter Hepner, sophomore, Ottawa; Cade Driskell, senior, Louisburg; Kale Murdock, senior, Paola; Keaton Neal, freshman, Spring Hill

OUTFIELD: Declan Battle, junior, Louisburg; Cade Johnson, senior, Spring Hill; Xander Meinig, sophomore, Paola

DH/UTILITY: Keaton Neal, freshman, Spring Hill

HONORABLE MENTION

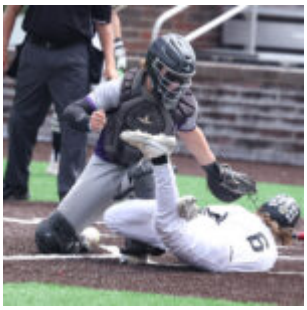
CATCHER: Brandon Reynolds, junior, Ottawa; Kolby Wheeler, senior, Paola; Danny Napier, freshman, Louisburg

PITCHER: Luke Kessinger, junior, Tonganoxie; Holden Fields, senior, Spring Hill; TJ Kerns, junior, Ottawa; Logan Morton, senior, Ottawa; Kelton Ford, junior, Eudora; Hunter Loethen, sophomore, Paola; Dane Warmuskerken, senior, Baldwin

INFIELD: Talon Langford, sophomore, Tonganoxie; Jake Titus, senior, Ottawa; Keegan Rimmer, junior, Ottawa; Wyatt Caldwell, senior, Bonner Springs; Liam Prentice, senior, Bonner Springs; JD Troutman, sophomore, Paola; Luke Schultz, sophomore, Louisburg; Brody McGreer, junior, Louisburg

OUTFIELD: Brendan Briley, junior, Tonganoxie; Aidan Michel, senior, Ottawa; Eli Gerken, senior, Paola; Shamus Sawyer, senior, Baldwin; Nathaniel Lamm, junior, Louisburg

Louisburg baseball falls short in regional semis against Paola



Louisburg catcher Danny Napier tags out a Paola runner after centerfielder Declan Battle threw the strike home Tuesday during the Class 4A regional tournament at Benedictine College.

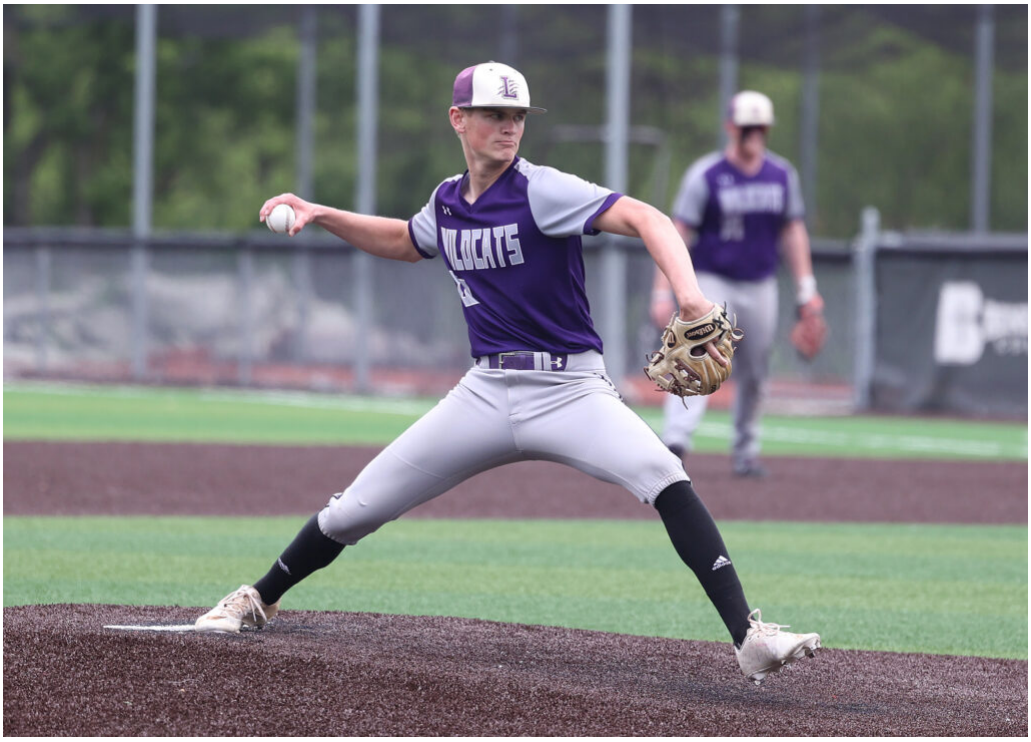
ATCHISON – Just a few days after playing its rival, Paola, to end the regular season, the Louisburg baseball team saw the Panthers again and the stakes were much bigger.

Louisburg and Paola squared off in the Class 4A regional semifinals Tuesday at Benedictine College in Atchison. Just like their previous meetings, it was a battle.

Unfortunately for Louisburg, its season came to a close after the Panthers scored two runs in the fifth and that was all they needed to hand the Wildcats a 2-0 loss.

“The guys were ready to play and played well,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “Paola is a great team and just had a little bit better day than us. The Frontier League is always loaded and it’s never ideal drawing a league school in the first round.”

A week prior, the two teams squared off in Louisburg for a doubleheader and each team took a game in which they combined to score 30 runs.



Louisburg senior Corbin Hamman gave up just one earned run in nearly five innings of work against Paola on Tuesday in Atchison.

This showdown was a little different. It was a pitcher's dual from the start and the Wildcats got the performance they were hoping for from their starter, Corbin Hamman. The Louisburg senior pitched 4 2/3 innings and gave up just one earned run and struck out three.

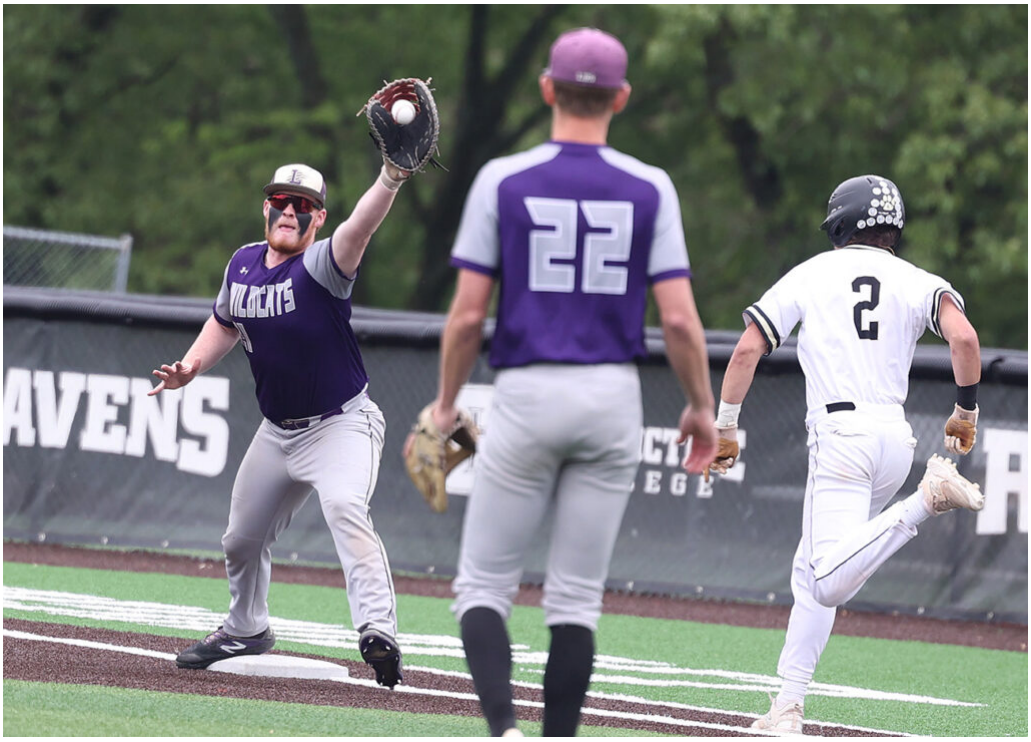
Sophomore Alex Saad came in for relief and didn't gave up a run in 2 1/3 innings and struck out two.

The Wildcats had a tough time stringing hits together against Paola starter Keaton Matlick, who pitched a complete game and stuck out eight.

"Corbin threw really well all day," Larson said. "He kept them off balance and they really had to scratch for runs. Paola's pitcher was really good as well. He kept us off the base paths and made it difficult to get guys into scoring position."

Louisburg was able to get base runners as the Wildcats worked four walks and tallied five hits, but couldn’t string many hits together.

Declan Battle, Luke Schultz, Bristol Barbour, Jackson Howard and Jackson Kush each had a hit for the Wildcats.



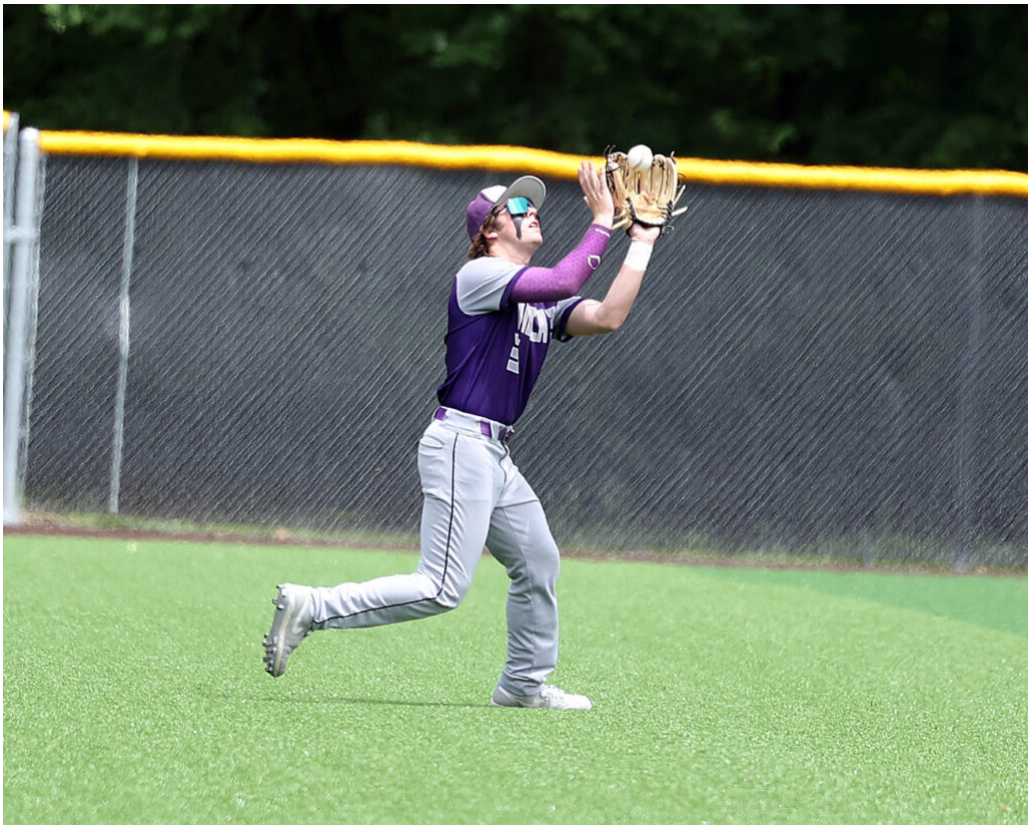
Louisburg first baseman Jackson Howard stretches for an out Tuesday against Paola.

Each team had runners on through four innings, and Paola nearly took the lead in the top of the fourth, but Battle threw a runner out from centerfield to keep the game scoreless.

Paola took advantage in the top of the fifth as the Panthers plated a pair of runs, including one on a squeeze play and another on a steal of home.

Louisburg had two runners on in the sixth, and another runner in the seventh, but the Wildcats couldn’t take advantage.

“The guys never gave up and fought until the last pitch was thrown,” Larson said. “That was how this team was all year and why we had so much success throughout the season.”



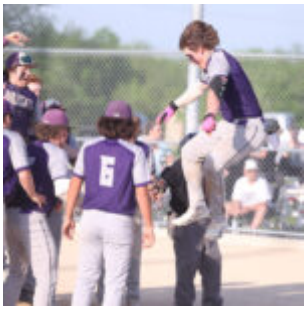
Louisburg senior Jackson Kush tracks down a ball in left field Tuesday against Paola.

The Wildcats, who finished with a 13-8 record, had their first winning season in nearly 15 years. Louisburg had .500 record two years ago.

Although the Wildcats will return a majority of this season's team, they did have to say goodbye to four seniors in Hamman, Kush, Cade Driskell and Kaleb Carter.

"This season showed what we can do," Larson said. "It will be difficult to replace these four seniors, but I think we have some great pieces coming back that we can continue building on and take the next step."

BOMBS AWAY: Wild finish lifts Wildcats past Paola on Senior Night



Louisburg freshman Danny Napier jumps onto home plate as his teammates celebrate his 3-run walk-off home run Wednesday against Paola at Lewis-Young Park.

It may have taken a day to finish it all, but for the Louisburg baseball team, the wait was well worth it.

After having to suspend the first game due to weather, and wait a day to finish what was a 7-2 loss to Paola in the first game of the doubleheader Wednesday, the Wildcats made it a memorable Senior Night finish in game two.

Louisburg had a flair for the dramatics as the Wildcats lost the lead twice – only to get it back on a Wyatt Holland pinch hit grand slam the first time. The Wildcats then won it in walk-off fashion with a Danny Napier 3-run home run in the seventh, to give them a 12-9 victory over the Panthers.

It was the perfect ending for the four Wildcat seniors – Jackson Kush, Corbin Hamman, Kaleb Carter and Cade Driskell – who were playing in their final game on their home field.

“That was a huge win heading into regionals,” Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. “The guys fought hard all night. When things didn’t go the way we planned, everyone kept battling and found a way to win. It was a crazy game all around. Credit to Paola

as they continued to battle from behind, just like we did.”

Through four innings, there wasn’t much drama to be had. Louisburg had 3-0 lead and the Panther bats hadn’t been able to touch Wildcat starter Alex Saad.

Paola eventually was able to break through in the top of the fifth when the Panthers exploded for six runs in the inning that was aided by a couple Wildcat errors. Down 6-3, the Wildcat bats got to work in their half of the inning.

Jackson Howard and Brody McGreer opened the inning with singles and Bristol Barbour was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Jack Anderson worked a walk to score Howard.



Junior Wyatt Holland connects on a pitch for a grand slam Wednesday against Paola.

Holland then came up to bat as a pinch-hitter, and on a 3-1 count, the Wildcat junior smacked the ball over the centerfield fence for the grand slam to give Louisburg the 8-6 lead.

“Wyatt did a great job of coming in, in a spot we needed and did his job really well,” Larson said. “He worked the count

well and got ahold of one. That was really great to see.”

With the Wildcats two outs away from victory, Paola struck again. The Panthers doubled, reached on an error and walked to load the bases. Paola then scored on a ground out and another a single to take the 9-8 lead.

Louisburg reliever Declan Battle got a strikeout to end the seventh and gave the Wildcats one final opportunity to get the win.

Anderson opened the bottom of the seventh by getting hit by a pitch and Holland worked a walk. Then after a strikeout, Battle reached on a fielder’s choice and the Wildcats were down to their final out.

Sophomore Luke Schultz came up in a big way for the Wildcats as he singled home Anderson to tie the game. The Louisburg freshman catcher walked to the plate with a chance to end it — and he did.

Napier, who was robbed of a home run by a Paola outfielder earlier in the game, cleared the fence this time on a home run to right field and the celebration ensued.



Louisburg senior Kaleb Carter makes a throw from his knees for an out Wednesday against Paola.

“Danny was hitting the ball well all night,” Larson said. “He had a really hard hit ball right at the third baseman and a home run robbed earlier in the game. He went with the pitch and hammered it to right field.”

McGreer and Jackson Kush led the Wildcat bats with a pair of hits, while Kush had a double. Battle also doubled and scored a pair of runs, while Anderson scored three times and had an RBI.

Saad and Battle competed to keep the Wildcats in it as the two combined to give up five earned runs, with the rest of the Panther runs coming on four Louisburg errors.

“I thought our pitching did well in game two,” Larson said. “We had a few mistakes in the field that need to get cleaned up, but Saad and Battle competed on the mound and that’s all you can ask for.”



Louisburg junior Declan Battle steals second base against Paola last week.

The Wildcats also got out to a good start in game one last Tuesday as they took a 2-0 lead into the sixth inning. Paola tied it with two in the sixth and then added another in the seven to take the lead.

Storms then rolled in and forced the postponement and the two teams picked up where the left off Wednesday. Paola struck for five runs in the seventh and handed Louisburg the 7-2 loss.

Battle led the Wildcat offense with four hits, including a double, while Napier and Barbour both had RBI doubles.

Senior Corbin Hamman pitched the first six innings for Louisburg and gave up five runs, but struck out five



Louisburg seniors (from left) Kaleb Carter, Cade Driskell, Corbin Hamman and Jackson Kush were all honored with their parents Wednesday on Senior Night.

Louisburg will now begin postseason play Tuesday in Atchison as the Wildcats are the No. 7 seed and will have a rematch against No. 10 Paola at 1 p.m. at Benedictine College in Atchison.

If the Wildcats advance, they will play the winner between No. 2 Atchison and No. 15 Eudora for the regional championship later that night.

“The guys are really excited for the postseason,” Larson said. “They know they can hang with anyone and it’s time to go see what happens. We always want to give ourselves a chance near the end and I think we’re playing our best ball heading into regionals. I’m excited to see what happens.”

Wildcats salvage doubleheader at Eudora with 15 runs in nightcap



Louisburg freshman Bristol Barbour looks to turn a double play after getting the out at third Tuesday at Eudora. The Wildcats lost the doubleheader opener, but rallied to take the second game, 15-0.

EUDORA – Last week's doubleheader at Eudora was quite the roller coaster for the Louisburg baseball team.

The Wildcats jumped out to a big lead in game one, only to see Eudora rally back to hand Louisburg an 11-10 loss. In the nightcap, the Wildcats took off from the opening pitch.

Louisburg used a 12-run second inning to pull away for a 15-0 victory Tuesday over the Cardinals to salvage a road split. The Wildcats are now 12-6 on the year heading into their final doubleheader of the season.

"We were definitely hoping for a sweep, but the guys answered well after the tough loss in game one," Louisburg coach Kade Larson said. "We hit really well all night and just had some costly mistakes that came back to bite us in the end. We will learn from this one and try to fix those mistakes moving forward."

In the nightcap, the Wildcats took advantage of a couple Eudora mistakes and walked eight times to keep themselves

active on the base paths.

Jack Anderson led the Louisburg bats with a pair of hits, to go along with 4 RBIs and senior Kaleb Carter finished with a hit and three runs driven in.

Brody McGreer added a pair of RBIs and two hits, while Jackson Howard also drove home two runs to go along with a hit and two walks.



Louisburg junior Nathaniel Lamm makes contact with a pitch Tuesday at Eudora.

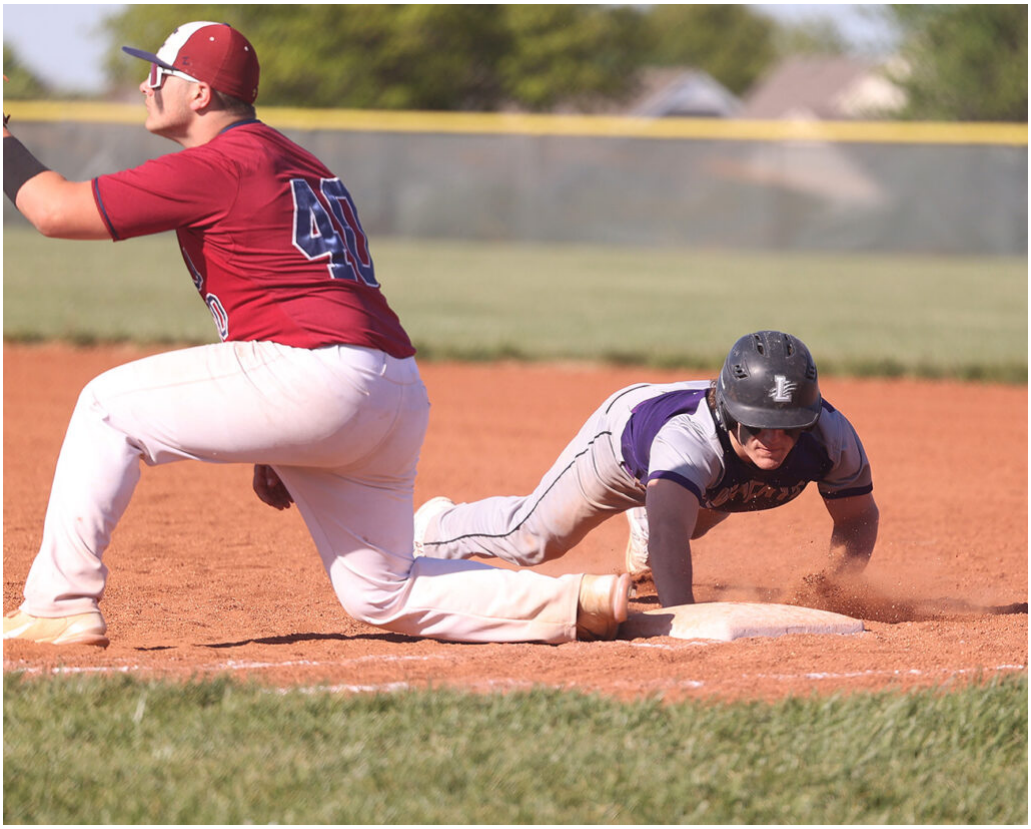
Danny Napier had a pair of hits and an RBI, while Corbin Hamman, who ran for Napier, scored three times. Luke Schultz and Wyatt Holland also had an RBI base hit.

Sophomore Alex Saad started the game for Louisburg and had no problems with the Cardinals. Saad didn’t allow a hit in the 3-inning game, worked around three walks and struck out five.

The Wildcats also got good starting pitching in the opener as Hamman, who was coming back from a minor injury, went 4 1/3 innings and gave up just two earned runs and struck out seven.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, Eudora took advantage of four Louisburg errors as nine of its 11 runs were unearned.

Louisburg took an 8-4 lead going into the bottom of the sixth inning, but the Cardinals answered with seven runs in the bottom of the frame to take an 11-7 advantage.



Louisburg junior Wyatt Holland dives safely back to first base Tuesday against Eudora.

The Wildcats scored two runs in the top of the seventh, but could get no closer.

Junior Declan Battle led the Wildcat bats from the leadoff spot as he finished with two hits and a run driven in. Freshman Bristol Barbour delivered a big hit with a 2-run triple to give Louisburg a 5-3 lead in the fifth inning.

Louisburg added on to its lead in the sixth thanks to back-to-back RBI doubles from Napier and Saad. Junior Nathaniel Lamm also finished with a pair of hits and 2 RBIs.

McGreer and Howard each added RBIs, while senior Jackson Kush scored a pair of runs and he also had a double.

The Wildcats will finish up the regular season with Senior Night this Tuesday as they host rival Paola for a doubleheader at Lewis-Young Park. Senior Night ceremonies will be held in between games. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.