

# Blue Caplinger selected as 2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year



Blue Caplinger made history in a few different ways for Louisburg High School during the 2018-19 season.

Caplinger, along with fellow LHS student Alyse Moore, became the first Wildcat athlete in recent memory – if ever – to participate in two sports during the same season. All that led up to what was a spectacular finish to his senior year.

Caplinger helped the 4x400-meter relay to a state championship in late May, which was the school's first individual track title since 2015. When all was said and done, Caplinger lettered in four sports this past year.

These are just a couple of the reasons why Caplinger was chosen as the 2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.

The award, which is in its second year, is to recognize an outstanding LHS student athlete. Louisburg Sports Zone asked the head coaches at LHS to submit nominations and those nominations were then organized and submitted back to the coaches for a vote.

The coaches then submitted their top three choices and the number of votes were added up, which decided the winner.

Caplinger was one of the leaders of the Wildcat football team that reeled off 10 straight wins to start the season and captured a regional championship before falling to eventual state champion Bishop Miege.

He was an All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball as he earned first team defensive honors from the safety spot with 31 tackles, two fumble recoveries and an interception.



**Blue Caplinger poses for picture with his coaches (from left), boys track coach Andy Wright, head football coach Robert Ebenstein and baseball coach Joel McGhee. Not pictured is wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird.**

Caplinger played a couple different positions offensively and earned second team all-league honors as a multi-purpose player. He had 310 yards rushing and four touchdowns to go

along 234 yards receiving and two more scores.

He was also the lead blocker on a lot of the big runs that teammate Austin Moore – who was a first-team all-league and all-state running back – had during the season.

“Blue was the most all-purpose player we had,” Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein said. “He was the ideal teammate who put the team first all the time. He always did anything that was asked of him. He was a tough competitor and a great all-around person.”

During the wrestling season, Caplinger was a state-ranked wrestler at 170 pounds for much of the year. He ended his season with a team-high 33-5 record and was a regional champion.

At the Class 4A state tournament, Caplinger finished one win shy of his first state medal. In all, Caplinger finished with a team high in wins and also holds the school record for most career reversals (72) and most career escapes (86). He ended his Wildcat career with a 111-57 record.

“Anyone who knows Blue understands what a great young man he is,” Louisburg wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Blue embodies so much about what wrestling is all about. I wanted him to get that state medal so badly, and he came so close not once, but twice. With these sorts of setbacks, Blue has demonstrated that he’s gained the resilience to be a champion in life.”

In the spring, Caplinger became a dual-sport athlete as he participated in both baseball and track and field.

Although his focus was on track, Caplinger helped out the Wildcat baseball team as a pinch-runner as he stole five bases

in eight games.

However, Caplinger did a lot of his damage on the track as he was one of the Wildcats' top sprinters. He joined Justin Collins, Ben Wiedenmann and Chris Williams to win the Class 4A state title in the 4×400-meter relay.

Caplinger, along with Charlie Koontz, Wiedenmann and Collins, also medaled fifth at state in the 4×100 relay. Both relays broke school records this past season in the Frontier League and regional meets.

Caplinger will continue his athletic career this fall as he plans to attend Benedictine College on a football scholarship.

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## **Wildcat baseball awarded four spots on all-league team**



Louisburg senior Beckett Rasmussen was one of four Wildcat players to recently earn honorable mention All-Frontier League honors.

It may not have been the season the Louisburg High School baseball team had hoped for as the Wildcats finished the year with five wins, but the Frontier League coaches saw a lot of talent from

the Louisburg squad.

The All-Frontier League teams were recently released and the Wildcats found four members of the team included among the league's best.

Seniors Beckett Rasmussen, Michael Rogers, junior Madden Rutherford and freshman Brandon Doles were all selected to the honorable mention team for their efforts this past season.

"We were represented well in a league that expanded this season and that is filled with talented athletes," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "The Frontier League is extremely competitive and produces some of the top athletes in the state every season. The competitiveness of the league, partnered with the addition of the new teams, makes an All-Frontier League selection an even greater achievement."

Rutherford was among the team's top offensive threats as he finished the season with a .373 average and had 25 hits, seven of which were doubles and 13 RBIs. He also struck out just six times in 74 plate appearances and he was named as a utility player on the honorable mention team.

"Madden had another solid year for us this season as he played a number of positions this season," McGhee said. "He is an extremely versatile

and competitive athlete. He had lot of hard hit balls this year, and led the team in RBIs, and did a great job getting on base and plating runs. Several of his hardest hits balls went to the deepest part of the park or right at a fielder.

“Madden was limited in his pitching this season, but he is pitcher that teams do not want to face. He had very good games in our win over Parsons and in our walk-off loss to Anderson County.”



**Junior Madden Rutherford was selected as an honorable mention all-league utility player.**

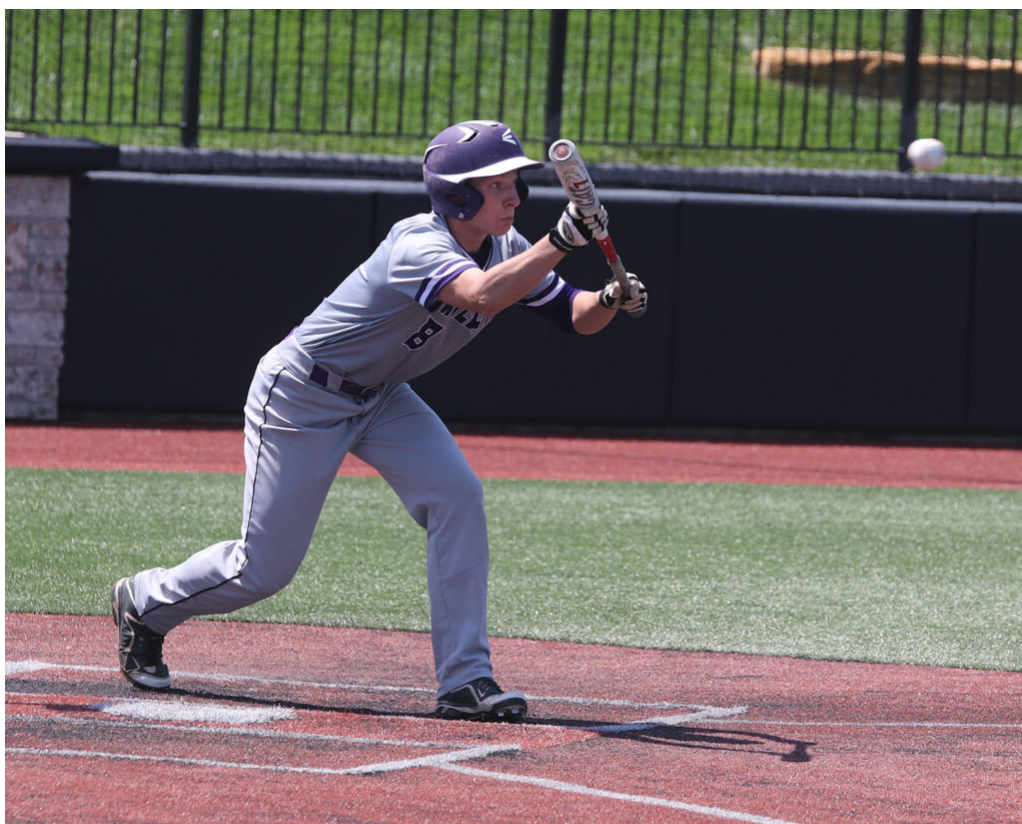
Rasmussen was another Wildcat who provided Louisburg with some big moments this season as he played both the outfield and catcher spot.

Although he made the all-league team as an outfielder, Rasmussen also fared well behind the plate.

Offensively, he ended the year with a .333 average with 23 hits, six doubles and 11 RBIs at the top of the Wildcat lineup.

“Beckett had a great year this year,” McGhee said. ‘He played in the outfield and caught a majority of our games. He batted in the two hole, and had a great on base percentage. He had a great year at the plate and is a team first guy. He did a great job behind the plate this year and in the outfield.

“Beckett was not only a leader on the field, but also in the classroom and in the many other organizations that he has been a part of throughout his high school career.”



**Senior Michael Rogers was an honorable mention selection as an infielder for Louisburg.**

Rogers was the Wildcats’ starting second baseman all season as

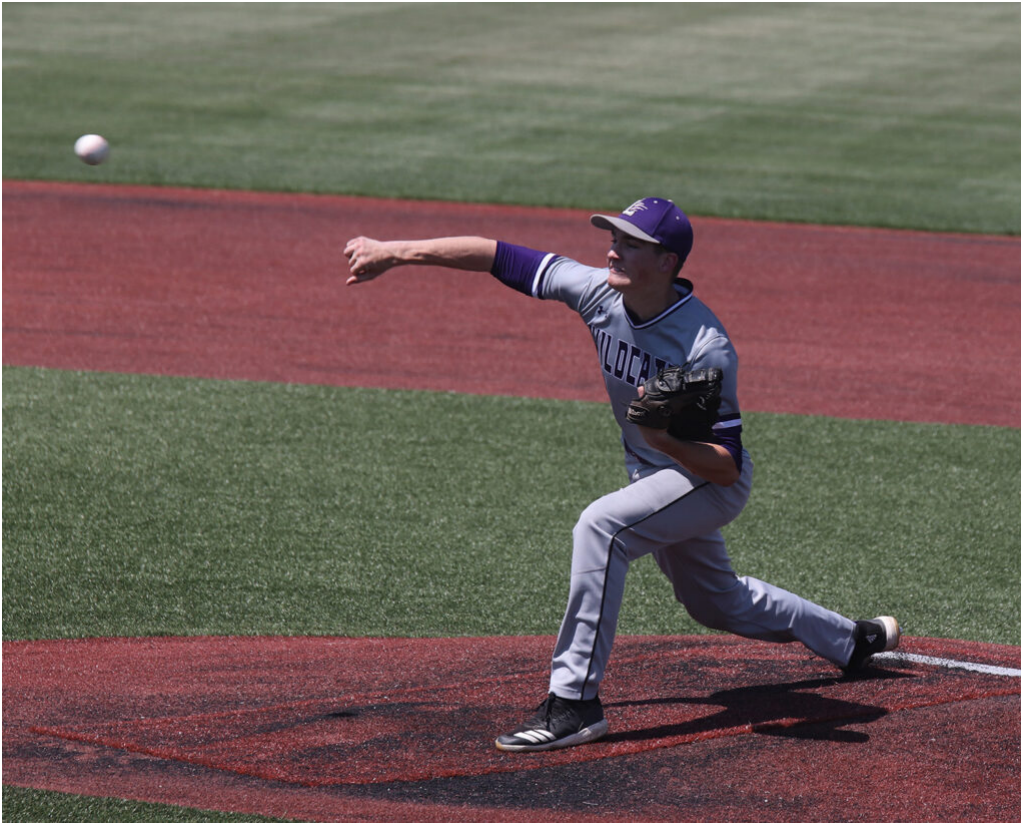
he earned his all-league infield spot with solid defense and timely hitting.

Rogers hit .304 on the season to go along with 17 hits and had just seven errors in the team's 22 games.

"Michael had a great senior season," McGhee said. "He started every game for us at second base and put forth great effort in everything he did. Rogers hustled after every ball hit his way, busted it on the base path, and worked extremely hard at all times. Mike did a great job throughout the season getting on base and scoring runs. He is a great example to his teammates and was someone we could always rely on."

As a freshman, Doles put together a solid first season for the Wildcats as he also earned a spot on the all-league infield. He finished his first season for Louisburg with a .356 batting average and had 16 hits and 8 RBIs. He also had just five errors on defense, while also serving as one of the Wildcats' starting pitchers.





**Freshman Brandon Doles earned honorable mention honors as an infielder.**

“Brandon had a great freshmen year,” McGhee said. “He came in and made an impact on the mound and at the plate. He drove in runs consistently and was a regular on the base path. He showed great hustle, and made some very heads up reads to pick up a base. Brandon challenged hitters on the mound and was very efficient in his pitching. He allowed the defense to support him, and didn’t give up many walks. We are looking to see some great things from Brandon over the next few years.”

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL**

### **FIRST TEAM**

PITCHER – Bear Gardner, Paola,

junior; Cooper Cunningham, Tonganoxie, junior

CATCHER – Austin Fisher,  
Tonganoxie, senior

INFIELD – Connor Quick, Baldwin,  
junior; Chase Terrell, Bonner Springs, senior; Chad Bones,  
Ottawa, senior;  
Brandon Walker, Piper, senior

OUTFIELD – Diadrien Aho, Ottawa,  
junior; Caden Marcum, Paola, freshman; Ethan Basler,  
Tonganoxie, senior

UTILITY – Ty Bennett, Baldwin,  
senior

## **SECOND TEAM**

PITCHER – Connor Quick, Baldwin,  
junior; Garrett Trimmer, Paola, senior

CATCHER – Corbyn Meyers, Spring  
Hill, junior

INFIELD – Cameron Reynolds,  
Ottawa, senior; Creigh Markovich, Paola, junior; Tyson  
Cheathman, Spring Hill,  
senior; Gehrig Goldbeck, Tonganoxie, freshman

OUTFIELD – Korbin Hiebert, Eudora,  
senior; Brendyn Bard, Piper, junior; Zade Barker, Spring Hill,  
junior

UTILITY – Klayton Coffman, Bonner  
Springs, senior

## **HONORABLE MENTION**

PITCHER – Chase Terrell, Bonner  
Springs, senior; Korbin Hiebert, Eudora, senior; Jackson

Murphy, Ottawa,  
junior; Garrett Williams, Paola, sophomore

UTILITY – Jayden Pierce, Eudora,  
senior; Madden Rutherford, Louisburg, junior; Colby Stewart,  
Spring Hill,  
junior

INFIELD – Hunter Peacock, Baldwin,  
junior; Jayden Pierce, Eudora, senior; Brandon Doles,  
Louisburg, freshman;  
Michael Rogers, Louisburg, senior; Nate Golubski, Piper,  
sophomore

OUTFIELD – Beckett Rasmussen,  
Louisburg, senior; Garrett Williams, Paola, sophomore; Jake  
Scoma, Spring Hill,  
senior

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## **2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Year nominees**



For the past three years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements and to highlight the athletes.

For the second straight 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. In the next week, I will announce this year’s recipients.

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

## **FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES**



## **CARSON BUFFINGTON – SENIOR – BASKETBALL, SOCCER, VOLLEYBALL**

Carson was a 3-time letter winner in her senior season and was named as a team captain in volleyball, basketball and soccer.

In volleyball, Buffington earned second team All-Frontier League honors as she helped lead the Lady Cats to a Class 4A state runner-up performance. She also moved from her starting setter position to the outside hitter spot and had a lot of success for the Lady Cats as she tallied 130 kills in her new position. With all that success, Buffington was also selected to the Greater Kansas City Volleyball Coaches Association Senior All-Star Match.

Buffington also wrapped up a strong career for the Louisburg basketball team as she averaged eight points and seven rebounds to go along with three steals a contest. She was named as a Frontier League honorable mention this past season, and she also was selected as an all-state honorable mention.

In girls soccer, Buffington was the starting goalie for Louisburg in all 20 games. She posted 13 shutouts, which is a school record and had a .952 goals against average, which is also a school record. Buffington had 90 saves on the season that ended as a Class 4-1A state runner up for the second consecutive year. For her efforts, she was also selected second team All-Frontier League. Buffington was also named first team all-state goalie and was named Goalkeeper of the Year.



## **ANNA DIXON – SENIOR – VOLLEYBALL**

Anna wrapped up her fourth volleyball season as a varsity starter for the Lady Cats and guided Louisburg to its second consecutive Class 4A-state runner-up finish.

Dixon, who is currently with the Kansas State volleyball team, ended her senior season with 584 kills and had a hitting percentage of .260. She also added 325 digs, 50 aces and 42 blocks as she played all six rotations. With those lofty numbers, Dixon earned several big time honors in her final season.

She was selected as an All-Frontier League first team player and was also named to the 4A State All-Tournament Team. Those honors continued as she was named the Kansas Volleyball Coaches Association Class 4A Player of the Year and earned a spot on KVA All-State First Team.

Following the season, Dixon was also named as an Under-Armour All-American also earned MaxPreps/American Volleyball Coaches Association Player of the Week honors.



## **ALYSE MOORE – SOPHOMORE – BASKETBALL, SOFTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD**

Alyse is a 3-sport varsity letter-winner this past year as she earned letters for the basketball, softball and track and field teams. This past spring season, Moore went to state in two different sports and became the first Wildcat athlete in recent memory to do so.

In her first season in track and field, Moore threw the javelin for the Lady Cats and went on to become regional champion as she

eclipsed her personal best throw by almost 25 feet in just her third competition of the season. The following week, she medaled fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a personal best throw of 131 feet and 9 inches.

Moore was also the starting shortstop for the Lady Cats as she helped Louisburg to its first regional championship since 2014.

During the basketball season, Moore was a starter for the Lady Cats and averaged six points, five rebounds and three steals a game.



### **TRINITY MOORE – JUNIOR – CROSS COUNTRY, SOCCER**

Trinity is 2-sport letter-winner for Louisburg this past year as she had state performances in both cross country and soccer.

During the fall, Moore was the top runner on the Louisburg



girls cross country team as she helped the Lady Cats to a regional runner-up finish and qualified for state as a team for the first time in school history. Moore medaled fourth at the Class 4A state meet in Wamego and currently holds the school record for the fastest time in program history. She also earned first-team All-Frontier League honors for her third place finish at the league meet.

In soccer, Moore was a starter on the Wildcat team that recently finished as the Class 4-1A state runner-up for the second consecutive year. At the midfield spot, she finished the season with 12 goals and six assists and was also named to the All-Frontier League first team.



**DELANEY WRIGHT – FRESHMAN – BASKETBALL, CROSS**

## **COUNTRY, TRACK AND FIELD**

Delaney is a 3-sport letter-winner as she took part in cross country, basketball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of those.

Wright found most of her success in track and field as she earned four medals at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita this past month. She medaled in the long jump, 400-meter-dash, 200-meter dash and as a member of the 4×400-relay.

During the regional meet, Wright broke two school records (long jump, 400 dash) and earned a regional and Frontier League title in the long jump. She also earned a medal in the long jump at the Kansas Relays earlier in the season.

In cross country, Wright was a member of the Louisburg team that finished as a Class 4A regional runner-up and qualified for the state meet as a team for the first time in school history. In basketball, Wright saw playing time at the varsity level as a freshman at different points throughout the season.

## **MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES**



## **BLUE CAPLINGER – SENIOR – BASEBALL, FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING**

Blue is a 4-sport letter-winner in football, wrestling, baseball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of the sports.

In football, Caplinger was an All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball as he was named to the first team defense as a defensive back and second team offense as a multi-purpose player. On defense, Caplinger, who helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship, had 31 tackles from the safety spot and also had two tackles for a loss, two fumble

recoveries and an interception. Offensively, he had 544 total yards and six touchdowns.

On the wrestling mat, Caplinger was a regional champion at 170 pounds and finished his season with a 33-5 record. The Louisburg senior fell one match short of state medal with a 2-2 record at the Class 4A state tournament. He currently holds the school record for most career reversals (72) and most career escapes (86). Following the season, he was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

Caplinger split time between baseball and track and field in the spring. Although he spent time as a reserve and pinch-runner on the baseball team, Caplinger found a lot of success on the track.

He qualified for state as a member of two relays. Caplinger was a member of the 4×400 relay team that won the Class 4A state championship in 3 minutes and 25 seconds. Caplinger also helped the 4×100 relay to a fifth place finish and went on to garner two state medals.

Caplinger will join the Benedictine football team this fall.



## **AUSTIN MOORE – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING**

Austin is a 3-sport letter winner in football, wrestling and track and field and was among the state's best in two of the sports.

Moore thrived on the football field for the Wildcats as he helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship. Moore was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and was the league's leading vote-getter. He went on to rack up all-state awards as the Louisburg senior earned Class 4A first team all-state honors as a running back from the Topeka Capital-Journal and the Kansas Football Coaches Association. Moore was also named as a Class 4A first team all-state linebacker from the Wichita Eagle.

When the season was all said and done, Moore tallied 1,554 total yards from the running back spot, including 1,428 yards on the ground, and had 21 touchdowns before he broke his collarbone during the regional championship game.

With those numbers, he was named the Kansas Small Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity and was All-Purpose Player of the Year by Kpreps.com. Earlier this year, Moore was also named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl roster.

On the wrestling mat, Moore missed more than half of the season with his broken collarbone, but came back in a big way. Moore won his first 14 matches when coming back at 220 pounds, which included a regional championship. He went on to earn his first state medal as he finished fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a 3-2 record. He was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

During the spring, he was a member of the Louisburg track and field team and threw the javelin for the Wildcats. He was also on the throwers relay that ranked Top 5 nationally at one point in the season.

Moore will join the Kansas State football team this fall.



## **KIEFER TUCKER – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WEIGHTLIFTING**

Kiefer is a 2-sport letter winner in football and track and field and also went to state competition in two activities.

Tucker was a presence on the line of scrimmage for the Louisburg football team as he was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and helped the Wildcats to a 10-1 record and a regional championship.

The Louisburg senior was among on the leaders on the offensive line as he helped pave the way for more than 3,500 yards of total offense. On defense, Tucker recorded 55 tackles from the defensive end spot, including three tackles for a loss, three forced fumbles, a fumble recovery and a sack. Those numbers helped earn him honorable mention all-

state honors and was also named to the all-state team by the Kansas Football Coaches Association.

The honors kept coming for Tucker as he was recently selected to participate in the Kansas Shrine Bowl.

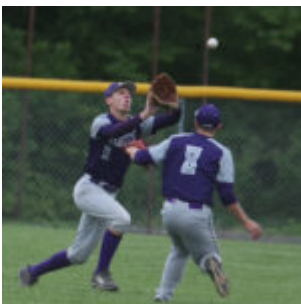
During the winter, Tucker was a member of the Louisburg powerlifting team and certainly made his mark there as well. Tucker won the Class 4A state championship in the 220-pound class and broke a 24-year-old record in the bench press with a lift of 375 pounds.

In track and field, Tucker qualified for state for the first time in the discus. He finished as a regional runner-up and went on to take ninth at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita, just one spot away from earning a state medal.

Tucker will join the Emporia State football team this fall.

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## **Wildcats split with rival Paola on Senior Night**



Louisburg senior Beckett Rasmussen runs in from right field to make the catch Thursday against Paola on Senior Night at Lewis-Young Park.



It was a busy couple days for the Louisburg baseball team last week as it hosted Paola and Eudora and the Wildcats got a big win against their rival on Senior Night.

After Louisburg lost the doubleheader opener, 15-6, to Paola on Thursday at Lewis-Young Park, the Wildcats made sure they didn't end their Senior Night on a sour note. Louisburg held off a late Paola rally to take the nightcap, 8-7.

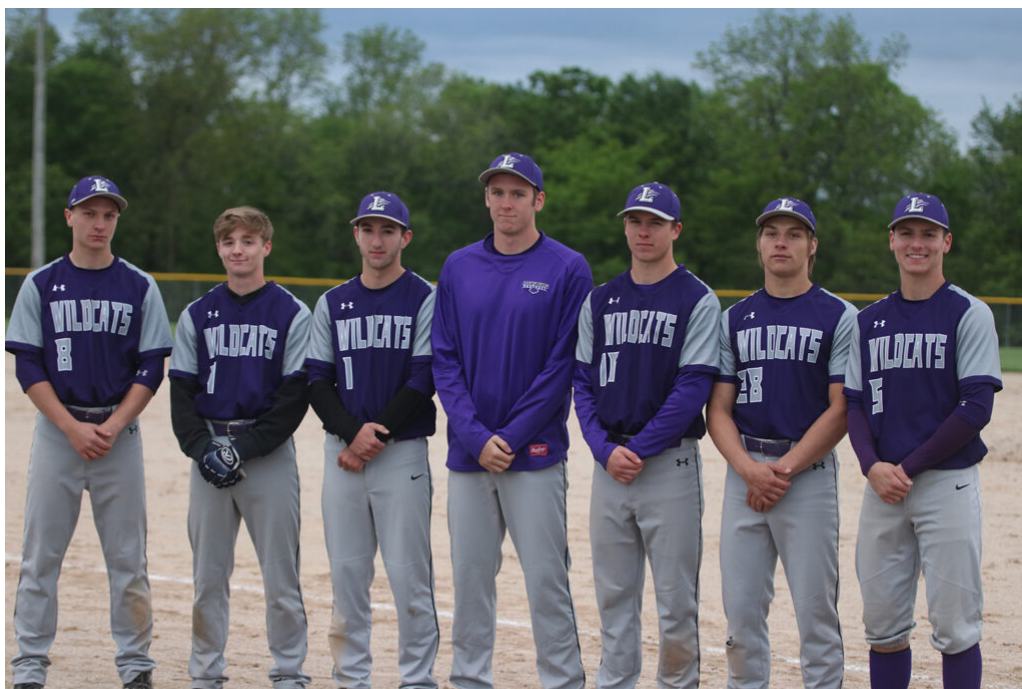
Senior Logan McClellan pitched the final 1-plus innings to get the save, including a strikeout with the go-ahead runners on base to secure the win. Fellow senior Jakob Krause got the win as he gave no earned runs in almost four innings of work.

Paola took a 2-0 lead after the first inning, but the Wildcats struck back as they scored a run in the second and six in the third to take a 7-2 advantage. Each team scored a run in the fifth, but Paola scored three in the sixth to cut into the Wildcat lead.

Madden Rutherford had a big game offensively for the Wildcats as he reached base in all four at-bats. The Louisburg junior recorded three singles, 2 RBIs and a walk to help ignite the Wildcat offense.

Freshman Matt Madison had two-run single in the win and McClellan also had two hits and an RBI for the Wildcats. Krause finished with an RBI single, while Andrew Krause, Brandon Doles and Michael Rogers also had a hit for Louisburg.

It was a good way to end what was a memorable night as seven Wildcat seniors were honored in-between games during a Senior Night ceremony. Beckett Rasmussen, Logan McClellan, Jakob Krause, Chase Norton, Noah Larson, Michael Rogers and Blue Caplinger were all recognized for their time with the Wildcat program.



**Louisburg seniors (from left) Michael Rogers, Chase Norton, Logan McClellan, Noah Larson, Jakob Krause, Blue Caplinger and Beckett Rasmussen were honored in-between games Thursday on Senior Night.**

In the opener, the Wildcats found themselves down early to Paola. The Panthers scored eight runs in the first inning and never looked back as they took a 12-1 lead going into the bottom of the sixth inning.

Louisburg answered with five runs in the sixth to keep the game going, but the Panthers scored three more times in the seventh to seal the win. Paola pounded out 15 runs on

16 hits to get the split of Louisburg.

The Wildcats did have 10 hits of their own, but had a tough time getting those into runs. Andrew Krause led the Louisburg attack with three hits and an RBI and Rogers had a two-run single for the Wildcats.

McClellan had a pair of hits, including a double, and an RBI for Louisburg. Madison also finished with two hits for Louisburg, while Rasmussen had an RBI single and Rutherford finished with a base hit.

## **EUDORA EDGES LOUISBURG IN REGULAR SEASON FINALE**

Louisburg hosted Eudora in a make-up game Friday at Lewis-Young Park in what was its final regular season contest.

The Wildcats were able to outhit the Cardinals, but came up short in the run department as they fell 5-2 to Eudora.

A pair of freshman pitchers helped keep the game close for Louisburg as Brandon Doles pitched the first four innings and gave up just two earned runs and struck out three. Maverick Rockers threw the final three frames and gave up one earned run and struck out a batter.

Sophomore Matt Madison led the Wildcat offense with three hits, including a double and an RBI. Madden Rutherford and Noah Larson each had two hits each, while Doles, Rockers and Logan McClellan had a single each.

The game was tied at 1-all going into the top of the fourth inning, but Eudora struck for two runs and then added insurance runs in the sixth and seventh innings to seal the win.

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## **Wildcats take two from Osawatomie for first sweep of season**



Louisburg junior Madden Rutherford follows through on a base hit during a game earlier this season. The Wildcats swept Osawatomie on Friday, 6-1 and 18-2.

OSAWATOMIE – It has been a frustrating year at times for the Louisburg baseball team and it didn't help matters Thursday when they lost a pair of games to Anderson County.

However, the Wildcats got a little pick-me-up Friday when they traveled to Osawatomie for a doubleheader. It was exactly what Louisburg was looking for.

The Wildcats recorded up their first sweep of the season as they rolled the Trojans in Osawatomie, 6-1 and 18-2, and it also snapped a long losing streak for Louisburg in the process.

“Getting the sweep was needed,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “We had two tough games with Anderson County on Thursday that we came up short in and being able to turn around the next day and pick up two wins was huge. We did a much better job taking care of the baseball and did not have mistakes that led to extra outs and free bases. This was a much-needed sweep and we made the improvements in our fielding that we needed to see.”

Louisburg senior Jakob Krause took care of the Osawatomie lineup as he pitched six innings and gave up one run on four hits and struck out six batters to get the win. Freshman Kolby Kattau had a scoreless seventh inning on just five pitches.

The Wildcats struck for four runs in the top of the second inning and struck for two more in the fifth to help seal the win against the Trojans.

“Jakob did a great job filling up the zone and challenged hitters,” McGhee said. “He was able to get lead-off outs and

in most innings got the first two batters out. He did not give up any walks, and made their hitters put the ball in play.”

To start the second inning, freshman Brandon Doles scored on a passed ball and then Krause helped himself with a 2-run single that scored A.J. Drew and Michael Rogers. Senior Beckett Rasmussen, who had Louisburg’s lone extra base hit, doubled home Krause to make it a four-run game.

Senior Noah Larson added an RBI single in the fifth that scored Blue Caplinger, and Andrew Krause singled home Larson to complete the Louisburg inning.

In the nightcap, it was Rasmussen’s bat that led the charge for the Wildcats. The Louisburg senior finished with three hits and 5 RBIs. He also walked, doubled and scored three runs in a game where all the Wildcats got involved in one way or another.

“Beckett had a great night,” McGhee said. “He saw a lot of pitches, which led to quality at-bats. He had multiple extra base hits that drove in runs and he showed great hustle. He found ways to get on base and get across the plate.

“For the night we had a lot of quality at-bats. We had guys seeing more pitches that led to positive outcomes.”

Several of Rasmussen’s teammates had good showings as well. Junior Madden Rutherford had three hits, including a double, and 3 RBIs, while sophomore Matt Madison had a pair of hits and 3 RBIs.

Jakob Krause had two hits with a double, two walks and scored three runs to go along with 2 RBIs. Senior Logan McClellan and freshman Maverick Rockers also finished with two hits and Larson had an RBI double.

McClellan also gave the Wildcats a strong pitching performance as he went four innings and gave up no earned runs and struck out five. Rockers then came in for relief in a scoreless fifth inning.

“Logan threw well also,” McGhee said. “He had some long periods between throwing several times, but came in and threw strikes. He also had multiple innings in which he got the lead-off or first two batters out.

“Our most efficient innings came from Kolby Kattau and Maverick Rockers. Both came in to close out the games and threw very well. They filled the zone and both threw under 10 pitches to finish up the game.”

The Wildcats (3-14) opened with a nine-run first inning, which was more than enough to get the sweep. Louisburg added six runs in the fourth and three more in the fifth to compete the run-rule win.

Louisburg will try and keep its winning streak going Thursday when it travels to Eudora for one game.

## Wildcats lose two to Anderson County

It was a tough night for the Louisburg baseball team Thursday in Garnett as the Wildcats lost a pair of games, including a 4-3 loss that ended in walk-off fashion.

The Wildcats then committed five errors in the nightcap that led to a 9-4 loss to the Bulldogs.

Louisburg got a good start from junior Madden Rutherford who pitched a complete game in the loss and gave up three earned runs on 10 hits and struck out nine batters.

The Wildcats held a 3-2 lead going into the bottom of the seventh, but the Bulldogs loaded the bases with two outs and then singled home two runs to steal the win from Louisburg.

“Anderson County was tough,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “We got a lead in the first inning of game one, and saw it disappear after several mistakes were made in the bottom of the inning. We battled back to retake the lead. Madden was throwing very well and was challenging the hitters. He filled the strike zone and had multiple innings with lead-off outs, first two batters out, and two 1-2-3 innings.

“Anderson County had some timely hits in the final inning, and ended with a walk-off single down the right field line, that just caught the foul line to win the game. Everyone wanted that game.”

Freshman Brandon Doles and senior Logan McClellan each had RBI hits in the loss for Louisburg and senior Michael Rogers finished with two hits to lead the Wildcats.



In the nightcap, Louisburg struck first with four runs in the first inning, but errors allowed the Bulldogs to score three in their half of the first. Anderson County followed with two runs in the third, fifth and sixth innings to complete the sweep.

Rutherford had a big day at the plate with three hits and a run scored, while Doles had a two-run single and Kolby Kattau had an RBI double. Senior Chase Norton also added a double.

“Game two started off well as we picked up a four run lead, but then struggled to take care of the ball and Anderson County again came up with hits and took advantage of our mistakes,” McGhee said. “Brandon Doles and Andrew Krause threw well, but we were unable to overcome our errors in the field and were unable to get things rolling on offense after the first inning.”

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## **Wildcats pick up first win with split of Bonner Springs**



**Louisburg junior Madden Rutherford tags out a Bonner Springs runner Tuesday during the Wildcats' game at Lewis-Young Park.**

It has been a rough stretch to start the season for the Louisburg baseball team.

The Wildcats have not been at full strength since their opener and have had a difficult schedule to begin the year. All that led to eight straight losses and Louisburg was looking for its first win going into Tuesday's doubleheader with Bonner Springs.

Louisburg is winless no more as the Wildcats defeated the Braves 8-6 in the first game, and although they lost the nightcap 11-1, it was good to get the monkey off their back.

"Getting the first win was big," Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. "It was much needed. We've been down several players over the past week, and finally had our most experienced guys back. Our younger players have done a great job competing against the more experienced lineups of Baldwin, Spring Hill and Wellsville over the past six games."

One of those younger players was freshman Brandon Doles who came up big for the Wildcats late in the first game. With the game tied in the bottom of the fourth inning, Doles singled home senior Noah Larson to give Louisburg a 7-6 lead.

Doles then came on in relief to get his first varsity win as he

pitched 3 1/3 scoreless innings and gave up just one hit and struck out a batter.

“Brandon has done an outstanding job this season,” McGhee said. “He has shown quality stuff on the mound each time he has thrown and has a great approach at the plate. He is patient and takes advantage of the opportunities that he has had. He hasn’t given up many walks and challenges hitters to put the ball in play. Brandon has been on a roll to start the season.”

Both teams opened the game with a run in the first inning, and after Louisburg was down 2-1 in the bottom of the second, the Wildcats took the lead with three runs in the frame.

Michael Rogers tied the game with an RBI single that scored pinch runner Blue Caplinger and then Logan McClellan singled to score Rogers to give the Wildcats the lead. Madden Rutherford then walked with the bases loaded to put Louisburg up 4-2.



**Senior Blue Caplinger steals second base Tuesday and would later score a run in the Wildcats' win over Bonner Springs.**

Louisburg (1-9) responded with two more in the third when McClellan doubled to score Caplinger and Rogers scored on a wild pitch to give the Wildcats a 6-3 advantage.

Bonner Springs tied the game at 6-all with three runs in the fourth, but Doles' RBI single put Louisburg up one and then got an insurance run when Beckett Rasmussen scored on an error in the sixth.

"We did a great job battling in the game," McGhee said. "We combined efforts on the mound and had some great at-bats. Our hitters were patient at the plate and worked counts to their advantage. We had some hard hit balls that drove in runs when we needed them."

Seniors Jakob Krause, Rasmussen and McClellan each had two hits to lead the Wildcats and all three had a double. Rutherford

and McClellan each finished the day with 2 RBIs.

The nightcap didn't go as well for the Wildcats as Bonner Springs scored eight runs in the final two innings as the Braves turned a 3-1 game into an 11-1 run-rule win in the sixth inning.

Louisburg hurt itself defensively with six errors and the Braves took advantage. Offensively, the Wildcats recorded just three hits on singles from Rasmussen, Garrett Harding and Andrew Krause.

"In the second game we had several errors to start the game that allowed Bonner to get an early lead," McGhee said. "We had opportunities throughout the game, but were unable to capitalize. At one point we had bases loaded with no outs, and were unable to score a run.

"The biggest impact on the game were the 'freebies' that we gave up, extra bases on misplayed balls, walks, and errors that kept innings going. Bonner did a great job taking advantage of our mistakes."

Louisburg will return home today when it hosts Tonganoxie for single game. First pitch is set for 6 p.m.

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# Wildcats fall to Wellsville in home opener



Louisburg freshman shortstop Maverick Rockers tries to turn a double play Thursday during the Wildcats' home opener against Wellsville.

The Louisburg baseball team had hoped a change of scenery might turn around their recent string of bad luck.

Louisburg hosted Wellsville on Thursday in its home opener after playing six consecutive games on the road. Unfortunately for the Wildcats, they weren't able to turn it around.

The Wildcats are still looking for their first win of the season after a pair of 5-0 and 7-3 losses to the Eagles at Lewis-Young Park. Louisburg was also missing a couple starters due to a class trip, which made a young team even younger.

Wellsville took a two-run lead in the opener and never looked back and the Eagles had a perfect going until the sixth inning when junior Kaden Oehlert broke it up with a single. Kolby Kattau, a freshman, added another single later for the Wildcats' only two hits.

Freshman Maverick Rockers provided the Wildcats with a quality start as he gave up three earned runs on five hits and struck out two over five innings.

In the nightcap, the Wildcats had a 2-1 lead going into the fifth inning after an RBI single from Kattau scored Michael Rogers in the third. A.J. Drew then tripled in the fourth inning and scored on a wild pitch to give the Wildcats the lead.

Wellsville then answered with three runs in the fifth and three more in the seventh to secure the win.

Louisburg scored another run in the fifth when Oehlert scored on a Wellsville error, but the Wildcats could get no closer.

The Wildcats (0-8) were able to pound out 11 hits, but stranded several of those runners. Five errors also cost the Wildcats.

Freshman Brandon Doles led the Wildcat bats with three hits, while Andrew Krause and Kattau each finished with two.

Junior Garrett Harding provided the Wildcats with a strong start as he didn't allow an earned run in his four innings of work, gave up two hits and struck out two. Krause gave up two earned runs in three innings of relief and struck out four.

Louisburg will try for that first win tonight when it hosts Bonner Springs in a doubleheader at Lewis-Young Park.

First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

## **LOUISBURG DROPS TWO GAMES TO SPRING HILL**

The Louisburg baseball team continued its long road schedule on April 2 when the Wildcats traveled to Spring Hill for a Frontier League doubleheader.

Although the Wildcats put up a fight in both games, they fell to the Broncos, 5-2 and 4-2.

The Wildcats got good starting pitching in the opener as Andrew Krause and Brandon Doles combined to allow just three earned runs in nearly six innings and gave up nine hits.

Offensively, the Wildcats just couldn't get much going. Junior Madden Rutherford finished with a pair of RBI doubles to lead the Louisburg offense, while Beckett Rasmussen and A.J. Drew also had two hits.

Spring Hill jumped out to a 4-0 lead after four innings and never looked back.

In the nightcap, the Wildcat offense racked up 10 hits, but couldn't the big one when they needed it. Kolby Kattau had the lone extra base hit with a double and finished with two hits for the day.

Doles and Krause also had two hits each to help the Louisburg cause and Doles drove home the Wildcats' other run.



Logan McClellan, Maverick Rockers and Drew combined to throw six innings as they gave up three earned runs on just five hits.

Louisburg held a 2-1 lead going into the bottom of the fourth inning, but the Broncos scored two in the frame and another in the sixth to get the win.

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## **Wildcats fall short in doubleheader at Baldwin**



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

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

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

Although Louisburg still fell in the second game, 5-4, the Wildcats took a lot of positives

from a contest that provided strong pitching and timely hitting.

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

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

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

Logan McClellan and Andrew Krause led the Wildcat offense with two hits each and Madden Rutherford had the lone extra base hit with a double.

Chase Norton and A.J. Drew each added a single in the loss

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

“Logan did a great job throwing strikes,” McGhee said. “He allowed his defense to work for him and pumped from the start of the game. He provided some solid innings and then when to the

outfield and threw a runner out that was headed to second. Not much more that we can ask for defensively.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

out great  
effort.”

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

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## **Piper sweeps Wildcat baseball in opener**



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

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

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

but seal the win.

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

Senior Noah Larson led the Wildcats with a single and double and junior Garrett Harding had a hit and 3 RBIs in the loss. Rutherford and seniors Beckett Rasmussen and Michael Rogers also had hits for Louisburg, while senior Jakob Krause and Rutherford each scored a pair of runs.

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

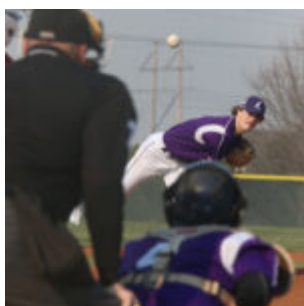
The Piper bats were just too much for the Wildcats as the Pirates scored 11 runs in the next three frames to complete the sweep of Louisburg.

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

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

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# Wildcat baseball ready to take step forward this season



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

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

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

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

“Having this group back with another year of experience under their belt is great,” Louisburg coach Joel McGhee said. “Many had good seasons last year and are looking to improve on where they were a season ago. The

experience will help us offensively and defensively. We have some versatile guys that can help us in multiple positions. They are a hard working group that is passionate about the game.”

The Wildcats return a pair of All-Frontier League players from last season, including the team’s No. 1 starter, junior Madden Rutherford.

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

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



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

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

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

Rutherford, senior Logan McClellan and Rasmussen will man the shortstop



position, while

Harding, Andrew Krause or Rutherford will play third depending on pitching matchups.

Jakob

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

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

On the mound, Rutherford will look to lead a veteran staff that

includes Jakob Krause, Harding, McClellan and Andrew Krause. The Wildcats may also look to some younger arms to contribute as well in junior Kaden Oehlert and sophomores Trevin Lohse and A.J. Drew.

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



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

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

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

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

reps on the field has us all a bit on edge.”

Louisburg opens its season at 4:30 p.m. today when it travels to

Piper for a doubleheader and it is the first of three straight road appearances

for the Wildcats to start the season. Louisburg will host Wellsville in its

home opener on April 4.