

Defense sparks Wildcats in win over Anderson County



Louisburg senior Dawson Barnes picks off an Anderson County pass Friday in Garnett. That steal was one of 20 turnovers the Wildcats forced on the night.

GARNETT – The Louisburg boys basketball team wasn't always clicking on all cylinders Friday against Anderson County, but when they were, the Wildcats made things difficult on the Bulldogs.

Louisburg used a pair of big runs – one in each half – to pull away from Anderson County, 63-48, at Anderson County High School and earned their second straight win in the process.

Defensively, it was one of the Wildcats' better contests of the early season and was able to spur their offense. Louisburg forced 20 turnovers and scored 29 points off those Anderson County mistakes to help get their first road win of the year.

"Our emphasis from the start of the season has been to play aggressive and play relentless defensively and I thought we were really good in that area," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "We weren't the best offensively, especially in the half court, but part of it was because a lot of our offense was because of our defense. We were scoring points, but would like to see us a little sharper in the half-court and more patient, but I really thought our defense was great."

The Wildcats (2-1) took a convincing 37-19 lead at halftime after they outscored Anderson County by 13 in the second quarter. The Bulldogs cut the Louisburg lead to 10 midway through the third quarter, but the Wildcats ended the frame on a 15-2 run.

All of those points in the run were from behind the 3-point line as five different players knocked down the perimeter shots. Michael Seuferling, Julian Margrave, Konnor Vohs, Weston Guetterman and Maverick Rockers helped extend the Louisburg lead to 56-31 going into the fourth quarter and the Wildcats never looked back



Junior Julian Margrave tries for a dunk off a missed shot Friday against Anderson County.

"We needed it that is for sure," Pfannenstiel said. "We talked about at halftime that we needed to put this away in the third quarter and we came out about as flat as you can be. I am not sure why, but we answered and responded and that is

important.

“A lot of those were good unselfish plays like drive and kicks and rhythm shots. That is where we were lacking in the first half is we were trying to do too much individually and not enough team-oriented basketball. That run was sparked buy playing team basketball.”

Louisburg had four different players score in double figures and Guetterman led the way with a team-high 15 points. Margrave finished with 13 points to go along with six rebounds and a pair of blocks.



Senior Konnor Vohs scores two of his 10 points against Anderson County. Vohs was one of four Wildcats to score in double figures.

Ben Guetterman added 11 points in the victory and had a team-high three steals. Vohs finished with 10 points.

"That is how it should be," Pfannenstiel said of the team's balanced scoring. "If one guys is off, or a couple guys are off, then other guys should be able to step up and they did that. We were very balanced and that was definitely good for us."

Louisburg will try to make it three in a row tonight and will try for its first league win of year when it hosts Baldwin for a 6 p.m. tipoff. The Wildcats also had to take Piper off its schedule for Thursday due to COVID-19, so instead they will travel to Shawnee Mission East for a 6:30 p.m. start.

"Baldwin had just played Anderson County and played them tough, so it will be a challenge," Pfannenstiel said. "They are always a hard-nosed team, and then we were able to find Shawnee Mission East to replace Piper and these are two good matchups for us. We tell the boys all the time that we are fortunate that we are getting the opportunity to play and we are going to show that on the court with how hard we play. Hopefully we can have some fun in the process."

LOU 14 23 17 9 – 63

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LOUISBURG (2-1): Weston Guetterman 6-7 2-2 15; Julian Margrave 5-13 2-3 13; Ben Guetterman 3-6 5-6 11; Konnor Vohs 4-5 0-0 10; Michael Seuferling 2-5 0-0 6; Maverick Rockers 1-1 0-0 3; Dawson Barnes 1-3 1-2 3; Andy Hupp 1-5 0-0 2. Totals: 23-47 10-13 63. 3-point field goals: 7, (Seuferling 2, Vohs 2, W. Guetterman, Rockers, Margrave).

Overtime victory gives Wildcats their first win



Louisburg senior Weston Guetterman drives through the lane for a layup Tuesday at home against Harrisonville.

The Louisburg boys basketball team off to a good start Tuesday in its home game against Harrisonville, but it had an even better finish.

After staking itself an eight point lead after the first quarter, Louisburg found itself down six points early in the fourth quarter. In what was a back and forth contest, the Wildcats were able to force an extra period and eventually win, 67-62, in overtime.

“Harrisonville went on some runs and we answered,” Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. “We came up big at the end of regulation and in overtime when we got down. Something about us, when we realize that we have to make plays, that we find ways to do it. I told them right before overtime that this game was going to be won on the defensive end and that is what sparked us. We got a couple steals there and it was huge for us. It was a fun game.”

The Wildcats (1-1) got on a roll to start the fourth when senior Weston Guetterman cut the Harrisonville lead in half as he scored, was fouled and converted the 3-point play. Junior

Julian Margrave added six straight points on his own to tie it at 52-all midway through the fourth.

Harrisonville hit a 3-pointer to break the tie, but junior Michael Seuferling knocked down a shot and Weston Guetterman hit two free throws to put Louisburg up one with 2 minutes remaining. Louisburg found itself down two when Ben Guetterman was fouled and hit both free throws to help send it to overtime.

Defense took over for Louisburg as the Wildcats recorded three steals in the extra period. One from Weston Guetterman that led to a runout score, another from Ben Guetterman that led to a layup and the final one from junior Maverick Rockers that led to a Ben Guetterman layup to give Louisburg a four-point lead with 45 seconds left.



Senior Ben Guetterman puts a shot up in the lane Tuesday against Harrisonville.

Margrave had a big night for Louisburg as he finished with a team-high 26 points, with 13 of those coming in the first quarter. He also added a team-high nine rebounds and three blocks

“Julian had a great night,” Pfannenstiel said. “He is a good player that works hard at it. When we can get the ball in his hands, good things usually happen. I am not sure why he wasn’t able to get as many touches as he did in the first quarter, but this is team basketball. When he gets attention from multiple defenders, that opens things up for other guys. It was a big night for Julian and it is something we expect from

him every night.”

Weston Guetterman also had a solid outing for Louisburg with 14 points and eight rebounds from the point guard spot, to go along with four steals and three assists. Ben Guetterman added eight points and seven rebounds, most of which came in the fourth quarter and overtime.

Louisburg also got good production from its bench as senior Konnor Vohs finished with seven points off the bench, while Rockers gave the Wildcats good minutes late in the contest and scored five points.

“I thought our bench was huge,” Pfannenstiel said. “Konnor came in early and did a very good job. He shot the ball well and played good defense. Mav is never going to be the biggest kid on the floor, but he always looks comfortable out there. He is our second ball handler and he was big for us late. He played well for us defensively, but he was a lot of the reason why our offense was doing so well at times because other guys are comfortable with him out there.”

Harrisonville’s Brooks Langrehr had a big night for the Wildcats as he scored a game-high 34 points.

Louisburg will try for its second straight win today when it travels to Anderson County for its first road test of the season. Tipoff is set for 7:30 p.m.

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15	9 – 67		
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12	4 – 62		

LOUISBURG (1-1): Julian Margrave 11-16 2-2 26; Weston Guetterman 4-12 6-9 14; Ben Guetterman 3-15 2-2 8; Konnor Vohs 3-5 0-0 7; Maverick Rockers 1-1 2-4 5; Michael Seuferling 2-10 0-0 4; Andy Hupp 1-5 0-0 3. Totals: 25-65 12-17 67. 3-point

field goals: 5, (Margrave 2, Rockers, Vohs, Hupp)

Wildcats' rally falls short in season opener



Junior Julian Margrave goes up for a dunk Friday during the Wildcats' season opener against Tonganoxie.

There was no easy game out of the gate for the Louisburg boys basketball team as the Wildcats squared off with No. 5 Tonganoxie in their season opener.

The challenge was a difficult one and the Chieftains lived up to their preseason ranking.

Tonganoxie racked up nearly 40 points in the first half, and despite a late rally from Louisburg, handed the Wildcats their first loss of the season, 63-56.

"You never really know what you are going to get in these first games," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "Sometimes you get some real ugly ones or get some really up-tempo games, and Tonganoxie came out pretty hot. Our guys battled back, and even though there were a couple times there were a deer in the headlights look, they hung in there. They battled back possession by possession and we were a different team in the fourth quarter. Tonganoxie played really well, and we weren't

bad by any means, they were just better this time.”

Louisburg found itself down 51-38 heading into the fourth quarter, but used its defense to get back in the game. The Wildcats ramped up their full-court pressure and it helped lead to an 11-2 run that cut the Tonganoxie lead to 53-52.

Weston Guetterman opened the quarter with seven straight points, including a 3-pointer, a steal and a layup and a drive to the basket in which he was fouled. Ben Guetterman ended the run with a 3-pointer to give the Wildcats all the momentum.



Seniors Andy Hupp (23) and Weston Guetterman converge to force

a Tonganoxie turnover Friday.

Unfortunately, the Chieftains were able to hold off Louisburg as they went on a mini 7-2 run of their own and hit their free throws down the stretch to seal the win.

“That is how we started off the game,” Pfannenstiel said of the press. “We were running the same things, we were just better at it in the fourth quarter. We were a little more desperate and so our energy was better. The issue in the first half is we weren’t as aggressive. Tongie’s guards were comfortable throwing the ball ahead. The way we looked in the fourth quarter is how we want to look all the time out of our press. I’m glad we were able to see it be successful because we know now that if we play like that we can do some good things.”

Turnovers hurt the Wildcats as the Chieftains forced 16 Louisburg turnovers and turned those into 17 points.

It was a back and forth game to begin the night as the two teams traded baskets and Tonganoxie held 20-17 lead after the first quarter. It was the second quarter where the Chieftains did their damage as they outscored Louisburg 19-11 in the frame and took an 11-point halftime lead.

“We played pretty well defensively, but we gave up almost 40 in the first half,” Pfannenstiel said. “Offensively, I think we just got sped up a little bit and there are some footwork issues that can be fixed. Had a lot of mental errors, but we will get better.”

Only four players scored on the night for Louisburg. Weston Guetterman led the Wildcats offensively with 20 points to go along with a team-high four assists and four steals.

Junior Julian Margrave also had a big night as he recorded a double-double with 17 points and 10 rebounds. Ben Guetterman also scored in double figures with 13 and junior Michael

Seuferling added six points, five rebounds and three assists.

Louisburg will try and bounce back tonight as it hosts Harrisonville (Mo.) at 7:30 p.m. The Wildcats were supposed to host Burlington, but it was recently forced to quarantine.

LOU	17	11	10	18 –
56				

TON	20	19	12	12 –
63				

LOUISBURG (0-1): Weston Guetterman 7-11 4-5 20; Julian Margrave 7-15 1-2 17; Ben Guetterman 5-11 1-2 13; Michael Seuferling 2-6 0-0 6. Totals: 21-49 6-9 56. 3-point field goals: 8, (Seuferling 2, W. Guetterman 2, B. Guetterman 2, Margrave 2).

Wildcats hope to make big jump from last season



Louisburg's leading scorer from a year ago, Julian Margrave, returns to lead the Wildcats after a first-team all-league performance last season.

It may have happened more than nine months ago, but the final loss of last season has stuck in the minds of several members

of the Louisburg boys basketball program.

The Wildcats rallied from 20 points down in the fourth quarter of their first round playoff game against Iola to force overtime, and scored 32 points in the frame. Louisburg didn't have enough and eventually fell in the extra period.

It was a lesson that was realized the hard way – a lesson to play the game hard from start to finish.

"We definitely learned from that loss at the end of the year," Louisburg coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "What really hurt us that game was our inability to get stops in the first three quarters, which led to the big deficit. Once we realized our season was on the line and we started playing with more energy and aggressiveness, that sparked our run.

"That's our goal this year is to play with relentless energy each game. We have no idea what this season is going to bring this year, so we have to play each game like it might be our last. If we can play with that fourth quarter desperation for all four quarters, I like our chances in every game we play this year. Now it's time to put it to the test."

That first test comes today when the Wildcats host Tonganoxie, which is currently ranked No. 5 in Class 4A, for 7:30 p.m. tipoff.

Louisburg seems well-prepared for that first test as the Wildcats return all but two starters from a season ago, in which they finished with an 8-13 record. The Wildcats also return six seniors in Weston Guetterman, Ben Guetterman, Konnor Vohs, Charlie Peters, Andy Hupp and Dawson Barnes, and with first-team all-league player Julian Margrave in the mix, they are an experienced group.

"We return 80 percent of our scoring from last year, and I think we've added more depth this year as well," Pfannenstiel said. "Our practices have been very competitive so I think

the competition for varsity minutes will elevate our play, not only in games, but in practice. It's been fun watching this senior class develop over the years.

"We return three starters, (who were all All-League players) from last year, and lots of other guys that saw significant court time as well. We lost a starting guard and post player, but I think we have guys ready to fill those voids. We definitely like what we have returning and look forward to making a jump this year."

One player who hopes to take another big step forward this year is Margrave. The Louisburg junior was among the Frontier League's best last season as he was a unanimous first team selection as he averaged 16 points and seven rebounds a contest.

The 6-foot-9 forward will be the focus of a lot of opposition most nights, but Pfannenstiel is looking forward to seeing how much he has improved.

"Julian had a great sophomore season," Pfannenstiel said. "He was a unanimous 1st Team All-League player, which is hard to do as a sophomore in the Frontier League. As good as he was last year, I've already seen improvement this year. He's still growing into his body and he's much more explosive this year. His continued effort and work in the weight room is evident by that. Julian works hard on his game. He's always the first one to arrive and the last one to leave the gym each day. He has a chance to have a special year."



Ben Guetterman is one of six returning seniors for the Wildcat basketball team this season.

Also returning are guards Weston and Ben Guetterman. Both players were honorable mention all-league players last season.

Weston averaged 11.2 points, to go along with four assists and a four rebounds a game. Ben finished the year as he averaged 11.1 points a contest and 5.5 rebounds. Weston is the team's returning point guard and Pfannenstiel knows that leadership will be valuable on and off the court.

"Weston has been solid for us," Pfannenstiel said. "This will be his third year as a starter, so we will rely on his consistency and ability to lead on the floor. Weston sets the tempo for us, so we expect big things out of him this year."

Vohs and juniors Maverick Rockers, Michael Seufferling and Isaac Guetterman will also be called upon to play plenty of

varsity minutes at the guard spots as each contributed a season ago. Peters, Barnes and Hupp will also be a presence down low for the Wildcats.

To add on to what is already a difficult league schedule, the Wildcats also have to try and plan for an impossible opponent – COVID-19. Louisburg has already faced challenges on how to work around all the guidelines, but the players are excited to just be able to play.

“We were fortunate to be able to have a camp this summer, but that was about it,” Pfannenstiel said. “We usually play 20-25 games in the summer and that was not allowed, so we lost all of that summer prep. Already this season, we were missing four players from practice due to quarantines, but we have everyone back now.

“The biggest change this year is how we practice. We have to cohort our JV and varsity guys for practice so we’ve really had to adjust our practice routine to allow for that. Coach (Drew) Harding and myself are going to be in better shape now because we have to be an extra body in 5 on 5 situations. All of the changes do make it difficult, but we all feel fortunate that we are getting the opportunity to play, so we will do whatever is necessary for that to happen.”

KSHSAA votes to start winter sports on time, will not allow spectators



The 2020-21 winter sports season may have a little different look than in the past, but there is one thing that will remain the same – the student athletes will be out competing.

During the Kansas High School Activities Association Board of Directors meeting Tuesday, the board voted in favor to have winter sports continue as scheduled by a 53-22 decision. The meeting was in response to the Executive Board's proposal last week to delay winter sport till Jan. 15.

Instead, schools around the state will be able to kick off their seasons in early December, and then after a moratorium for Christmas Break, can resume competition on Jan. 8. The basketball, wrestling and swim teams will also be able to have a full schedule of events, barring cancellations due to the spread of COVID-19.

"I'm extremely happy and relieved on how KSHSAA voted regarding winter sports being able to happen," Louisburg senior Megan Foote said. "Sports are extremely important to students as it not only helps with physical health, but also provides a release for mental health. Athletes can depend on sports to be an outlet for the troubling feelings they may have. As someone who struggles with mental health, I can vouch for how important sports are. Sports provide some of the best memories and times a kid can have and I believe they're essential in today's world."

During the meeting, eight different people – from parents to physicians – spoke on behalf of letting competition resume and two of those were Louisburg parents Craig Holtzen and Jenny Diederich.

Holtzen, whose son Cade is a senior on the Wildcat wrestling team, gave opening remarks in which he tried to convey the importance of extracurricular activities, even during COVID-19 times.

"There is no evidence to suggest that kids are either super-spreaders or very susceptible to this virus to begin with," Holtzen said during the meeting. "I would dare go far enough to say that kids are practicing better virus protocol when they are in school or activities than when they are locked down.

"Fall activities were largely successful because of our ability to be flexible and adaptive to the many changing things that happened over that season."

The vote to let them play was a sigh of relief to many players and coaches around the state, who were already in the process of prepping for their season.

"This is great news for our kids," Louisburg boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "Our students and athletes have been so resilient this year with all the new protocols, so I'm happy for them to get their opportunity because they've been through a lot. There was a lot of concern among our kids, so I'm sure they're relieved now that the uncertainty has been resolved. We are definitely not out of the woods yet when it comes to setbacks, so we have to continue to do our part to stay safe and healthy throughout this season."

Following the decision by the executive board last week to delay the start of winter sports, Diederich started a Facebook group called "Rally the Troops to Fight for Winter School Sports."

The page attracted more than 4,000 followers and advocated for parents and players to email and call the board of directors to let them know how important the winter season was for all of them. It seemed to work as the measure to allow them to

play passed easily.

"Yesterday was a victory," Diederich said. "It was exactly what we were fighting for – a full season with 20 games that starts on time. I am as passionate as they come and would love to be in the stands but my main goal was to get my daughter and her teammates on the court. With all the uncertainty they need something to focus on and to look forward to. It is just as important mentally as it is physically. I was proud to be part of a group of families across the state that fought for all our student athletes and scholars. I think it taught our kids to use their voice."

Although many of the teams were already gearing up for the season, there has always been a cloud hanging over the programs whether the season was going to happen or not. Now, those players and coaches can resume with more confidence.

"I'm very grateful for the chance to get the kids back on the mat," Louisburg wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird said. "All year I've been wondering about the unknowns, whether we'll get a season or not. But we've been practicing for a week and a half, and things are feeling more like normal than they have all year."

"This season, we've got the theme 'Relentless,' and that's the mindset we're trying to implement. Things like the KSHSAA ruling, the potential to get quarantined, and more are the obstacles in the way of our success. We've got to be relentless and work together to find ways around them."

The meeting was bittersweet for most parents as the board of directors voted that the athletic events will be held without spectators on both the high school and middle school levels. The measure passed by a 50-26 vote and spectators will not be allowed from Dec. 1 to Jan. 28.

Following that time, fan attendance will be limited in accordance with local attendance policies.

"I believe we had a solid plan to allow fans to attend our games in a safe manner," USD 416 superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann said. "We had already had indoor sports for middle school girls' basketball and middle school wrestling and it was working well. Now, that fans are not allowed, we will strive to provide our fans a quality livestream option to allow them to cheer on our Wildcats."

"I am glad that the board of directors decided to allow our kids to participate in sports. Our coaches and student-athletes have adhered to every possible safety measure. I know our kids are excited to represent the Wildcats on the mat, court and swimming pool in the upcoming weeks."

From some players' point of view, while getting to play their season was the most important outcome from Tuesday's meeting, the fact of not having their parents there is tough to comprehend.

"Basketball is a momentum sport and fans are a huge part of that," Foote said. "I believe we have one of the best student sections for girls' basketball. When we get into a rough patch, our student section gets louder and helps us out of that. I also have a lot of family that is extremely supportive and loves to watch me play. Not having them there is gut wrenching, especially my dad. Having my parents and family there is huge to me."

"Sadly, this is what it has come to. Right now all we can do is work together as a team and be each other's support system. We have to depend on each other to be loud and hype each other up. I still hold hope that this unreasonable ruling will be turned around, but I'm incredibly grateful that I can have one last season with my best friends."

Not only players, but coaches having to instruct their players in an empty gymnasium will take some getting used to as well.

"I am so happy for the student athletes who get to play winter sports and I am super excited to see what this season brings," Louisburg girls basketball coach Adrienne Lane said. "Basketball is an extracurricular activity, but it is also a chance for these students to come together and be a team. Playing in an empty gym will be a change, but I think the athletes will mainly be grateful for their opportunity to play."

Even though some parents will have to get used to watching their child on the computer or television, instead of in-person, they are hoping they will be able to back in the gym sooner rather than later.

"I was a little surprised with the no fan policy as I think blanket policies are not good for Kansas," Diederich said. "We have districts of so many sizes and local decision making is best. Districts know what they can and cannot handle. Hopefully we can convince KSHSAA to loosen the policy to allow for 1-2 immediate family members, but for now just be happy with the fact that they are playing at all."

KSHSAA proposes delay for winter sports



The 2020-21 winter sports season in Kansas could be delayed or

reduced depending on the vote at the Nov. 24 Kansas State High School Activities Association Board of Directors meeting

During the KSHSAA Executive Board meeting Wednesday the board reviewed data on the impact of COVID-19 on activity programs around the state due to the rising number of positive cases and impact on the health care system.

The board unanimously approved a proposal from the KSHSAA staff to suspend competitions until Jan. 15, 2021 and extend the winter moratorium. That proposal is now in front of the KSHSAA Board of Directors, who will vote on the issue at 1 p.m. on Nov. 24. The board of directors has members from every league across the state.

One of those board of directors, Paola High School principal Jeff Hines, was caught off-guard by the news.

"I consider myself pretty up to date when it comes to issues with KSHSAA, but I had no idea this was happening yesterday," Hines said. "I was in an administrator meeting that started at 10 a.m. and at 10:01 I received an email from KSHSAA with the executive board agenda for a meeting that had already started. This is a pretty important issue and I wanted to speak at the board meeting, but was told I couldn't because the meeting had already started.

"I asked someone at KSHSAA why the agenda was posted sooner, and they said it was posted last week. I have searched the internet and I couldn't find it. I have no doubt that they did post somewhere, but they need to make it more accessible so there can be more discussion on the issue. I was surprised the issue came up."

The proposal which will be put up for a vote is as follows:

- Delay competitions for all winter activities until Friday, January 15.

- Allow virtual competition only in Debate and Scholars Bowl.
- Winter activity practice may continue where appropriate to do so through December 22. All KSHSAA risk mitigation protocols strictly enforced.
- Extend Winter Moratorium. Dec. 23 – Jan. 3; practices to resume Jan. 4; restrictions eliminate contact between coach/athlete/school and no school facility use.
- Tentative resumption of competition on January 15.
- No fans for competition, January 15-28.
- Limited fans Jan. 29 through remainder of winter competitions.
- Mandatory universal masking with exception to athletes in competition and officials during live action.
- No invitational tournaments.

High School Competition Limits:

- Basketball maximum 13 games per team.
- Bowling maximum 8 days per team/individual.
- Swimming and Diving maximum 6 competitions per athlete.
- Wrestling maximum 12 events, 20 competition point max.

Middle School Restrictions:

- No competition in December, practice only.
- No competition Jan. 1 – Jan. 14
- No events with more than three schools participating.
- Strongly encourage skill development.
- Strongly encourage intramural play only.

- Limit two fans per player starting Jan. 15.

As far as how the board of directors will vote on the issue, Hines isn't quite sure how it will go, but he doesn't believe the executive board was trying to sneak the issue past anyone.

"You can have two thoughts on the issue," Hines said. "One, all of the executive board members think delaying winter sports is a great idea. That is an option, I guess. Or two, all of the members thought this issue was too big for them to decide on and wanted to make sure to get input from all its members and allowing them to make that decision. I tend to think that is what they are doing here.

"Will there be some people that vote yes to delay sports? Yeah I think there will be, just because of the situation their districts are in, but I tend to think a majority of them will vote no. Just as far as how I will be voting, I will vote no because I think that each school board should be able to decide whether or not to have winter sports. They know their district better than anyone. That is what we did for the fall and I believe the same thing should happen here."

Louisburg wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird understands the concern with the rising number of COVID-19 cases across the state, but he knows there will also be an impact on the student athletes if these activities are delayed.

"I totally understand why KSHSAA is considering taking action, but it worries me because a delay in starting competition could put us on the path to canceling the winter season altogether," Bovaird said. "There have been wrestling tournaments happening across the nation since mid-July, and there have been very few cases traced back to the tournaments themselves. Coaches, wrestlers, officials, and tournament directors are taking precautions, and I hope that we're able to continue doing what they've been doing.

"I'm afraid that a reduction in the number of competitions

allowed would only further harm the kids in the sport. I get it, though. Covid-19 is real and we're constantly reacting to it and rethinking how we can best protect our kids' health. While we may be protecting kids and their families from the potential of infection, we would also be taking away opportunities where kids can learn invaluable lessons and come together as a team to bond in ways that you can't get through the classroom, and we would be doing some considerable harm to their mental health."

KSHSAA's decision to potentially delay winter sports came on the same day Gov. Laura Kelly issued a new executive order on face masks after Kansas reported more than 5,800 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday.

Since the news broke, Hines has been hearing from people all over the area, who are voicing their concerns.

"There are a lot of people who are worried that their kids' season might not happen, and I get that, but I would say that people need to temper their venom at the state association," Hines said. "I think it's is great that people are contacting their board of directors and letting people know their feelings, and we want to hear from those who are concerned. At the end of the day, I believe they will do the right thing for these kids."

As for Louisburg High School itself, administrators will be ready to implement any rules necessary as they hope the students get to play a full season.

"My reaction was to the kids and coaches it would affect who look forward to sports and saw their peers and themselves play in the fall with accommodations, only to be potentially denied their opportunity for a full season," Louisburg activities director Michael Pickman said. "I understand the reasoning of the KSHSAA board, but I also understand the views of those who don't want to see any changes. Luckily it is in the discussion

phase and perhaps they will find a way for the kids to play while implementing some guidelines for keeping it safe, such as no fans.

“Whether Dec. 4 or Jan. 15 as proposed for starting competitions, we are still going to work to make it a safe environment for all and to limit risk. I am not in the medical field, so I won’t pretend to know if the delay will help lower the numbers. If it passes, then I hope that it does. Still, we won’t have a cure and will have the same need to implement safety protocol Jan. 15 as we would Dec. 4.”

“I want our students to have the opportunity to play and play safely, so my main concern right now is that the policies the district and athletic department have put in place are well thought out and followed,” Pickman added. “I think if we commit to following safety practices, we can still slow the spread regardless of the results of next week’s discussion and decisions by the KSHSAA board.”

Garrett Rolofson selected as 2020 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year



Garrett Rolofson never considered himself as one of the top athletes at Louisburg High School.

Rolofson grew up playing the game of basketball, but never really had any interest outside of that. Then in his junior year, soccer and golf started to appear on his radar – and in two year's time – became on the best players in the school at both.

During the 2019-20 school year, all Rolofson did was earn first team all-league and second team all-state honors in goal for the Wildcat soccer team. Then was a full-time starter on the Louisburg basketball team and was considered one of the top three golfers on a team that was poised to make another trip to the state tournament.

It has been a wild couple of years for Rolofson, but it ended with him being named as the 2020 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.

“Receiving the award for the male athlete of the year was a complete surprise to me,” Rolofson said. “I did not expect to be nominated for the award, let alone receive it, and I am honored. This award means a lot to me because it goes to show that all the time and effort you put into working towards your goals in the offseason really does pay off.”

The award, which is in its third 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 two choices and the number of votes were added up, which decided the winner.

Along with his all-league and all-state honors in soccer, Rolofson also holds the school record for most victories in a season with 16, second in shutouts with eight and third in saves with 82 in a season. He was a big reason the Wildcats were able to win a school record 16 games in 2019 and earn a league and regional title.

“Garrett was a fantastic goalkeeper and leader for us,” Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. “He went from not playing for a really long time to Miami County Republic goalkeeper of the year, first team All Frontier League and second team 4A-1A All State in his first year as a starter in our program. He was a tremendous leader and had a work ethic second to none. He, as well as, the other members of our defense helped lead the team to the 2019 Frontier League title and another regional championship. I could not be happier for Garrett as he is very deserving of this award.”



It was Conley who helped convince Rolofson to go out for soccer, in an albeit, very untraditional way.

“I remember I was lifting weights the summer before my junior year when I heard Coach Conley call my name and he threw a basketball at me,” Rolofson said. “I caught it and he told me

to try out for the soccer team as a goalie. At first I thought he was crazy until I saw the comradery and family the soccer team had built and I got sucked in immediately. My favorite thing about the soccer team was that it wasn't just a team it was a family. Every person on the team was a part of one big family and that was something special.

"From the coaches all the way to the new freshman, they were all welcomed in with open arms. Coach (Michael) Pickman coached me and taught me everything I know about the game from a goalie standpoint. Coach Conley taught me everything I know about the game and taught us very valuable life lessons that will follow me forever."

Rolofson also worked his way up the basketball ranks to where he was a full-time starter as a senior and brought a lot of tenacity for the Wildcats as they weaved their way through a difficult Frontier League schedule.

"Rolo has made so many strides athletically throughout his high school career," Louisburg boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "He's an incredibly hard worker and turned himself into an explosive, tough athlete. He was our toughest kid on the basketball court this year. He is a high character kid. We are really going to miss his leadership and I have no doubt he is going to be successful in the future."

Basketball brought an experience that Rolofson won't soon forget.

"Stepping onto the court on a Tuesday or Friday night with a buzzing student section behind you just gave me the chills every time," Rolofson said. "The fans, support from the community, teammates and coaches made basketball special. Basketball is the longest season of the year and that provides countless hours with teammates building bonds and friendships that will last forever along with memories to go with it. I think that's what I enjoyed the most was the friends and

atmosphere the Louisburg community brought to the gym on game nights.”



Like soccer, golf almost never happened for Rolofson either. As it turned out, he was one of the big reasons the Wildcats qualified for state as a team a year ago.

The spread of COVID-19 didn't allow Rolofson an opportunity to see how his senior year would have turned out on the golf course, but the game helped change him in a short amount of time.

“Golf was something special, although we didn't get a senior

season like we had planned,” Rolofson said. “I am still thankful for the year I did get to play as a junior. The spring of my sophomore year I had never once set foot onto a golf course and was something I could never have seen myself doing until Calvin Dillon convinced me to give it a try. From then on I fell in love with the game, but not only that, it was if every time my classmates went golfing I got invited as well even though I had barely played.

“The countless hours of fun competitions out on the golf courses all throughout the years were the best part about golfing. No matter where we played, how I performed, or how the team performed I always had a great time playing golf and that’s what made the sport so special to me.”

The overall aspect of playing three sports not only gave him confidence in the athletic arena, but it also provided him life lessons and a way to escape the everyday stresses in life.

“Staying active throughout all of my high school career was very beneficial to me not only as an athlete but as a person,” Rolofson said. “Sports have always been a big part of my life and allowed for me to get away from the stress and anxiety of the real world and enjoy the sports I love. I gained a passion for sports throughout high school and new passions for sports I never would’ve thought to try. Most importantly though, I learned the quality of leadership, teamwork and giving effort into everything you do not only in sports but in the classroom and in the real world.”

Sports taught Rolofson a lot of about work ethic, but it was his father’s experience that left a lasting impact on him.

Bob Rolofson suffered a brain aneurysm several years ago, and Garrett watched as his father – slowly, but surely – worked his way back through many obstacles that stood in his way. He saw his father’s strength and dedication and it is something

that was contagious to Garrett and gave him motivation.

“Most importantly I want to say thank you to my parents for showing me what it really means to never give up and I think without them I never would have been able to achieve any of the goals I have achieved this year,” Garrett said. “Through my dad’s brain aneurysm journey I was shown that if my dad can recover from such a traumatic brain injury, and work as hard as he did to be where he is today, that I can work just as hard. He showed me that I can do anything if I put my mind to it and I really took it to heart. I also want to thank my mom for always reminding me of that and pushing me to do my best in everything I do, not just sports.”

2020 Athlete of the Year Nominees



For the past four 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 third 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.”

Obviously, 2020 has not been the typical year when the spring was cancelled due to COVID-19. However, I still want to make sure those athletes that were set to make an impact in the spring were recognized as well.

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 voted for their top male and female athletes and then I tabulated the results. I will release the results in the coming days.

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



Haley Cain – Senior – Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer

Haley was a three-sport athlete during her time at Louisburg High School and recorded the rare feat of earning 12 varsity letters.

In the fall, she helped the Louisburg volleyball team to its third consecutive state tournament and was selected to represent Kansas in the Greater Kansas City All-Star Match. She was also named to the All-Frontier League second team as a middle hitter.

Cain was also a two-time team captain for the Louisburg girls basketball team and was a key player for the Lady Cats this past season. She was also set to be a big contributor for the Wildcat soccer team in the spring as well.



Trinity Moore – Senior – Cross Country, Soccer

Trinity made cross country history for the Wildcats this past season as she medaled third at state and broke her own school record in the process. The Louisburg senior also medaled at state all four years.

Moore was also a returning starter for the Wildcat soccer team and was a key factor in helping the Wildcats to three consecutive state final fours and two state runner-up finishes.

She started 43 games for the Wildcats and concluded her career with 18 goals and eight assists. She is fifth in school history with 44 points.



Erin Lemke – Senior – Volleyball, Soccer

Erin was another multi-sport athlete for Louisburg as she was a member of the volleyball and soccer teams. Lemke was an outside hitter for the Lady Cat volleyball team and was selected to represent Kansas in the Greater Kansas City All-Star Match.

On the soccer team, Lemke was a two-time team captain for the Wildcats and was a returning all-league and all-state player. She was also one of the team's top goal scorers.

Lemke had a very productive career for the Wildcats as she started 48 of her 59 games and earned all-league and all-state honors as a sophomore and a junior.

She finished her career with 29 goals and 27 assists and Lemke

has the second-best assist mark for a season in program history with 17 and is third in career assists. She also added seven game-winning goals.



Reilly Ratliff-Becher – Senior – Volleyball,

Powerlifting, Softball

Reilly was a multi-sport athlete for Louisburg High School as she competed in volleyball, power-lifiting and softball. She was an honorable mention all-league selection in volleyball as she served as the Lady Cat libero.

Ratliff-Becher was a big part of the Lady Cats' state tournament runs the last three years. She was also selected to participate in the Greater Kansas City All-Star game last November.

As a powerlifter, Reilly recorded her second-straight state championship and took first in each of the three individual events.

Ratliff-Becher was also a returning starter on the Lady Cat softball team after she helped Louisburg to a state tournament appearance a year ago as a catcher and outfielder.

Male Athlete of the Year Nominees



Garrett Rolofson – Senior – Soccer, Basketball, Golf

Garrett is a three-sport athlete for Louisburg as he was a member of the soccer, basketball and golf teams. In soccer, Rolofson served as the Wildcats' goalkeeper and helped Louisburg to a regional title and a school record 16 wins.

Rolofson was named to the All-Frontier League first team and to the all-state second team. He posted eight shutouts on the season and allowed only 17 goals, four of which came from penalty shots. He also finished with 78 saves on the season and allowed the second fewest goals in Class 4-1A.

In basketball, Rolofson was a starter on the Wildcat basketball team and this spring he was all set to help the Wildcat golf team to their second consecutive state tournament

appearance. He was the team's No. 3 golfer a year ago.



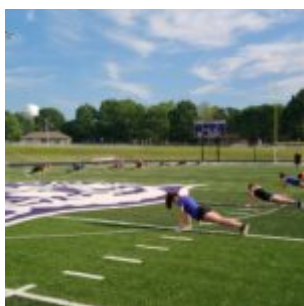
Madden Rutherford – Senior – Football, Baseball

Madden was a multi-sport athlete for Louisburg as he was a key member of the Wildcat football and baseball teams.

Rutherford, who was a team captain on the football team, was selected as a first team All-Frontier League quarterback. Rutherford finished the year with 671 yards passing with eight touchdowns and he also added 245 yards on the ground and four more scores.

On the baseball team, Rutherford was also a returning all-league player and was slated to be the Wildcats' No. 1 starter this spring.

Wildcat athletes report back for summer conditioning



Almost 80 high school girls attended the first day of summer conditioning on Monday at Louisburg High School.

For the first time in almost three months, Louisburg High School and Louisburg Middle School athletes found themselves back on the field starting Monday at Wildcat Stadium.

It didn't include any balls, equipment, weights and wasn't indoors, but more than 300 athletes participated in the mandatory conditioning drills that were set by the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

"The turnout was exceptional, and considering the limit on group sizes, distance restrictions, and getting creative in using multiple spaces to accommodate the large numbers in appropriately sized groups allowed in phase three, these coordinators did a great job setting a standard," Louisburg activities director Michael Pickman said.

This was all following the cancellation of the spring season to the spread of COVID-19 and KSHSAA allowed school districts to begin conditioning exercises on June 1. The Louisburg school district started this past Monday and each athlete must participate in 10 sessions before being able to attend in any team activities or camps.

Several coaches were in attendance running athletes through drills in three separate stations that would allow some space between everyone. Football coaches Robert Ebenstein, Ty Pfannenstiel, Joel McGhee and Drew Harding were on hand to lead drills, along with other staff from within the USD 416 school district.

“There are many coaches who are volunteering and just want to be there to support their athletes,” Pickman said. “It’s what makes the LHS coaching staff stand out from others. However, I have encouraged coaches not directly coordinating weights to stay home as much as they can with numbers restrictions, but so far we haven’t had that be an issue.”

High school boys begin each morning at 6 a.m., for the hour-long workout and high school girls follow and then it all finishes up with middle school. To start there were 121 high school boys in attendance, 79 girls and 126 middle school students.



More than 120 Louisburg High School boys attended the first day of summer conditioning at Wildcat Stadium.

To start the day, each athlete is screened before the start of

conditioning with a temperature check and then they are divided into three groups. Each of them will participate in three stations that focuses on different workouts. There are no more than 45 athletes in a group and the coaches design workouts to promote the six feet of distance.

“There were temperatures that needed to be taken and protocol for sanitizing hands and checking in that went efficiently and smoothly overall,” Pickman said. “A lot of planning went into this with the coaches to make sure it went well. And Mr. Holloway (LHS principal) volunteered his time to help take temps at the various sessions.”

As far as cross country goes, interested runners instead attend running sessions held by coach John Reece that will take place throughout the summer and they do not have to attend conditioning.

Whenever the athletes have completed their 10 sessions, they are allowed to participate in team activities the rest of the summer. As of right now, everything is on track to allow athletes to begin attending camps after June 29.

“Everything is progressing so far to according to schedule,” Pickman said. “Assuming the governor’s phase out stage begins when it is supposed to, we will be ready to begin using the weight room, gyms, and sports equipment. Coaches will be able to have practices and then middle school and high school age camps after June 29. The younger kids who do not have to have the 10 days of acclimatization are able to run the week of June 22. With the schedule the way it is, kids should have no problem getting their 10 days of acclimatization needed to participate in camps.”

Dennis leaves lasting legacy in Louisburg, LHS athletics



Damon Dennis, and his wife Karla, pose for quick picture during a timeout at a Louisburg High School basketball game Dennis was announcing. Dennis, who is better known as Doc D, is handing over his business at Louisburg Chiropractic Office to Dr. Jacob Polzin and is stepping away as the LHS team doctor after 28 years of service. His last day at the office is tomorrow (Saturday).

Almost every day of the week, if you were looking for Damon Dennis, he could be found at his office on 11 S. Broadway St., helping treat those pesky aches and pains, taking X-rays, or mending those beaten up athletes after a game.

Doc D – as he is affectionately known – opened Louisburg Chiropractic Office 28 years ago and has served as the Louisburg High School athletic team doctor for almost that same amount of time.

Dennis has seen it all. The walls in his office are lined with mementos from his years of service to both the community and the high school.

He has taped thousands of ankles, seen even more patients and has touched many lives during his time in Louisburg. That is why this week is one of the more emotional times in his life.

On Saturday, he will officially leave Louisburg Chiropractic Office and hand the reins over to Dr. Jake Polzin. Add to

that, Dennis is also stepping away as LHS' team doctor and will leave an absence on the sidelines and behind the mic that many in Louisburg have come to know.

"My decision to step down and sell the practice has turned out to be the hardest thing I have ever done," Dennis said. "I have poured everything I have into my job and community. It has become my entire existence. I was taught from a young age to serve others and your community. I feel like the pressures I have put on myself have become unhealthy. I have put about 40 years work in to 28 and feel like there is never going to be a good time to make such a huge life change.

"That being said, I feel like I need to make changes while I am still able to do the things that will be best for my family. Dr. Polzin came along and I think he will carry on the work at the office wonderfully. We are a lot alike in many ways. I could not have found anyone better to replace me."

For many, Dennis has been a big part of people's lives, especially in the athletic arena. He has served as the LHS team doctor since 1992 and has treated many athletes in those 28 years.



Dennis (left) and Dr. Jake Polzin pose for a picture in their office. Polzin will officially take over the practice from Dennis after this week, but both have been seeing the patients the last three months.

During the school year, Dennis would leave his place of business every day after 3 to go to the high school to tape up athletes from all different sports and made sure they were all ready to go for practice. After that was over, he would rush back to his office to finish the day treating his patients.

It would be hectic life for some, but it is one that he has treasured for the last nearly three decades.

“My time in practice has been a blessing,” Dennis said. “I truly care about all of the patients and people in the community that I have been involved with. I have tried to be a positive impact on the town through my involvement in different organizations. As with any business, there are bumps in the road. I genuinely appreciate everyone who has had a positive impact on me through these years.

“I have poured my heart and soul in to every aspect of my business and involvement in the community, sometimes at the sacrifice of my wife, Karla. I am eternally grateful for her patience and love. Part of the reason why I am handing over the reigns is that I have a lot of making up for time to do.”



Damon Dennis (middle) walks out of the locker room with the Wildcat football coaches prior to a game.

Dennis and his family have made a lot of sacrifices during his

time and many of the Wildcat coaches – both former and present – appreciate what he has done for them and their players.

“As far as what he has meant to the community, it is immeasurable,” longtime former coach Gary Griffin said. “He came in the first year and made himself available to all the coaches and was there for whatever the kids needed from the medical stuff, to a new pair of shoes, or money to go to a team dinner. He was even there to lend an ear to a kid that was having issues from girlfriends, teacher issues or problems at home.

“For me personally, he was a cheerleader when times were not good, he was an advocate for kids when I didn’t always know what was going on behind the scenes. I trusted Doc like he was a member of the coaching staff. I told him a lot of things in confidence so I could get his advice knowing it would not go any further. As far as the community goes, he is a pillar and he is involved in everything and is held in high regards by most. It is really hard for Doc to tell anyone no, so most of his days are longer than just his office hours. Doc is going to be missed in so many ways. He is a very humble man and he is very deserving of slowing down and enjoying the fruits of his labor.”

A Small Beginning

Back in June of 1992 is when Dennis began to plant his roots in the town he would begin to call home.

Dennis purchased the small satellite office from Dr. Larry Fulk, who at the time also had a practice in Paola. Dennis was less than a year out of school and was eager to get involved in the Louisburg community.

Two months later, Dennis reached out to then Louisburg High School administrator Doug Chisam and asked if he could serve as the team’s doctor – free of charge. Since August of 1992,

Louisburg High School would not be the same.

Dennis made trips over to the high school for treatment and would also follow many of the team's to their games after work was over. It was a life that would go on to create many memories.

"Jim Knox, Don Meek and Doug Chisam were all very supportive and I am forever in their debt," Dennis said. "I started out just going to all games, home and away, and every sport that I could. At that time I was in the office from 6 am to 7 pm and then off to games 3-4 nights a week. The things I have always enjoyed about being the team doctor was the kids and the coaches. High school athletes have not changed since day one. They want someone who cares about and shows interest in what they are doing. I am still close with a lot of the students who have come through the high school and will continue to be.

"My role evolved over the years. I began doing all the taping before practice and games, Impact testing, announcing basketball and other roles as the coaches requested. I enjoy helping others and that is how my role evolved in to so many other areas. Over the years, the coaches have included me and I will always be grateful to them for allowing me to be a part of the experience."



Damon and his wife Karla pose for a picture in front of his office back in the early 90s.

His role got even bigger when the new high school was built and Dennis was asked if he would like to announce basketball games. He certainly didn't mind having a mic in his hand and loved playing off the crowd and making sure the athletes felt a little extra special.

"We had a girls' tournament and Dave Tappan asked me if I would announce the game," Dennis said. "He thought it would be a nice touch to have an announcer. I am not sure he ever asked me to continue, I just did it. I had to be at games anyway and I like to talk, so it worked out. Dave never said to quit, so I just kept doing it.

"I really did enjoy that. I would try to throw in a little funny once and awhile just to see if people were listening. Dottie Cook had a birthday every game night for several years. Knowing the kids so well, it was fun to add their middle name or nickname at the game."

Tappan, who is currently the USD 416 assistant superintendent, worked as the LHS activities director and principal during many of Dennis' years in Louisburg and the two became quick

friends.

With that, Tappan is well aware of Dennis' work ethic and commitment to Louisburg athletics. In fact, he has seen it firsthand.



Doc D lets out a cheer on the sidelines following a big play during the Wildcats' 2010 state championship game.

"Most people know that Doc doesn't take vacations very often," Tappan said. "In fact, it usually takes a team of us to get him out of the office for more than a day. But in 2010, he and Karla scheduled a trip over Thanksgiving break to Chicago. Well, that was also the year of our run to the state football championship and there was no way he was going to miss it. In typical Doc D fashion, he lined things up to perfection. He takes a 5 a.m. flight from Chicago to Kansas City, has Karla drive him to the Legends off of I-70 and at about 6:30 I'm

picking him up and we beat the team to Salina. When the bus finally rolls in, he looks at Coach (Gary) Griffin with a grin and says, 'What took you so long?' About four hours later we were celebrating a championship.

"The commitment that Doc D has demonstrated over the years to the students of Louisburg schools is second to none. From the football sidelines on a Friday night in the fall, to being behind the mic in the LHS gym during basketball season, Doc always supported the students, the coaches and the administration of USD 416. I am proud to call Damon Dennis my friend."

Beyond The Call of Duty

Running a business can be difficult enough, but when you have other responsibilities on top of all that, it can be stressful at times.

The coaches at Louisburg High School never got that when working with Doc D. Veteran and young coaches alike were amazed at the dedication he displayed.

"Doc D is one of the most honest and honorable men I have ever met," Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. "He has donated countless hours and years for helping Louisburg student athletes. He always went out of his way to help anyone and everyone. He wasn't always just helping players. He would always check in on the coaches as well – checking on their well-being, their teams, and their families.

"Doc always went out of his way to make someone feel important and special. He was NEVER too busy for anyone. He will be greatly missed and he is irreplaceable. Thank you Doc D for everything that you have done for my teams, my family and for myself. You are someone I am lucky enough to call a friend."

That dedication would not only be found after school in the evenings, but even before the sun came up as well.



Doc D checks out Louisburg's Hallie Hutsell following an injury during last soccer season.

"Doc D will be greatly missed," Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment said. "He unselfishly devoted many hours to our athletes and was always a phone call or a text away. I can't count how many times he would meet myself and an athlete or two at the school at 5:30 a.m. prior to departure for a volleyball tournament. Not only was he a great role model and mentor for the athletes, but he served as a great mentor to a young coach for the past 14 years. He will be greatly missed by many."

However, where Dennis is most recognized was on the football sidelines. He did anything from tending to injured athletes, mentoring future trainers and handing out free food or candy to the student section before certain games.

It wasn't gone unnoticed as many around the school and

community know what Doc D has meant to the district.

"If Louisburg had a Mt. Rushmore, Damon would definitely be up there," Louisburg graduate and longtime coach Jeff Lohse said. "Doc is one of the most selfless people that I know. He was always more than willing to help anyone out and never expected anything in return. I consider Doc to be a great friend of mine and this is definitely bittersweet. I wish him and Karla nothing but the best as they open up this new chapter in their lives. Damon will be missed but his legacy in Louisburg will live on forever."

Dennis always made sure to welcome the new coaches to the district and made them feel a part of the family and that was the case with boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel when he came to the school three years ago.



Doc D was presented with a team signed helmet following the team's award banquet two years ago.

"Doc D is the most selfless man I know," Pfannenstiel said. "What Doc gave to this school and community is unprecedented. He cared so much for all of our athletes, there's no way we are going to be able to replace what he brought to this school. I feel bad for whoever is going to come in and try to fill his shoes – he set the bar way too high."

Dennis has been on the sideline for many of Louisburg's greatest athletic achievements, including three state football appearances and has watched many athletes along the way achieve great individual accomplishments.

He knows that he has been blessed to be able to be a part of Wildcat athletics in one form or another the last 28 years.

“As for favorite memories, it is not always about the wins and losses,” Dennis said. “The things I have most enjoyed is the time spent with athletes and coaches. The things that go on in the locker room, before and after games were the fun part. I have had a behind the scenes view of some pretty amazing people.

“Obviously the 2010 state football championship is at the top of the list. We had gone to the championship twice and come home in second on two occasions. It was a great group to be around and a great experience. If I had to choose a group of kids that really stand out the most, it would be the seniors my first year here (class of 1993). They welcomed me with open arms and made me feel like I was appreciated. I still speak to members of that class often and consider them friends. It was a really special group. I also loved seeing kids accomplish their dreams of success. Louisburg has had its share of champions and athletes that have gone on to do some amazing things.”



Doc D was also good with equipment as he works on Madden Rutherford's helmet prior to a game.

In his last week at the office, Doc D has seen a lot of visitors that have come to thank him for everything he has done. Although Dennis won't be around as much as he used to, he wants people to know that this isn't a farewell – but more of a see you later.

"I want everyone to know how much I appreciate their kind words," Dennis said. "There has been talk of various activities surrounding my career change that have been proposed. While I genuinely appreciate this, I don't think I can handle the attention. My emotions have gotten the better of me and I am not sure that I can handle any celebrations publicly, unless everyone wants to see me cry.

"I am not going away. I just won't be at 11 South Broadway or at the high school every day. Thank you to everyone that has

supported me as I have made every effort to support my community."

No, Doc – thank you...