

# Melton excited for chance to play basketball at Benedictine



***Madilyn Melton recently signed her letter of intent to play basketball at Benedictine College next season. The Louisburg senior averaged more than 13 points a game a year ago.***

Entering her final season on the Louisburg girls basketball team, Madilyn Melton was not ready to give up her love – not even close.

Melton has grown up around the game of basketball and been around several coaches that have helped her get better as she has gotten older. Next season, Melton will add another coach to that list and she hopes it will be her final one.

Earlier this fall, Melton made it official when she committed to play basketball at Benedictine College, an NAIA program in Atchison. It was an opportunity the Louisburg senior couldn't pass up.

"When I found out that I was going to be able to play basketball at the next level it made me feel amazing," Melton said. "I was so excited to know that I got into Benedictine because it's been a dream of mine since I was a little girl to play basketball in college."

Melton also has the opportunity to play under head coach Chad Folsom, who has been a fixture for the Raven women's

basketball program. Folsom is currently in his 19<sup>th</sup> season with the Ravens and recently recorded his 400<sup>th</sup> victory last season.

He has also led Benedictine to the NAIA National Championship Tournament the last four years and has earned a Sweet Sixteen appearance during that time. The Ravens are also a perennial contender in the Heart of America Conference.



**Louisburg senior Madilyn Melton signed a national letter of intent to play basketball at Benedictine College. Pictured with Madilyn are (in front, from left) her mom, Meghan, little brother, Adly, and her father, Andy; (back row) grandparents, Eddie and Vicki Surrentt, brother, Jaymes, and sister, Zyleigh.** “It wasn’t too difficult to figure out where I wanted to go,” Melton said. “Benedictine was always on the top of my list when I visited for the first time. When I met Coach Folsom I felt like I’ve known him forever. He and the girls were so

welcoming and kind. I felt like this was where I was meant to go.”

Melton was a second-team All-Frontier League player last season and led the Lady Cats in many different categories during their 8-13 season.

The Louisburg senior had a big year for the Lady Cats in 2019-20 at the forward spot as she led Louisburg in scoring at 13.3 points a game and finished with 7.1 rebounds a contest. She also averaged two steals and 1.3 blocks a game.

She is looking to translate that success to the collegiate level with the help of the Raven coaching staff.

“My favorite part of the program is their philosophy and how Coach Folsom describes the way he plays the game,” Melton said. “I love how Coach Folsom and the girls have built a family atmosphere.”

Along with being a part of the Raven program, Melton also chose Benedictine and how it fit her academically. Benedictine has a nursing program, which is her planned major, which works out when it comes to both balancing the academic and athletic world.

Melton is looking forward to getting on campus, following what she hopes will be successful senior season at Louisburg.

“Benedictine is a beautiful campus and I am excited to be a part of what they have to offer,” Melton said. “The people who gave their time to help me around campus were amazing and I can’t wait to meet more of the students and staff.”

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# 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.

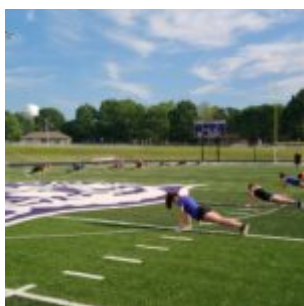
Rutherford, who was a team captain on the football team, was selected as a first team All-Frontier League quarterback. Rutherford finished the year with 671 yards passing with eight touchdowns and he also added 245 yards on the ground and four more scores.

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



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# 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.”

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# 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...

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## **LHS sports preparing to start back up in June with summer workouts**



Kansas high school sports has been absent since the middle of March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that all could change very soon.

During its board of directors meeting earlier this month, the Kansas State High School Activities Association made a change to its summer regulations. Starting on June 1, school employed coaches may begin summer programs as long as it is permitted by the community’s health authorities and the school district.

Coaches at Louisburg High School are making plans to move forward beginning the first of June, but they must meet some guidelines to do so.

In the first two calendar weeks in June, athletes will need to attend a conditioning session each day. Those must be completed to be able to participate in a coach’s camp or



organized competition.

If an athlete is playing football, they must complete an extra five days of conditioning before being able to participate in competition.

The first two weeks of conditioning sessions will not involve weights, indoor facilities or sporting equipment to ensure safety. Masks will be optional at workouts, but six feet of distance will be in place along with no more than the 90 gathering restriction under the phase 3 guidelines put out by the state.

Then on June 15, barring no setbacks, conditioning will include indoor weight sessions and indoor facilities will be allowed. Coaches will also be able to hold camps and competition throughout the summer.



**Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein has plotted out summer workouts for his football team beginning with three weeks of conditioning starting June 1**

"I think the guidelines were set to help ensure the safety of all student athletes accords the state, along with their physical health as well as the preparation for the season," Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein said. "Challenges may be there, but overall they are irrelevant as all the teams in the state have to follow the same guidelines. Our school administrators have been very supportive throughout this process."

Along with the new changes, KSHSAA also lifted the moratorium period at the end of the summer and will allow teams to practice all the way up to the beginning of the school year. Fall sports, however, will take precedence from Aug. 1 through Aug. 15.

For some programs, the changes won't be much different as what they have experienced in the past, other than practicing social distancing through the first two weeks of conditioning.

"We are still allowed to compete in leagues and camps after all athletes have completed 10 days of conditioning/training," Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment said. "Our summer weights program is changing some this summer, so it gives the players a chance to acclimate back into workouts before putting a ball in their hands."

"When you really look at the schedule, we lost the first two weeks in June (in terms of volleyball skill work), but we gained the moratorium week and have full contact until August 16. The fall season starts on August 17. Normally, we can't have contact, outside of weights and conditioning, after mid-July. This actually gives us about four weeks on the back end of summer to work with the athletes."



**Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment has her normal summer scheduled planned out despite a different start.**

Still, the new-look summer won't be without its challenges – especially in the first 10 days of the summer calendar. However, the coaches and athletes will gladly work around the new rules in order to get back together and competing again.

“I think the new guidelines will help kids get back to some normalcy as long as everything continues to get better, but the six feet of social distancing could be challenging when you are coaching a team sport,” Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. “We will find a way to overcome these challenges and help the kids develop as much as possible.”

Coaches have already altered their camp schedules for the summer, and that information, along with a list of camps, can be found [here](#).

As for Louisburg cross country, the runners will also be going through a conditioning period like everyone else. They will meet at the football practice field at 7 a.m. for an hour every morning beginning June 1 and that will continue through the summer.

Since school has been out since the middle of March, coaches have tried to find a way to stay in touch with their players – and like with online schooling – the zoom platform has been a big help for coaches.

“Football has been doing online zoom workout together for those currently in high school every Monday, Wednesday and Friday while we have been out of school, so I have still been seeing them and they have been doing some cardio,” Ebenstein said. “We have as normal of a summer planned as possible. We will have our weights sessions, our team camp, review/skills night, and we will have our contact camp that KSHSAA is allowing.”

With everything going on around the state and the country, everything is still in limbo and dates could have to be altered once again depending on what local officials decide. Even with all that, the coaches believe there will be a fall season.





**Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley has tried to keep many of his same events for both the boys and girls teams.**

"I am confident our fall season will be played," Conley said "It may have some things that are different, but we will play. I know that the boys are very anxious in having conversations with some of them."

Many of the coaches and players are just ready to return to some kind of routine following the spread of COVID-19 and they hope sports can give that to them.

"As of right now, our season is scheduled, and we'll plan accordingly if told differently," Compliment said. "But for right now, (activities director Michael) Pickman has stressed that for most of the athletes, a return to summer weights/conditioning/activities will be their first taste of 'normalcy.' I'm excited to get back at it and see the athletes

and students again.”

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## Pickman named as new LHS activities director



Michael Pickman (left) was hired as Louisburg High School's new activities director and assistant principal last week following the USD Board of Education meeting. Current Louisburg AD, Scott Hinkle (right), will move to the middle school to serve in the same capacity starting next school year.

Louisburg High School will have a little different look to its activities department for the 2020-21 school year.

Following the USD 416 Board of Education meeting on April 13, Michael Pickman was hired to serve as the school's new assistant principal and activities director. Pickman will replace Scott Hinkle, who has been in that position for the last two years.

Hinkle will remain in the district and will move over to the middle school to serve in the same capacity.

"I had known for a while that I wanted to continue my education by getting a second master's degree, but I didn't really know which area," Pickman said. "I talked with current

administration and was both inspired and encouraged to explore administrative leadership. This is the job I wanted because it meant staying in Louisburg and continuing to work with the staff and coaches who I know have, can and will achieve great things when it comes to our students and student athletes.

“We are a Louisburg family and I want my daughter in the Louisburg community and school system, so I wouldn’t have done this anywhere else. The atmosphere from district leadership to the building leadership is top notch and I am ready to grow as an educator and work alongside (principal) Jeremy (Holloway) and the administrative staff at the high school and the amazing coaches and support them.”

Pickman has taught English at the high school for the last seven years and has also worked in the Prairie View, West Franklin and Maur Hill Prep school districts.

He has also spent a lot of time in the athletic arena as he has served as the Wildcat boys and girls soccer assistant coach, alongside head coach Kyle Conley, for the last five-plus years.

“It will be tough to give up all aspects of it, but the magic of these soccer programs will be especially difficult,” Pickman said. “Kyle has been an amazing person to coach with and his passion is contagious. Getting to start the girls program with him and the immediate success has been amazing. State finals and big wins and the atmosphere – some don’t ever get to experience that – and lastly the players, both boys and girls who have graduated and those who remain to carry on the greatness are why I said yes to coaching. They make the whole experience amazing and fun.

“So it will be hard, but I would also not have gone anywhere else to do a different job and so I will still be able to support the soccer players and every other student and athlete through my new opportunity and to do so the Wildcat Way.”

As for Hinkle, he spent the last two years as the LHS activities director after coming from Liberal High School. He is excited that his new position at the middle school will allow him to spend more time with family.

"I really enjoyed my time at the high school, even though it was only two years," Hinkle said. "I am leaving behind a great workplace with a great culture and an unbelievable staff. It was not an easy decision.

"I made the move to the middle school to get back some evenings and weekends. I have been an athletic director for 11 years at the high school level in my career, and I was ready to free up some time. I know I am joining another great staff at LMS, and look forward to the new challenge ahead of me."

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## **Lane ready to lead Lady Cats as head basketball coach**



**Adrienne Lane was hired as the new head girls basketball coach earlier this month and will take over for Shawn Lowry, who was the head coach for the last seven seasons.**

Following the resignation of head coach Shawn Lowry in early February, Adrienne Lane made her way to the bench for the Louisburg girls basketball team to fill in as an assistant coach.



As it turns out, Lane is going to stay there – but in a bigger role.

During the USD 416 Board of Education meeting on March 9, Lane was officially hired to be Louisburg's new head girls basketball coach and will replace Lowry, who spent the last seven seasons guiding the Lady Cats.

"I am very honored to be offered this position at LHS," Lane said. "The timing of this opportunity is perfect for me and my family, and I am so thankful to be asked to step into such a valued position. After coaching the seventh grade girls the past two seasons, I am super excited to get back into coaching at the high school level again."

Lane came to Louisburg after coaching and teaching for several years at Drexel (Mo.) High School. She served as the Drexel head girls coach from 2006 to 2012 and was able to capture a lot success.

She posted a 90-36 record during her time with the Drexel program and coached in two Missouri all-star games. Before that time, she served as a junior varsity coach during the 2003-04 season at Piper High School.

Lane has been the business teacher at Louisburg High School for three years and has spent the last two seasons as the LMS seventh-grade girls coach. She also was an assistant coach for the LHS softball team for one season.

In 2020, Lane was an assistant for interim coach Leanna Willer

and Willer will return as the junior varsity coach next season.

“Being asked to help this season I do feel will benefit me in the future,” Lane said. “I got to know the girls on a coach/player level and not just teacher/student level and I believe these relationships will make the transition into next season easier. When I was asked to step in and help, I felt very honored that the assistant coaches trusted me and my basketball knowledge.”

Even though the season is still months away, Lane is excited to get started with her new team over the summer as she begins to put her fingerprints on the program.

“I would say my coaching style is aggressive,” Lane said. “I like to play man-to-man defense if possible and run the court. Defenses will change depending on the team we are playing, but every defense we run will be based on man to man principles.

“As for offense, I feel that all offenses should be based around a team’s personnel. We will run the court on offense when we can, and we will try and be aggressive on the offensive boards. I believe in the big 4: defense, rebounding, transition and free throws. If we can do these four things, we can be successful as a team. I have high expectations for my players and I will expect them to work hard on and off the court.”

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# Lady Cats place three on All-Frontier League basketball team



Louisburg junior Madilyn Melton earned second team All-Frontier League honors with the team was released late last week. She was one of three Lady Cats to be awarded recognition.

In a year that saw three teams from the same league go to the state tournament, the 2019-20 version of the Frontier League was a very difficult one.

Eudora, Piper and Baldwin all advanced to the state tournament and Piper earned a spot in the Class 4A final four. Although the Louisburg girls basketball team didn't have the season it was hoping for with an 8-13 record, the Lady Cats were still recognized by the area coaches.

Three Louisburg players were named to the All-Frontier League basketball team when it was released late last week.

Junior Madilyn Melton was awarded second team honors, while juniors Alyse Moore and Brooklyn Diederich were named to the honorable mention squad.

“Given the up and down season that we had, I think we were definitely well-represented on the all-league teams,” Louisburg interim coach Leanna Willer said. “The Frontier League is extremely strong, especially in girls’ basketball. We have some true basketball talent in our league, and I was glad to see that other coaches and schools recognize what these three brought to the court this year.

“We are so proud of all three of these girls and we’re very excited to have all three of them returning next year. They are very deserving of this recognition.”

Melton had a big year for the Lady Cats at the forward spot as she led Louisburg in scoring at 13.3 points a game and finished with 7.1 rebounds a contest. She also averaged two steals and 1.3 blocks a game.





**Junior Alyse Moore was named to the honorable mention team after leading the Lady Cats in rebounding.**

“Madilyn finished the season very strong for us,” Willer said. “She was our clear leading scorer, but she also stepped up her rebounding and defensive game to become very valuable on both ends of the floor. At the beginning of the season, we were looking for her to have a big year, and I believe she expected the same of herself.

“Madilyn had a bit of a tough time getting to the rim toward the beginning of the year, but she started to learn to be more physical and find ways to

score. Teams recognize that she is the player to stop when they play us, but her skill and experience help her overcome.”

Moore also had a strong season for Louisburg as she led the team in rebounding with nearly eight a game to go along with nearly three steals a contest. She also averaged 8.9 points a game.



**Junior Brooklyn Diederich was the team's leading 3-point shooter and was awarded honorable mention all-league status.**

As for Diederich, she finished the season with an average of 6 points a game and a team-high 29 3-pointerse, but she also led the Lady Cats on

defense. She recorded a team-high 5.7 deflections and 1.7 steals a game.

“Alyse is the type of player who gives 100 percent effort, 100 percent of the time,” Willer said. “She goes full speed and refuses to give less. She would run through a brick wall for her teammates only to get back up and do it again. On the court, Alyse is physical and leads the team in rebounds and steals. Her speed and physicality allowed us to play the type of defense we wanted and additionally, Alyse was our second leading scorer this season – a huge asset on both offense and defense.

“Brooklyn is one of those girls that just has a nose for the ball. She may be small, but she covers more court than anyone else and leads the team in deflections. If there’s a chance, Brooklyn will get a hand on the ball. Brooklyn plays like the energizer bunny – she just doesn’t quit. She was our third leading scorer and a person we want out there on the floor. We know she will play smart, give the effort that we need, and take care of the basketball.”

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS BASKETBALL**

### **First Team**

Evelyn Vazquez, Piper, junior

Harper Schreiner, Eudora,  
sophomore

Alli Frank, Spring Hill, junior

Josie Boyle, Baldwin, senior

Riley Hiebert, Eudora, senior

Trinity McDow, Paola, senior

Kim Whetstone, Bonner Springs,  
senior

### **Second Team**

Grace Barnes, Piper, senior

Ayreona Carter, Piper, senior

Madilyn Melton, Louisburg, junior

Anna Burnett, Baldwin, senior

Reagan Hiebert, Eudora, senior

### **Honorable Mention**

Lauren Gray, Tonganoxie, senior

Sophia Ficken, Ottawa, sophomore

Kirsten Evans, Ottawa, sophomore

Jenna Harvey, Baldwin, junior

Kate Ediger, Paola, sophomore

Alyse Moore, Louisburg, junior

Brooklyn Diederich, Louisburg,  
junior



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# Inspired effort nearly gives Lady Cats upset of Baldwin



Louisburg senior Haley Cain goes up for a jumper during the team's game with Baldwin on Tuesday at Baldwin High School.

BALDWIN CITY – When it was all said and done, the Louisburg girls basketball walked off the court for the final time this season following a 44-32 loss to Baldwin Tuesday in the Class 4A sub-state semifinals.

There was obvious disappointment for the Lady Cats following the defeat, but the setback didn't deter from what was one of their best performances of the season – especially on the defensive end of the floor.

Louisburg held Baldwin to 28 percent from the floor and forced 19 turnovers as it was a tight game until the final minute.

Baldwin would go on to defeat No. 4 Labette County on Friday in the sub-state championship and the Bulldogs will

join fellow Frontier League members Eudora and Piper in the state tournament this week.

“We are so proud of these girls and how they showed tremendous resilience throughout that game,” Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. “It would have been easy for the girls to see themselves as underdogs and let the game get away from them, but they fought every step of the way. I believe it showed everyone just how much heart and soul this team can play with when we truly play together.”

The Lady Cats (8-13) got up on the Bulldogs early as they took a 10-6 lead at the end of the first quarter thanks to a 3-pointer from Brooklyn Diederich and a basket from Madilyn Melton in the final minute to give them some momentum.

Louisburg’s offense cooled in the second quarter as it managed three points, but the Lady Cats still found themselves down just five at halftime – thanks in part to their defense. Louisburg was active defensively as they recorded 33 deflections to go along with 12 steals and four blocks in the game.

“Our defensive effort was huge,” Willer said. “We are not a team that tends to score a lot of points, so maintaining a strong defense and holding the other team to

a low score was ideal. We had all kinds of players making big plays – getting steals, deflections, applying ball pressure, fronting their post, etc. It was a solid team effort and we worked really well together. Communication stepped up as well, and that energy carried us through our comeback in the fourth quarter.”

That comeback seemed to give the Lady Cats, who were the No. 12 seed coming into the tournament, a chance for an upset and a spot in the championship game.

Down 23-18 going into the fourth quarter, junior Alyse Moore hit a pair of free throw and Melton connected on a basket to cut the lead to one. Baldwin knocked down a shot to go back up three, but after a Delaney Wright made free throw, junior Megan Foote knocked down a 3-pointer to give Louisburg a 26-25 lead midway through the frame.



**The Louisburg girls basketball team leaps off the bench after Megan Foote hit a 3-pointer to give the Lady Cats the lead in the fourth quarter.**

Unfortunately for the Lady Cats, Baldwin answered with a 3-pointer of its own to take the lead back. The Bulldogs would go on to make 12 of 14 free throws down the stretch to ice the game and the Lady Cats didn't have a chance to catch up.

"We'll give credit where credit is due – Baldwin was extremely good from the free-throw line that night, especially during the fourth quarter," Willer said. "Fouling was the only way for us to stop the clock toward the end, and they were just solid – we couldn't catch a break. We always say that free



throws win games,  
and Baldwin's girls did an excellent job."

Melton scored a bulk of the Lady  
Cats' points as she finished with a team-high 18 points to go  
along with nine  
rebounds and two steals. Diederich was next on the team in  
scoring with six  
points, but was also active defensively with a team-high 11  
deflections and  
Foote also had 10 of her own. Both players also had three  
steals.

Moore was second on the team with seven  
rebounds, while Wright had five deflections, a steal and a  
block.

Although, the Lady Cats came up  
short, Willer was excited to see her team's effort in what was  
team's most  
important game of the year.

"This season has definitely been a roller coaster filled with  
many  
ups and downs," she said. "It's been an emotional ride for all  
of us, but I  
think we finally saw during that last game how truly special  
this team could  
be. We battled through so many tough moments and I believe we  
are all stronger  
for it. It has been a truly unforgettable year that I won't  
soon forget. I am so  
proud of the determination our team had to finish out the  
season strong."

<b>LOU</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>- 32</b>				
<b>BAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>

LOUISBURG (8-13): Madilyn Melton

6-14 6-9 18; Brooklyn Diederich 2-10 0-0 6; Alyse Moore 1-6 2-2 4; Megan Foote

1-3 0-0 3; Delaney Wright 0-6 1-2 1. Totals: 10-46 9-14 32. 3-point field

goals: 3, (Diederich 2, Foote)

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## Lady Cats fall to Paola in regular season finale



Sophomore Delaney Wright goes up for a shot against Paola during a game earlier this season. The Lady Cats fell to the Panthers on Friday, 46-35.

PAOLA – After losing in the final seconds last time it squared off with Paola, the Louisburg girls basketball team was hoping to return the favor when the Lady Cats traveled to Paola.

Unfortunately, a slow start cost the Lady Cats and they weren't able to recover in a 46-35 loss Friday to the Panthers and they ended their regular season with an 8-12 record. Despite a rough first quarter, Louisburg went on to outscore Paola in the next two frames as it continued to try and chip

away at the lead.

“I feel like the girls played very hard, and they fought until the end,” coach Leanna Willer said. “We were very proud of the team and how we battled. We never hung our heads or gave up whatsoever.”

Paola jumped out to a big lead as it outscored Louisburg 15-5 in the opening quarter and the Lady Cats tried to battle back. Louisburg leaned on junior Madilyn Melton to help get them there.

Melton scored a game-high 16 points to go along with six rebounds in the loss, including an 8-for-11 performance from the free-throw line.

Junior Megan Foote had a team-high five steals to go along with five rebounds and junior Alyse Moore had a team-high eight boards. Another junior, Brooklyn Diederich, had a team-best four assists.

The Lady Cat defense also improved in the second half as it held Paola to 20 points in the final two quarters. Trinity McDow led Paola in scoring with 19 points and Brayden Hanf also scored in double figures with 12.

“Without that 10 point spread in the first quarter, we are looking at a very different ball game,” Willer said. “From that point on, we played pretty

much even with them, and we actually won the second and third quarters. We definitely saw a lot of positives in that game.

“First of all, I think Madilyn played a great game for us – she got to the rim and the free throw line, which is exactly what we needed from her. I think our defense stepped up in the second half and took them out of their element. Delaney Wright played a huge role in that as she guarded McDow and limited her touches in the second half. I also think we did a much better job moving the ball around on offense and being patient on that end of the floor. It took us a bit to settle into it, but once we did, we started getting the looks we wanted and creating more opportunities for success.”

Louisburg is hoping some of those positives carry over into the postseason. The Lady Cats, who are ranked No. 12 in the Class 4A East playoffs, will travel to No. 5 Baldwin tonight for the sub-state semifinals. Tipoff is set for 7 p.m.

The winner of that game will play the winner of No. 4 Labette County and No. 13 Atchison on Friday evening for the sub-state championship.

“We are very excited heading into sub-state, and it’s always nice to start the postseason with a clean slate,” Willer said.



'Wins, losses, record

– none of that matters now. Each team comes in at 0-0 and anything can happen.

We are geared up and ready to go for what will inevitably be a tough battle. It's now or never."

<b>LOU</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9 –</b>
<b>35</b>				

<b>PAO</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12 –</b>
<b>46</b>				

LOUISBURG (8-12): Madilyn Melton

4-10 8-11 16; Brooklyn Diederich 2-6 0-0 5; Delaney Wright 2-7 0-1 4; Alyse

Moore 1-6 1-6 3; Megan Foote 0-3 3-6 3; Brianne Kuhlman 1-1 0-0 2; Haley Cain

1-6 0-2 2. Totals: 11-39 12-26 35. 3-point field goals: 1, (Diederich)