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 allleague 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 hourlong 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 his 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.



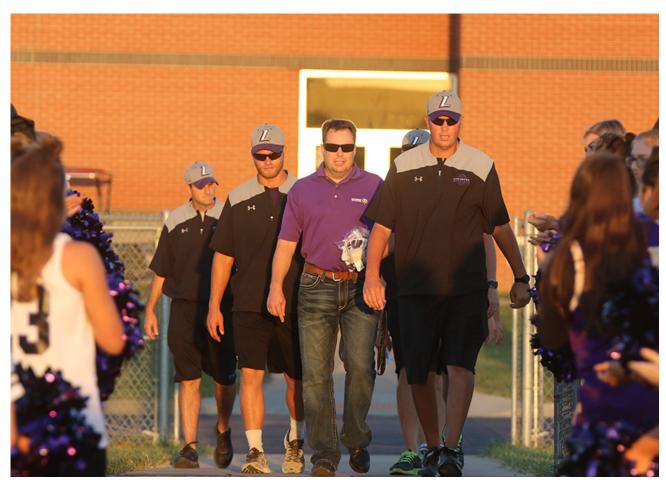
Dennis (left) and Dr. Jake Polzin pose for a picture in their office. Polzin will officially take over the practice from Dennis after this week, but both have been seeing the patients the last three months.

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...

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

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."

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2019



It was a successful, and eventful, 2019 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2019, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link

to the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account — whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site. There were stories that I had to leave off that normally would easily make it. 2019 was that successful of a year for Wildcat athletics.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can't wait for 2020 to begin. Looking forward to it!



10. Tucker, Ratliff-Becher win powerlifting titles, Tucker breaks state record.

Two Louisburg High

School weightlifters made their way to the top of the podium in March during

the Class 4A State Powerlifting Meet at Basehor-Linwood High School.

Louisburg senior Kiefer Tucker and junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher both earned state championships in their respective weight class. Senior Jonathan DePriest finished third overall and several other Wildcats also earned individual medals.

Not only did Tucker

win a state title in the 220-pound division, he also broke a 24-year state bench

press record as he recorded a bench of 375 pounds to surpass the old mark of

365. He also won the squat competition at 505 pounds and had a total of 1,165

pounds to run away with the crown.

Tucker's total was the

highest three-lift mark at the entire state meet in all weight classes.

"I had messed around with 375

and 385 before on bench, so I was confident that I could lift it if I had the

chance," Tucker said. "I was more worried about my first lifts on bench at 345

and 365 because if I messed up on those attempts then I would not have had the

change to even attempt 375. It was definitely a sigh of relief when I finally

locked it out.

"It was a great feeling to beat the state record. To put Louisburg up on the record chart definitely brought a smile to

my face."

Ratliff-Becher had a big day

in the women's division as she won a state crown in the 180-pound weight class.

She finished with a three-lift total of 575 pounds.



The Louisburg junior took first in bench press with 155 pounds,

first in clean at 150 pounds and second in squat with a 270-pound lift.

"Winning the state title meant a lot to me," Ratliff-Becher said. "I have put in a lot of time and

effort in weights class, so it's nice to see it has paid off. But, also because

I feel as if I put out a message to girls that it's cool to be strong

physically. I know that being sometimes the only girls in a class with a lot of

strong guys is intimidating. Weightlifting is all about your own personal

growth and seeing how far you can push yourself.

"I was honestly surprised I won because there are lots of very strong girls there and it's good competition. It's also fun to meet new people

that have the same interests and motivation as you."



9. Golf qualifies for state, Dillon medals for third straight season

As the scores trickled

in to the clubhouse at Paola Country Club, the Louisburg golf team could hardly stand it.

The Wildcats were

nervously waiting to hear if they had qualified for state, but they knew it was

going to be close. Louisburg had to be in the top three of the team standings

to earn a spot and the Wildcats had some tough competition amongst them.

As it turned out, the Wildcats had nothing to worry about.

Louisburg recorded a team score of 352 during the Class 4A regional tournament in May and finished third overall by nine strokes over fourth-place Ottawa. The Wildcat team of Calvin Dillon, Drake Varns, Garrett Rolofson, Ryan Haight, Noah Hill and Colin Cook all competed in the state tournament

Topeka-Hayden won the

regional title going away with a 332 and Louisburg was just three strokes

behind runner-up Tonganoxie, which had a 349.

"It feels great,

especially with all the hard work we have put in the offseason and last few

months," Dillon said. "It was our goal coming in and we did it. I felt like we

had a good chance. It was borderline with those four teams being as close as we

are. I knew we had a chance, but it was nice to actually qualify. It was

definitely a little nerve-racking waiting for the scores to come in."

As impressive as that

feat was for the Wildcats, Dillon's performance blew away the rest of the competition.

The Louisburg junior

won his first individual regional title as he carded a 1-over 73 to win the

tournament by six strokes. Dillon's 73 was his best score on the season and he

has now won all but one tournament on the year.

Dillon went on to record his third consecutive state medal and finished 11^{th} overall in Dodge City after the tournament was postponed several times, and eventually moved due to weather.



8. Wildcat wrestling sends six to state, Moore earns first state medal

Back in early November

of 2018, Austin Moore was in a sling with a broken collarbone and he wondered

why all this was happening.

Moore suffered the

injury during the regional football playoffs and he didn't get to finish his

final high school season. Not only that, his hopes of getting his first state

wrestling medal was in serious jeopardy.

A little more than

four months later, Moore was on the medal stand with some of the state's best wrestlers in his weight class.

The Louisburg senior earned a fourth-place medal at 220 pounds during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships in February at the Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina. It was his first high school state medal and it marked the end of a long journey for Moore.

"It was pretty special

for me to get a state medal, especially because it has been a goal of mine ever

since I started wrestling," Moore said. "Overall, I felt like
I wrestled pretty

well, but I just wish I could've ended it on a win."

The Wildcats qualified six wrestlers for state, had three regional champions and took third place in the team standings during the regional tournament in Paola — all while not being able to field a full team.

Louisburg's talent was

certainly on full display during the two-day tournament. Brandon Doles, Blue

Caplinger and Austin Moore won regional crowns, Cade Holtzen was a regional

runner-up, while Gabe Bonham and Ryan Owens also qualified for state by placing

third and fourth, respectively.

As a team, the

Wildcats ended up with 138.5 points and was just 2.5 points out of second

place. Ottawa won the regional with 149.5 points and Eudora was second at 141.

It was the highest regional team finish for Louisburg since 1998.

"The way these guys

wrestled this weekend shows that the program has been doing so many things

right this season," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "We've had the obstacle

of low numbers, which hurt us in our duals, but when it comes to tournament

time, we have a bunch of guys who are placing high and that gives us a lot of

team points. Taking six to state feels pretty encouraging, and finishing third

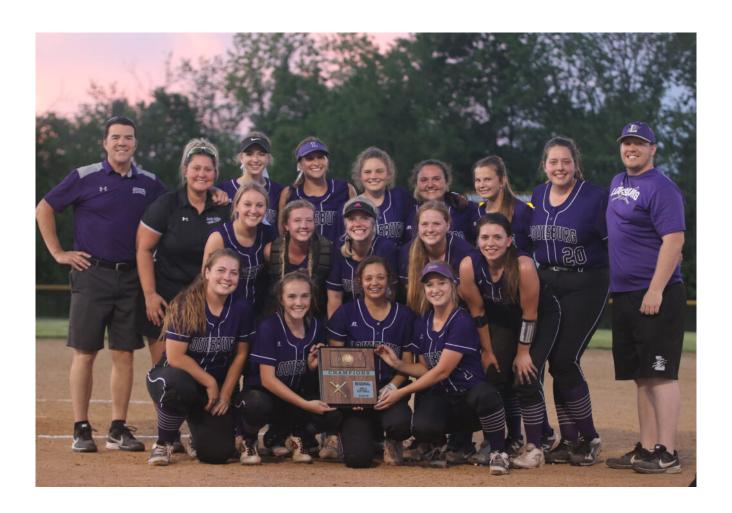
at regionals is an awesome statement for this team.

"If a few things had

gone the other way, we would have been in second as a team. On paper, we

weren't supposed to be in the race for a regional plaque. Almost all of our

guys stepped up and scored huge team points for us."



7. Louisburg softball captures regional title

OTTAWA - Madison

Svoboda could feel her heart starting to come out of her chest.

Karson Griggs was a feeling a little nauseous.

Those are some of the

same feelings that were flooding the Louisburg softball's team dugout during the

final inning of the Class 4A regional championship game against Chanute on Tuesday in Ottawa.

Louisburg held a one

run lead, but Chanute had the tying run on third, two outs, and a trip to the

state tournament was on the line. On the mound was sophomore

Brooklyn

Diederich, and with two strikes, the Chanute batter fouled five straight pitches.

The tension was mounting.

Finally, on the 10^{th} pitch of the at-bat, Diederich got what she was looking for — a swing and miss.

The strikeout sealed the Lady Cats' trip to state with a 6-5 victory over No. 7 seed Chanute and sent shockwaves throughout Class 4A softball.

"I want to cry, but at

the same time I am just really happy," Griggs said. "It is exciting because I

never thought something like this could happen, especially this year. It feels

really nice and now maybe people will actually start taking us seriously."

Not many gave people

gave the Lady Cats a chance as they entered the Class 4A regional tournament

with just five wins and were forced to begin tournament action in the play-in game.

After a 17-2 win over

Parsons last Monday in the play-in game, No. 15 Louisburg advanced to the

regional semifinals and upset No. 2 seed Ottawa, 9-7, which helped set up the

Lady Cats' first state tournament appearance since 2014.

"I think a lot of

other teams underestimated us," Diederich said. "The fact that we came out and

played our hardest ball showed what type of team we actually are. It is just crazy."

At the state tournament in Salina a week later, the Lady Cats faced off against Andale and lost to the eventual state champion in the first round, 10-0.



6. Cross Country qualifies for state, Moore breaks school record and takes third at state

BALDWIN CITY — One by one,

members of the Louisburg girls cross country team crossed the finish line and

coach John Reece was unsure whether or not his team did enough

to qualify for state.

The Lady Cats had made

school history by qualifying the last two seasons, but the third time was a

little bit in jeopardy — that was until the results were released.

As it turned out,

Reece didn't need to be so worried.

Louisburg finished third overall with 96 points in October at the Class 4A regional meet at the Baldwin Golf Course, and beat out Bishop Miege by six points to earn a spot at the state meet this weekend in Wamego.

The team of Trinity

Moore, Carlee Gassman, Reese Johnson, Claire Brown, Ruth Minster, Kennady

Wilkerson and Bree Gassman competed for the Lady Cats at state.

"This group of girls runs

well, they race well and they train well together," coach Reece said. "They are

a good group and this is just as exciting as the other two times. The

competition was a lot tougher than the previous two times. We had to run our

races and we did. From our third to fifth runners was about an eight point spread."

Trinity Moore has left a

lasting impression on the Louisburg cross country program over the last four

years, but she saved the best moment for her final act.

Moore broke her own school record with a time of 19 minutes and 39 seconds to finish third overall at the Kansas Class 4A State Cross Country Championships at the Wamego Country Club a week later.

The Louisburg senior

recorded the program's best ever state finish as she eclipsed her fourth-place state

medal from a season ago.

"It meant so much to

me to finish with such a great race for my high school career," Moore said.

"Going into the race, I didn't know how well I would finish. This race had the

best competition that I have ran against all year and I think that is what $\begin{tabular}{ll} \end{tabular} \label{table}$

really pushed me.

"When I saw my time

crossing the finish line, I was ecstatic. I felt great the entire race and was

able to control everything I did. Finishing third was icing on the cake. I was

surprised but so incredibly happy to be able to place in such a great spot, but

I also knew that this what I had worked for all year."

This made the fourth

state medal for Moore in her high school career and she improved on her state

finish every year. Last season, she took fourth overall and bested her state

time from a year ago by more than 30 seconds.



5. Boys Soccer wins league, regional titles to earn No. 1 seed in playoffs.

For more than 70 minutes, the goals for Louisburg were hard to come by and it started to leave an eerie feeling on Halloween night.

However, the Wildcats got their treat when it was all over.

Louisburg scored two goals in the final seven minutes of the match to earn a 2-0 victory over Kansas City Christian in the Class 4-1A regional championship game Thursday. The Wildcats (16-2-1) earned their third regional title in the last four years and advanced to the state quarterfinals.

"This group is special," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "It is going to be tough when it is

all over. This group has changed our culture. They came back to what this

program believes and they have bought in to what we are teaching them. They

have worked so hard since June. For these seniors, this is their third title in

four years and I think it is a lot of fun for them.

A school record 16

wins, a Frontier League championship and a regional title are all something

worth celebrating, but following the state quarterfinal match with Bishop

Miege, all Louisburg could think about was the finality of it all.

Despite all those

accomplishments, the Wildcats fell one win short of their main goal — a spot in the state final four.

Louisburg saw its season come to a close with a 3-0 loss to Bishop Miege at the Wildcat Sports Complex. The Wildcats lost to the eventual state champion, as Miege went on to defeat Wichita-Trinity on Saturday, 3-1, for the Class 4-1A state championship — the Stags' fourth in a row.

As difficult as the

loss was for Louisburg, there was no forgetting how big of a jump the Wildcats

made from the season before as they went from a 6-win team to one that earned

the East's No. 1 seed in the state playoffs.

"Going 6-11 last year

and seeing this Miege team almost mercy-ruling us in the regional championship

last year in the rain, was a program changer," Louisburg coach

Kyle Conley

said. "After that was over, we talked about how things needed to change and it

starts now. For our first practice in June, I told them that they are the ones

that has to change them. Since day one, they have played for each other, played

hard in practice and it was a total mindset change. When someone got hurt, it

was the next guy up. We missed two starters for half of the year and it was

always the next guy up taking advantage of his opportunity to fill in. The

freshmen stepped up huge for us.

"This team is special.

16 wins is a school record and only two losses is probably a school record.

This team is incredible, played so hard and did everything I asked them to do.

They were always there to pick each other up and that is what this soccer

family is all about. It will be tough to say goodbye to these kids."



4. Volleyball knocks off Miege to win regional title, takes fourth at state

ATCHISON - The

sub-state semifinal game between Louisburg and Bishop Miege had all the feels

of a state tournament match.

Partially because a year ago, it was.

Louisburg met Miege in

the state championship match only to see the Stags send the Lady Cats to a

runner-up finish in two sets. Then three weeks ago the two teams met again, and

like before, Miege dispatched of Louisburg in two sets.

However, Bishop Miege

saw a different Louisburg team during the sub-state tournament at Atchison High

School — one they didn't expect.

The Lady Cats came out on fire and never let up in a 25-18 and 25-22 win over Miege to end the Stags' season. It marks the first time in at least 12 years, if not longer, that Miege will not be at the state tournament.

Since the state

tournament began in 1971, Bishop Miege has made 39 state appearances during

that time in either Class 5A or 4A and is the most in Kansas history.

"Our energy was going

to be the difference in that match, so we knew we had to bring it," Louisburg

senior Erin Lemke said. "We knew we had the same skill set as Miege, but our

energy was what was going to pull us through there in the end. To get there, we

just had to believe in ourselves and work hard this past week to give us the

confidence that we needed."

However, even after

pulling off a big revenge win that expended a lot of energy, the Lady Cats

still had a sub-state championship match to play against No. 2 seed Atchison.

The No. 7 seed Lady Cats took care of business as they won in straight sets,

25-12 and 25-15, at Atchison High School.

Louisburg lost its final two matches of the season, but those setbacks didn't take away from what the Lady Cats accomplished during the Kansas Class 4A State Championships.

For the third straight

season, the Lady Cats were among the last four teams playing

and brought home a

little hardware for their efforts. Louisburg took fourth overall after losing

its third place match to Towanda-Circle, 2-1, in October at Hutchinson Sports
Arena.

"Every season our goal

is to put ourselves in the best position to qualify for state and then to

hopefully advance to bracket play on Saturday," Louisburg coach Jessica

Compliment said. "Leading up to state, we talked about how nothing is

guaranteed and in order to make it to bracket play, we have to show up and play

our best from the first whistle to the last whistle. If we play our game, then

hopefully the winning will take care of itself and we'd advance.

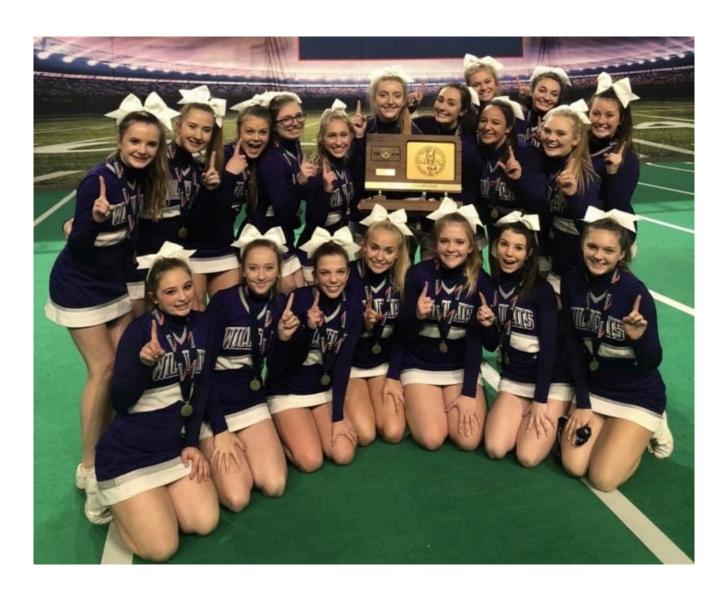
"The eight teams at

state this year were all very talented. I was happy that we qualified for the

semifinals because that put us one step closer to the championship. Even though

we didn't reach the championship match and finished fourth, I was still very

proud of how the team played throughout the tournament."



3. Louisburg cheer wins first state championship

The Wildcat

cheerleaders competed at the Class 4A KSHSAA Game Day Spirit Showcase

Competition on Nov. 23 at the Stormont Vail Events Center in Topeka and came

back home with a big trophy in tow.

Louisburg edged out runner-up Augusta with a point total of 82.25 to 81 in the finals to secure what is just the third athletic team state title in school history.

"I was so nervous at

the awards," Louisburg senior Lauren Vincent said. "We were all holding hands

and had our heads down. We thought that we would get second

place at best, most

likely third. We were content because we put everything out on the mat and did

the best we could. But when they called out second place and it was Augusta, we

screamed, cried, and hugged each other because we knew that we had just won.

"When our name was

called for first, we jumped up and hugged each other. Then I ran out onto the

mat and grabbed the trophy and we held it up and jumped around victoriously. It

was the best feeling in the entire world. Knowing that all of our hard work had

finally paid off was indescribable feeling of joy."

The Louisburg

cheerleaders that competed are Lexi Pena, Lauren Vincent, Ashlyn McManigal,

Brooklyn Mitchell, Gabby Tappan, Andrea Gaza, Eleanor Willming, Jayden Trester,

Lacie Kallevig, Sammy McDaniel, Mable Graham, Anna Morrison, Bella Feikert,

Audrey Anderson, Sydney Dudzik, Kaitlyn Vest, Jolie Hendrickson, Abby Bradley

and Zoe Cutshaw. Louisburg's head coach is Jayna Guerra.

Not only were the

Wildcats the third team to win a state title in school history, they were also

the first female squad to win a team crown as well. All the history just added

to what was a special day for the program.

"It means so much to

me and all my teammates," Tappan said. "As someone who's been a part of a variety

of sports my entire life, I know how hard each of our teams work to do their

very best in whatever sport they're a part of. We are so thankful that we got

to make history for Louisburg and it is something that I can guarantee that

each and every one of us will remember it for the rest of our lives."



2. Girls soccer takes second at state, Conley named coach of year and Scholtz, Buffington awarded players of year.

When it was all said and done, the Louisburg girls soccer team held its trophy high in front of the Wildcat faithful and the tears were easy to spot.

After nearly 200

minutes of soccer in a nine-hour time period, including one

match that ended in

penalty kicks, the Wildcats were spent. They gave everything they had.

For the second consecutive season, Louisburg earned the Class 4-3-2-1A state runner-up trophy after a wild victory over Topeka-Hayden in the semifinals and then were shutout by Bishop Miege in the championship game, 4-0. It was the third consecutive state final four appearance for Louisburg.

Frustration and

sadness was easy to see following the Wildcats' loss to the defending state

champion, but the team realizes what they have accomplished in just four years

of existence is to be celebrated.

"Being in this

situation two years in a row is something that doesn't happen very often,"

Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "There are a bunch of teams that haven't been

to a state final four and we have been to three in three years. It is pretty cool and it is special."

It was a wild 24 hours

for the Wildcats. Louisburg was supposed to play Hayden on Friday in the

semifinals, but severe weather forced the postponement to early Saturday morning.

The Wildcats battled

Hayden through four overtimes and eventually led to penalty kicks. After an

intense first five penalty kicks that left the match still tied, senior goalie

Carson Buffington recorded a big save and then senior Hallie Hutsell converted

the sixth penalty kick to break the tie and give Louisburg a 2-1 win over Hayden.

"We usually play 80 minutes, but this time we

had to play 110 minutes and we were gassed," Conley said. "We were holding on

and had some chances at the end to win it, but then we went to overtime and

then to penalty kicks. It was all about to see if we could survive. Emotionally

it was just a high for us and an unbelievable response and a great finish.

Carson making a big save, Hallie putting it in for the win — it was just a great game."

In the championship match,

the Stags were just too much for the Wildcats and junior Sophia Stram provided

a big spark. Stram scored all four goals for Miege in the title game, all of

which came in the first half, and the Wildcats didn't have an answer.

"They are just so freaking good," Conley said. "I think the girls were mentally ready, but I don't think their legs were quite ready, but

we lost to one of best teams in the state of Kansas. They have great players,

they are well-coached, but our girls played their butts off.

Coming off its second

consecutive state runner-up appearance, Louisburg had some positive

repercussions from its historic season.

However, none bigger

came when the all-state teams were released by the Kansas Soccer Coaches

Association. Not only did six Wildcats earn all-state selections, but they were

honored with some of the highest awards out there.

Junior Mackenzie Scholtz was named as the Co-Offensive Player of the Year in Class 4-1A with Bishop Miege's Sophia Stram after she led the Wildcats in scoring.

Louisburg was also

recognized on the other side of the ball as senior Carson Buffington was named

the Class 4-1A Goalkeeper of the Year.

"Seeing Mackenzie and

Carson recognized for their positional player of the years was fantastic,"

Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "They both had incredible years."

The Wildcats weren't

done, as for the second consecutive season, Conley was named as the Class 4-1A

Coach of the Year as he guided Louisburg to a 17-4 record. He also led the

Wildcats to three consecutive final four appearances.



1.4×400 boys wins state championship, Wright wins four state medals and team breaks six school records at regional meet.

Three days after

arriving in Wichita for the Kansas State Track and Field Championships, Justin

Collins, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Chris Williams finally got the chance

to get on the Cessna Stadium track.

The four Wildcat

runners had the top time in Class 4A going into the 4×400-meter relay, but

weather threw a little wrench into their plans. The meet, which was supposed to

end on a Saturday, was postponed to Sunday morning and all

races were judged by times with no preliminaries.

It wasn't the ideal situation, but they made it work — and it worked well.

Collins, Caplinger, Wiedenmann and Williams won the state championship in a time of 3 minutes and 25.39 seconds as they edged Chapman at the finish line, which ran a 3:25.61. It was the first state track championship for Louisburg since 2015 when Connor McMullen won the discus.

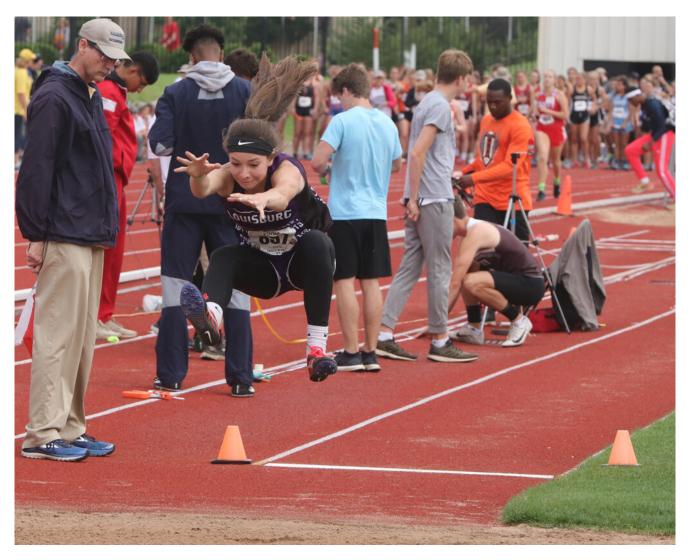
That was just one event in what was an historic week for Louisburg track.

Louisburg freshman Delaney Wright earned four state medals, while junior teammate Carlee Gassman finished with three as the Lady Cats went on to finish $10^{\rm th}$ in the team standings. The Lady Cats earned several other medals at the state meet coming off an impressive performance at regionals.

During the Class 4A

regional meet at Paola High School, Wright qualified for state in four events,

broke two school records and earned a regional title in her first postseason track meet.



Wright won a regional

title in the long jump and finished second in the 200 and 400meter dashes. She

also helped Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh and Sydni Keagle to a second place finish

in the 4×400 -meter relay.

"I am so grateful for

everything," Wright said. "I had been having trouble with my hip this week and

I just wanted to come out and make state in at least one event. I didn't

realize I would make it in four. It is an unbelieveable feeling."

Wright's day was just one of the many positives for the Lady Cats as they broke four school records, had four regional champions and qualified for state in 10 events.

As a team, the Lady Cats nearly earned the regional runner-up trophy as they racked up 86.5 points and finished a half a point behind second place Baldwin and Bishop Miege, who tied for second. Paola won the regional title with 107 points.

The Wildcat boys also broke two school records and would end up qualifying for nine spots at the state meet.

Haight, Yows earn all-state player of the year honors



Louisburg senior Ryan Haight was named as the Class 4-1A Co-Defender of the Year recently by the Kansas High School Soccer Coaches Association.

The Louisburg boys soccer team had one of its best seasons in the program's history in 2019 as they set a school record in number of wins and earned a No. 1 seed in the state playoffs.

The state soccer coaches were well aware of the Wildcats' accomplishments and several players were rewarded for their efforts.

Six Louisburg players were

selected to the Kansas High School Soccer Coaches Association all-state team

and two were named players of the year for their position.

Sophomore Braden Yows was named the

Class 4-1A Co-Midfielder of the Year along with Eudora's Keaton Herron and

Wichita-Trinity's Sakai Kan. Senior Ryan Haight was named Co-Defender of the

Year with Bishop Miege's JohnJoe Lopez and Ramon Rodriguez.

Along with Yows and Haight,

freshman Cade Gassman was a first team selection at the forward spot. Sophomore

defender Michael Seuferling, senior goalkeeper Garrett Rolofson and junior

forward Treston Carlson were each named to the second team.



Sophomore Braden Yows was named as the Class 4-1A Co-Midfielder of the Year.

"I

could not be happier for these young men to be recognized as 4A-1A all-state

players," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "These boys absolutely worked

their tails off to earn these awards. These awards are only possible because of

their teammates. Braden getting midfielder of the year and Ryan getting

defender of the year were incredible. They both played at such a high level in

every game that they played in. I could not have been more excited for

those two to be acknowledged by coaches around the state for their play."

Yows

had a big season from his midfield spot as he finished the year with 11 goals,

three of which were game-winners, and ended with a team-high 14 assists. He

also had 44 shots on goal.

Haight, who only played in nine

games this season due to injury, made the most of his playing time as he was in

charge of shadowing the team's best player from his defensive-midfield spot. He

also had a goal and two assists on the year.

Also on the first team, Gassman finished with a team-high 18 goals, including

four game-winning scores, to go along with five assists from his forward position.

Rolofson, who is in his first year as a varsity starter, 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.

Seuferling

was also a big part of the Wildcat defense from his outside back position. He

helped Louisburg allow only 17 goals on the year and did not give up a goal all season.

Carlson

also had a big year alongside Gassman at the forward position. The Louisburg

junior was second on the team with 12 goals and five assists. He also had four

Wildcat soccer earns 7 spots on All-Frontier League team



Louisburg's (from left) Braden Yows, Cade Gassman and Garrett Rolofson each earned All-Frontier League first team honors.

It was an historic season for the Louisburg boys soccer team and one the Wildcats aren't going to soon forget.

Louisburg finished the year with a school record 16 wins, its second Frontier League championship in three years and earned a regional title and a spot in the state quarterfinals.

The Frontier League coaches took notice of all that success as seven Wildcats were named to the All-Frontier League team, which was the most of any school.

Senior Garrett Rolofson, sophomore

Braden Yows and freshman Cade Gassman were selected to the all-league first

team, while senior Ryan Haight, junior Treston Carlson and sophomore Michael

Seuferling earned a spot on the second team. Senior Will Frank was named as an honorable mention.

"It was awesome to see how well we

were represented this year, but to be greedy it would have been nice to get a

few more guys on there," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "This season we

broke a lot of records or tied a lot of team records. This group was fantastic.

I could not be prouder of a group of young men and what they accomplished."

Rolofson, who is in his first year as a varsity starter, was named as a first-team goalie. 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.

"Garrett was voted captain by his peers," Conley said. "This is Garrett's second year playing soccer and first year being the varsity

starter. He is a converted basketball player and worked incredibly hard to

learn how to play goalkeeper. He was voted team captain by this peers because

of his work ethic and attitude."

Yows and Gassman provided a lot of the offense for the Wildcats as the two played off each other well throughout the season.

Gassman finished with a team-high 18 goals, including four game-winning scores, to go along with five assists from the forward position.

Yows had a big season from his midfield spot as he finished

the year with 11 goals, three of which were game-winners, and ended with a team-high 14 assists. He also had 44 shots on goal.

"Cade is

incredibly talented," Conley said. "He is a holding midfielder on his club

team, but we play him up top because of how dynamic he is. He is a fantastic

player and is going to be an absolute stud. His vision and ability to read a

play is exceptional. Cade is an unbelievable young men that is always

motivating and picking up his teammates.

"Braden

has been the best player on the field in just about every game if not every

game we have played. He has incredible vision and individual skill. Even though

is he only a sophomore, he has led our team and has played extremely well. He

hardly ever comes off of the field and has been fantastic for us."



(From left) Ryan Haight, Treston Carlson and Michael Seuferling were named to the All-Frontier League second team.

Haight

earned second team honors despite only playing nine games this season due to a

stress fracture. He certainly made the most of his playing time as he was in

charge of shadowing the other team's best player. He also added a goal and two $\,$

assists to his stat line.

Seuferling

was also a big part of the Wildcat defense from his outside back position. He

helped Louisburg allow only 17 goals on the year and did not give up a goal all season.

"Ryan was

named a captain by his peers," Conley said. "He was our best player the past

three years concerning all aspects of leadership, defensively and offensively.

He was an honorable mention all-league play in 2017 and first team all-league

in 2018. He plays as hard as he can every night and never makes excuses. As a defensive midfielder, his stats won't standout, but he is an incredible player and has a great work ethic and attitude.

"Michael

started and played every game and almost every minute for us at outside back as

a freshman and sophomore," Conley said. "He accepted the challenge and played

extremely well. We are constantly under fire in the back and he held his own,

especially since he was really under sized. He is one of the most coachable

kids I had on the team and plays his butt off."

Carlson

had a big year alongside Gassman at the forward position. The Louisburg junior

was second on the team with 12 goals and five assists. He also had four $\,$

game-winning goals.

"Treston

was an outside midfielder last year and was moved to forward this year," Conley

said. "He has improved so much this summer by his individual skill and learning

the game. He has played nearly every minute of every game and has become quite

the leader. His play each and every week has improved as he continues to learn the position."



Wildcat senior Will Frank was named an all-league honorable mention with his play as a centerback for Louisburg.

As for

Frank, he played the centerback spot for Louisburg and was an integral part of

a Wildcat defense that posted eight shutouts and limited its opponents to 95

shots on the season.

"Will

played extremely hard and saved us a bunch," Conley said. "He was our leader at

central defense. He started and played every minute of every game of the 17

games for which he was healthy as he had a knee issue and missed the first two

games. He has been very physical and won nearly every 50/50

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOCCER

First Team

Keaton Herron, Eudora, junior;

Grady McCune, Baldwin, junior; Jordan Barth, Baldwin, senior; Jon Villalobos,

Paola, senior; Ryan Wokutch, Paola, senior; Braden Yows, Louisburg, sophomore;

Cade Gassman, Louisburg, freshman; Javier Trujilo, Tonganoxie, senior; Grayson

Sonntag, Tonganoxie, sophomore; Jackson Rainforth, Spring Hill, junior

GOALKEEPER: Garrett Rolofson, Louisburg, senior

Second Team

Dylan Meier, Eudora, junior; Caden

Prather, Baldwin, senior; Adam Novak, Piper, sophomore; Ian Heid, Paola,

junior; Ben Timpe, Paola, junior; Ryan Haight, Louisburg, senior; Michael

Seuferling, Louisburg, sophomore; Treston Carlson, Louisburg, junior; Mayson

Sprague, Bonner Springs, sophomore; Reese Fogle, Ottawa, sophomore; Keen

Kittle, Spring Hill, junior; Josh Santos, Spring Hill, senior

GOALKEEPER: Chezney Haney, Spring Hill, junior

Honorable Mention

Caden Willits, Eudora, senior; Alex Kooken, Eudora, junior; Tyler Wales, Baldwin, senior; Colby Zimmerman, Baldwin, junior; Owen Roellchen, Piper, senior; Mason Escobar, Paola, senior;

Will Frank, Louisburg, senior; Abel Mendoza, Tonganoxie, junior

GOALKEEPER: Logan Sterling,

Ottawa, junior; Miles Lockridge, Piper, senior

Wildcats see historical season come to a close with loss to Bishop Miege



Louisburg goalie Garrett Rolofson slides in to make a save last Tuesday during the Wildcats' home state quarterfinal game against Bishop Miege.

A school record 16 wins, a Frontier

League championship and a regional title are all something worth celebrating,

but following last Tuesday's state quarterfinal match with Bishop Miege, all

Louisburg could think about was the finality of it all.

Despite all those accomplishments,

the Wildcats fell one win short of their main goal — a spot in the state final

four.

Louisburg saw its season come to a close with a 3-0 loss to Bishop Miege at the Wildcat Sports Complex. The Wildcats lost to the eventual state champion, as Miege went on to defeat Wichita-Trinity on Saturday, 3-1, for the Class 4-1A state championship — the Stags' fourth in a row.

As difficult as the loss was for

Louisburg, there was no forgetting how big of a jump the Wildcats made from the

season before as they went from a 6-win team to one that earned the East's No.

1 seed in the state playoffs.

"Going 6-11 last year and seeing

this Miege team almost mercy-ruling us in the regional championship last year

in the rain, was a program changer," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "After

that was over, we talked about how things needed to change and it starts now.

For our first practice in June, I told them that they are the ones that has to

change them. Since day one, they have played for each other, played hard in

practice and it was a total mindset change. When someone got hurt, it was the

next guy up. We missed two starters for half of the year and it was always the

next guy up taking advantage of his opportunity to fill in. The freshmen

stepped up huge for us.

"This team is special. 16 wins is

a school record and only two losses is probably a school record. This team is

incredible, played so hard and did everything I asked them to

do. They were

always there to pick each other up and that is what this soccer family is all

about. It will be tough to say goodbye to these kids."

Louisburg (16-2) gave Miege all it

had as several Wildcats were dealing with injuries, which made the task of

knocking off the perennial state champion even more difficult.

Senior defender Will Frank played

with an injured knee. The team's leading scorer, Cade Gassman, had an oblique

injury, and was nowhere near 100 percent.



Louisburg senior Will Frank heads the ball out of the box Tuesday against Bishop Miege.

Still, those players, and others, played through the pain to give what they had left against one of the state's best teams.

"Will is going to having surgery

in the offseason here on his knee and played hard and fought through," Conley

said. "Landon (Johnson) is still fighting through a patella tendon problem and

he did the best he could to run on the ball. Cade had a strained oblique, and

could hardly move at all, but just gutted it out for his teammates. David

(Perentis) hurt his leg earlier in the season and he has been fighting through

it. We are just dinged up and banged up everywhere, but Miege was able to put

it on us at the end."

The Wildcats kept the game

scoreless through the first 30 minutes thanks its defense. Goalie Garrett

Rolofson made several diving saves and Frank cleared ball after ball out of the back.

Sophomore defender Michael Seuferling also cleared the ball off the goal line to keep the game scoreless midway through the first half, but the Stags answered with a goal in the 30^{th} minute to go up 1-0 at halftime.

"We defended our butts off,"

Conley said. "It was kind of a 'bend but don't break' mentality there for a

while. We knew they were going to get chances. The goal was to just limit those

chances to the less-dangerous the better and keep them wide. We had a couple

good looks, but we just didn't put it on frame. Unfortunately,

we just couldn't get one to go.

"Defensively, we played well. We

had a wall built and were going to let them shoot from outside and we did a

good job blocking what we could. They have four or five players who do a really good job for them."



Senior Colin Cook makes a pass to a teammate during the Wildcats' state quarterfinal game against Miege.

Bishop Miege put away two more

opportunities in the second half to get the victory and end the Wildcats'

season on their home field — one that provided a lot of memories.

Like with the end of every season,

the Wildcats were forced to say goodbye to their season class as Ryan Haight,

Colin Cook, Landon Johnson, David Perentis, Emanuel Fries, Rolofson and Frank

all played their final game.

"The seniors, from day one, took ownership of the program," Conley said. "Since day one, they have held everyone accountable and it was incredible. I couldn't be happier for a group of guys. It would have been great to go back to a state final four, and this could have been a state championship game. It stinks that we had to run into them here and not in the state final four, where it deserved to be. This is a special team and they will be tough to emulate. These seniors have set the standard and brought us back to where we need to be."

Wildcats outlast Kansas City Christian for regional title



Louisburg senior Landon Johnson hoists the Class 4-1A regional championship trophy on Thursday and celebrates with his teammates after the Wildcats' 2-0 win over Kansas City Christian at Wildcat Stadium.

For more than 70 minutes, the goals for Louisburg were hard to come by and it started to leave an eerie feeling on Halloween night.

However, the Wildcats got their treat when it was all over.

Louisburg scored two goals in the

final seven minutes of the match to earn a 2-0 victory over Kansas City

Christian in the Class 4-1A regional championship game Thursday. The Wildcats

(16-1-1) earned their third regional title in the last four years and will now

move on to the state quarterfinals.

"This group is special," Louisburg

coach Kyle Conley said. "It is going to be tough when it is all over. This

group has changed our culture. They came back to what this program believes and

they have bought in to what we are teaching them. They have worked so hard

since June. For these seniors, this is their third title in four years and $\ensuremath{\mathrm{I}}$

think it is a lot of fun for them.

"I would like to get them back to

the state final four so they can see what it looks like. We are young, but we

have some upperclassmen here to lead us. They all work and play so hard and it

is a credit to them and their ability to play for each other.

It is bittersweet but it is a lot of fun right now."



The Louisburg boys soccer team won their third regional title in the last four years with a 2-0 victory over Kansas City Christian on Thursday.

It wasn't a lot of fun early on as

the Wildcats struggled to find the back of the net and it got a little harder

when they had to watch their leading scorer, Cade Gassman, leave with an injury

early in the second half.

Like they have done most off the season,

the Wildcats were there to pick each other up and freshman Colin McManigal, who

replaced Gassman, gave them spark they were looking for.

With seven minutes left in the

match, McManigal scored on an assist from junior Treston Carlson to put

Louisburg on top, 1-0, and it was all Louisburg needed to keep its season alive.



Freshman Colin McManigal tries to settle the ball as he races down the sideline Thursday against Kansas City Christian.

"I knew we had to get a ball into

the back side to score and once I saw that ball go through, I knew I had a

chance," McManigal said. "I saw the goalie's eyes and I watched him miss the

ball and I knew this was the one. I just popped it in and it was history from there.

"Cade has been doing so good this

year and he is like a brother to me. When he came out, it gave me a chance to

go get one for the team. I just tried my hardest out there and I am glad it all

worked out. Hopefully he will get better soon."

Less than two minutes later, Carlson provided the Wildcats with some cushion as he found the back of the net to all but seal the win. On a day where Carlson, and several of his teammates had good looks at the net and the shots didn't go in, the score provided a sense of relief to the Louisburg sideline.

"I am super excited," Carlson said

of the regional title. "I am just proud of the team on how we continued to

battle even when things weren't going our way. Kansas City Christian was a

tough team, and they played hard, but I am definitely glad we were able to get this one."

Kansas City Christian, which took

third in the state a year ago, provided the Wildcats with one of their toughest

tests of the season. Still, the Wildcats got the production it was looking at

several different spots in the field.



Sophomore Braden Yows tries to get past a Kansas City Christian player Thursday in Louisburg.

Sophomore Braden Yows was a factor for Louisburg all night in the midfield as he distributed the ball and provided the Wildcats with several scoring opportunities.

"Braden did a really good job,"

Conley said. "Isaac (Guetterman) has been playing well too in the middle so we

can give Braden a little bit of a breather here and there. It is hard to take

Braden off the field, and when he was out of there for the 4 or 5 minutes, you

could see the game starting to change a little bit and we had to get him back

out there. He played fantastic and was able to move the ball around quick and

he just has great vision and that helps us a ton."

Defensively, senior goalie Garrett

Rolofson earned his second straight shutout in the playoffs, while senior

midfielder Ryan Haight was locked on Kansas City Christian's top scorer for most

of the night and held him scoreless.

The back line of Toby Espina-Roca,

Will Frank, Michael Seuferling, Luke Faulkner, and midfielders Hunter Rogers

and Ethan Showalter also provided good protection as well.



Defender Toby Espina-Roca clears the ball away Thursday in the Wildcats' 2-0 win.

Louisburg's defense will have to

work hard in its next matchup as the Wildcats will host Bishop Miege at 5 p.m.

on Tuesday in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals. Miege has won the last three

state championships and Louisburg will face its biggest task of the season on its home field.

"They are a fantastic team,"

Conley said. "They play a really tough schedule and their record does not imply

out good they are. They are a very dynamic and dangerous team. Coach (Nate)

Huppe will have his boys ready to go and I will have mine ready and we will see what happens."

Louisburg shuts out Atchison

In its game leading up to the regional championship, Louisburg first had to get by Atchison.

It took a little while to get

going, but once they did, the Wildcats didn't stop as they scored five

unanswered goals to win 5-0 over the Redmen in the regional semifinals last

Tuesday in Louisburg.

Five different players scored for

the Wildcats as sophomore Braden Yows broke open the scoreless match on a goal

with nine minutes left in the first half. Cade Gassman and Ethan Ptacek both

added goals of their own to put Louisburg up 3-0 at halftime.

Junior Treston Carlson and sophomore

Jaden Vohs scored the game's final two goals to complete he scoring, while

senior goalie Garrett Rolofson earned the clean sheet.