

# Second half goals push Wildcats past Ottawa



Louisburg defender Kris Light ends the ball away from an Ottawa player Thursday at Ottawa High School. Louisburg got two second half goals for a 3-1 victory over the Cyclones.

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OTTAWA – It would have been easy for the Louisburg High School boys soccer team to overlook its final regular season match of the season.

With the postseason just days away, the Wildcats' game against Ottawa seemed more than a formality than anything else. Louisburg certainly didn't treat it that way.

The Wildcats challenged the Cyclones on their home field and scored two goals in the final 30 minutes to come away with a 3-1 victory Thursday in Ottawa. Louisburg finished the regular season with an 11-4-1 record.

"It was really nice to finish on a high note," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We worked very hard to accomplish our goals throughout the year and that was the icing on the cake. The boys were determined and it showed in their play. Ottawa is a much improved team and they are playing their system pretty well.

"We struggled a little bit in the midfield because of the condition of the field, but we had adjustments at halftime to

play more direct and put the pressure on them. This game should give us confidence going into postseason play.”



**Junior Grant Ryals knocks the ball down off his chest Thursday in Ottawa.**

The win bumped Louisburg to a No. 3 seed in the East Regional and the Wildcats will host No. 6 Baldwin (6-10) at 6 p.m., on Tuesday. The winner of that match will travel to Coffeyville on Wednesday for a spot in the regional championship.

Louisburg and Baldwin split during the regular season, but Conley said he and his players are looking forward to the challenge of the postseason.

“The playoffs are what we play the game for,” Conley said. “It is a great challenge and provides a lot of adversities. It

shows what teams are really made of and gives an opportunity for anything to happen. I am very excited and the boys are too. We will play some very good teams, and in fact, our first round game will be a great test against a confident Baldwin team."

As for the match against Ottawa, the Wildcats were able to strike first and take a 1-0 halftime lead on a goal from senior Noah Juarez with a minute remaining in the first half.

In the first half, the Louisburg defense worked hard to keep Ottawa off the board as it had several chances to take the lead. The Cyclones' best chance came with 24 minutes left in the first half as they took a shot on goal, it rebounded off goalie Ambrose Stefan and rolled toward the goal.

Senior defender Jacob Benne reacted quickly and sent the ball away just before it crossed the goal line. The Louisburg back line of Benne, Kris Light, Kolten Ragan and Curran Conklin, along with Stefan, turned away several Cyclone scoring opportunities.

"Our defense has been doing that all year," We have worked extremely hard, but we seem to give up some chances on inability to communicate at times. I honestly do not think they believe how well they are actually playing. The main back four and goalkeeper had given up only 15 goals all year; .937 goals against average and if I am not mistaken the majority of them if not all of them were not starters on last year's team. That is a great improvement and a credit to their work ethic. I could not be happier for them."

Six minutes into the second half, Ottawa was able to break through the Wildcat defense for a goal to tie the match at 1-all. However, instead of hanging their head, the Wildcats battled right back.

Four minutes later, senior Herman Knipp scored on an assist from junior Grant Ryals to put the Wildcats back in front and

they would stay there. In the 54<sup>th</sup> minute, Louisburg sealed the win after senior Ty Martin floated a pass into the box and Juarez headed the ball into the net for the game's final goal.



**Noah Juarez heads the ball into the back of the net for Louisburg's third goal in the Wildcats' 3-1 win.**

"Our team never quits," Conley said. "Our goal is to never give up regardless how things are going and to play to the final whistle. This game was no different. The boys just kept working and playing hard. Since the beginning of the year, we have had a goal to never get outworked in a game. These young men have bought in and it reflects their play."

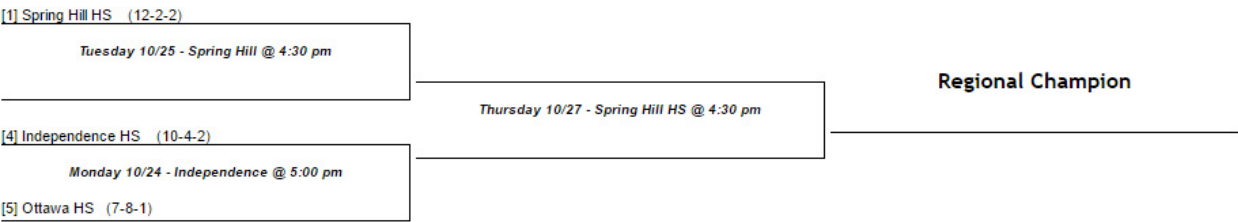
Tuesday starts a new journey for the Wildcats when they begin Class 4-1A regional tournament action. No matter the outcome, it has been a special ride for Conley, who is in his first year with the program.



“The boys have worked so hard throughout the year to buy into my philosophy and my style of play,” Conley said. “As a coach I could not be prouder of a group of young men. They have fantastic work ethics and great character. This season can attest to that.”

Kansas State High School Activities Association  
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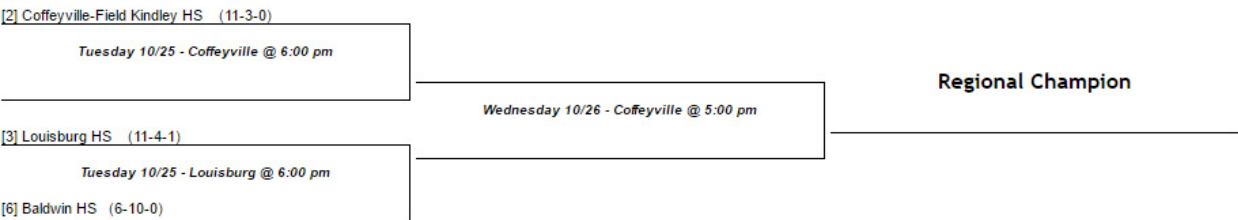
**East Regional #1**



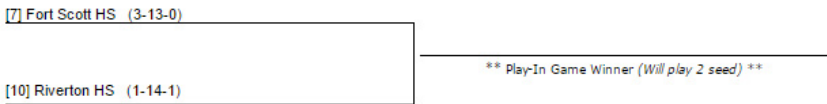
**Play-In Game**



**East Regional #2**



**Play-In Game**



Louisburg ties state-ranked

# Spring Hill



Louisburg senior defender Curran Conklin clears the ball away from the Wildcat goal Monday during the Wildcats' match with Spring Hill in Louisburg. The Wildcats tied state-ranked Spring Hill 1-1.

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A tie wasn't the result Louisburg was looking for during Monday's home match with Spring Hill.

However, the Wildcats didn't leave the field with their heads down – in fact – it was the exact opposite. Louisburg pushed No. 4 Spring Hill to the limits, and after two overtime periods, the two teams ended in a 1-1 tie.

It was a big step forward for the Wildcats (10-4-1) that lost to the same Spring Hill team 3-0 earlier in the season.

"It was a 50-50 game," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I think we had as many opportunities as they did, and in overtime we had much better looks. We just couldn't finish them. It was a heck of an effort. The kids played hard, didn't give up and just fought through everything. They just kept grinding and fighting and you really can't be more proud of a team."

The Wildcats did face some adversity as they found themselves down a goal early in the second half when the Broncos scored off a rebound. That didn't seem to bother the Wildcats more, in fact, they turned up the intensity and provided themselves

with a good look at the goal.

Senior Herman Knipp crossed the ball to freshman Landon Johnson, who was open on the back side, and Johnson found the back of the net to tie the match with 15 minutes left in regulation.



**Landon Johnson celebrates his game-tying goal with teammates Grant Ryals (on back) and Herman Knipp on Monday in Louisburg.**

“Landon showed a lot of composure compared to a coach who was yelling at him to ‘Shoot, shoot , shoot’ about 15 times,” Conley said. “He had a ton of composure to slot it and find where it needed to be. It was cool to see a kid play above his level a little bit. We knew that back side was open, and when we finally got it there, he was able to slot it in.

“It was cool for him and a great moment for our team. It shows the will and determination that we have that we fought even

harder after we gave up the lead.”

Prior to that, the Wildcats had several shots on goal, but were either saved or were just wide of the goal. Early in the second half, senior Noah Juarez played a ball to Johnson in the box but couldn’t convert on the shot.

Sophomore Jonathan Ventre had a shot saved on a breakaway opportunity and junior Grant Ryals also sent the ball into the box as diving Juarez tried to head the ball in, but to no avail. Juarez also had another opportunity to score late in the second half, but was thwarted by the Spring Hill defense.

Louisburg also turned up its defense as junior goalie Ambrose Stefan turned away three Spring Hill shots on goal in the final minutes.

“Ambrose made several great saves out there,” Conley said. “The goal that he gave up he knew he should have smothered, but he more than made up for the four or five saves that were just ridiculous. He played really hard and kept us in it to be quite honest. Without a couple of those saves it could be a 3-1 game instead of a tie.”

The Wildcats also received vital performances from its outside backs of seniors Jacob Benne and Curran Conklin. Both players had to deal with a persistent Spring Hill attack and help limited the Broncos’ chances as well.

“Jacob and Curran were fantastic,” Conley said. “Spring Hill just kept coming at them and those two just held their ground. They were able to stand their man up every time. The outside backs were just phenomenal out there. I don’t call out players or isolate groups very often, but those two young men did their job and kept us to where we had an opportunity to be in the game. I couldn’t be prouder of them.”

Drama continued into the overtime as the Wildcats had good looks at the goal. Louisburg appeared to have a great



opportunity in the opening minutes of the first overtime as Ryals played the ball to Juarez in the box and had a one-on-one with the goal but couldn't convert the shot.

Both teams each had more opportunities in the extra periods, but both team's defenses didn't break and the Wildcats walked off their home field with a tie against a state-ranked team and an undefeated home record.

"It was two teams just leaving it all out there and it was awesome," Conley said. "It came down to a war of attrition there for a while and I was beginning to wonder how we were going to hold up. The kids didn't give up and they weren't going to get outworked. We made a goal at the beginning of the year to go undefeated at home and this solidified that. Both teams played really hard."

Louisburg will travel to Ottawa tonight for its final regular season game before the Wildcats prepare for the postseason. The junior varsity will begin at 4:30 p.m., with the varsity to follow.

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## Wildcats down Eudora on senior night



Louisburg senior Noah Juarez dribbles past a Eudora defender Thursday in Louisburg. Juarez scored one of the Wildcats' two

**goals in their 2-1 win over the Cardinals to move their record to 10-4 on the year.**

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One by one, the eight Louisburg seniors were introduced in front of the crowd Thursday before the Wildcats' match with Eudora.

Jacob Benne, Calvin Cassida, Curran Conklin, Noah Juarez, Herman Knipp, Ty Martin, Kolten Ragan and manager Madisen Simpson were all recognized with their parents during senior night activities. It was night four years in the making.

As special as the pregame festivities were for the players, the result from the match made the night even better.

Louisburg jumped on Eudora early and was able to hold on for a 2-1 victory to run the Wildcats' record to 10-4 on the season. Senior Noah Juarez scored the first goal on a penalty kick, while junior Raistlin Brewer added a goal early in the second half to help give the Wildcats the win.



**The Louisburg soccer seniors are (front row, from left) manager Madisen Simpson, Ty Martin, Curran Conklin, Jacob Benne; (back row) Calvin Cassida, Kolten Ragan, Herman Knipp and Noah Juarez.**

"It was big and we needed the win," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I think we played better than the 2-1 score, we just had a tough time finishing and we couldn't get the ball in the net. Eudora's goalie made some big saves too. We had countless breakaways and he always seemed to be in the right place.

"At the same time we need to find the back of the net. It keeps the team in it, they start believing then they get a goal with 14 minutes to go and it is anyone's game. It is one of the games that was tighter than it needed to be."

The positive result made for a good night for all involved, including the seven senior players as they know their time playing in their home stadium is coming to an end.

"This was definitely special," Juarez said. "Playing on varsity since my freshman year, I didn't get to play with some of my classmates right away, but this year playing with all of them has really meant a lot to me and has been fun. We are all talking together, making decisions and I think it is good to not have one set leader. I think the whole team looks up to us and that is how it should be."

Junior midfielder Grant Ryals nearly gave the Wildcats a two-goal lead early in the contest, but his first shot sailed just wide of the goal. The second shot he took from 25 yards away, hit off a Eudora defender and then off the crossbar midway through the first half.

In the 28<sup>th</sup> minute, it was a pair of Wildcat seniors who teamed up to help give them a lead on senior night. Cassida received a pass in the box, and as he made a move toward the goal, he was fouled.

The foul set up a penalty kick for Juarez and he connected for a 1-0 lead for Louisburg and it stayed that way at halftime.

It didn't take long after halftime for the Wildcats to find the back of the net again. Brewer got a pass from sophomore Jonathan Ventre and shot it past the Eudora goalie for a 2-0 lead.

Eudora managed to get back in it as the Cardinals continue to pressure Louisburg as it got a couple shots on goal and converted one with a goal with 13 minutes left. Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan also turned away a couple shots to keep the Wildcats in front.



**Ty Martin looks up field on a breakaway opportunity at home Thursday against Eudora.**

"We couldn't find feet and do anything right it seemed in that second half, but we were able to stick together," Juarez said. "Our biggest problem is we couldn't feet and we stopped talking, but we got the win and that is important."

Conley was also happy to see his senior class go out with a win on senior night.

"It is a special group," he said. "They all have a great attitudes and work ethics for the most part and they came ready to go. They keep it light, even when I get mad, they do a good job of cutting it up a little bit and taking the stress off. At the same time, when it is time to work they are ready to work. They are accountable, good young men, honest and you



can't ask for a better group."

Louisburg will play its final regular season home match tonight when it hosts Spring Hill at 6 p.m., in a makeup contest. The Wildcats will finish the regular season Thursday in Ottawa.

"We are still fighting for a 2 or 3 seed in the region and some wins will help us get there," Conley said. "We have to get the win and get to 11 or 12 wins and see what happen. Eleven or 12 wins is a really good regular season and that was our goal at the beginning of the year."

### **Wildcats fall in Baldwin**

The Louisburg boys soccer team was hoping for a sweep of Baldwin on Oct. 11 when the Wildcats traveled to Baldwin City.

Unfortunately, the Wildcats were unable to dig themselves out of an early hole in a 2-1 loss to Baldwin. The Bulldogs scored a first half goal to grab a 1-0 lead at halftime and then scored on an own goal on a corner kick early in the second half.

Senior Noah Juarez broke up the shutout late in the second half with a goal, but the Wildcats couldn't get closer. The Wildcat defense played well as they limited the Bulldogs to three shots on goal

"It was frustrating, but the boys did play well," Conley said. "We just didn't finish. We possessed the ball well, had lots of chances, but unfortunately we couldn't finish our chances. We had three to four breakaway opportunities that we could not capitalize on. The conditions were extremely wet and it was difficult for both teams to use the width of the field. The boys worked hard though."

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# Brewer's goal lifts Louisburg past De Soto in overtime



Louisburg junior goalie Ambrose Stefan comes out of goal to make a diving save early in the match Friday against De Soto in Louisburg. The Wildcats defeated De Soto in overtime 1-0 on a goal from Raistlin Brewer.

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For 80 minutes, Louisburg found itself knotted in a scoreless match with Frontier League leader De Soto.

Louisburg needed a win to stay in the race for the league title and wanted revenge for a tough loss earlier in the season.

It took less than a minute in the overtime for all that to come to fruition.

Junior Raistlin Brewer scored 59 seconds into the extra period to give the Wildcats a 1-0 victory Friday at home over De Soto as they stayed alive in the league title race after falling to current league-leader Spring Hill earlier in the week. Spring Hill and De Soto were tied in the league standings heading into the contest.

The win was also the first time the Louisburg senior class had

ever notched a positive result over De Soto in their four years. Earlier in the season, the Wildcats fell to De Soto by the same score in what was a weather-shortened game.

“This was kind of redemption for us in how we felt the first game ended,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “By the boys winning, it gives us an amazing amount of confidence especially after losing to Spring Hill. By beating De Soto it actually gives us an ability to control our own destiny with our four regular season games left.”



**Raistlin Brewer heads the ball away Friday during Louisburg's home match with De Soto.**

Louisburg (9-3) had a few opportunities to score on De Soto in regulation, but its best one came in the overtime and Brewer made sure he took advantage. Brewer attacked toward the goal after he received a through ball, played it off toward the middle, the ball got back to Brewer and he took the shot that

hit the back of the net.

"Brewer's goal was fantastic," Conley said. "He has been so close so many times, but I couldn't have asked for a better time to get one. The boys all just kept fighting and grinding. They didn't give up and played with such desire."

De Soto, which outshot Louisburg 5-3 for the game, was on the attack early as it took several shots on the Louisburg defense and the Wildcats got a pair of nice saves from goalie Ambrose Stefan early on. Louisburg limited De Soto's chances after the first 20 minutes and was able to keep the game scoreless thanks to the Wildcat defense of Curran Conklin, Kris Light, Jacob Benne, Kolten Ragan, Scott Murphy and Calvin Cassida. Stefan also earned the shutout.

"After about the first 20 minutes, we settled down and pushed a bit more," Conley said. "The majority of the game was played between the 18's. They did take a lot of shots, but the majority of them were 30 yards out or so and didn't pose much of a threat. They did have two really good looks early but Stefan made two quality saves. The defense played with a 'bend but don't break' mentality. I couldn't have been prouder of the way the boys played."

Louisburg is currently tied with De Soto for second-place in the Frontier League standings with four regular season games remaining. Spring Hill is one game up on both teams, but the Wildcats will get another shot at the Broncos later in the season.

The Wildcats returned to action today when it traveled to Baldwin this afternoon, but they return home Thursday for senior night against Eudora. The varsity is set to begin at approximately 6 p.m.

**Spring Hill shutouts Louisburg**



Louisburg traveled to Spring Hill on Oct. 4 as it began the week tied with Spring Hill and De Soto for first-place in the Frontier League.

The Wildcats had both teams slated on its schedule for the week and they started with the Broncos. Unfortunately, it didn't get off to the best of start for Louisburg as it fell to Spring Hill 3-0.

The Broncos took control in the second half and scored two goals to pull away from the Wildcats. Spring Hill broke open a scoreless game eight minutes into the first half with a goal, and despite chances to score several minutes later, Louisburg couldn't get on the board.

"It was a frustrating game for us," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We played very even in the first half in fact had several quality opportunities, but the second half we struggled to find feet and didn't play our game. They scored three goals, but I felt two of which were soft by our standards. They are such a quality team, play hard and are a very experienced squad. We will play much better the next time we play them."

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## **Knipp notches hat trick in win over Paola**



**Senior Herman Knipp (right) celebrates one of his three goals with Noah Juarez during Thursday's league match in Paola. The Wildcats defeated Paola 5-0 to improve their record to 8-2 on the season.**

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PAOLA – It took Herman Knipp less than three minutes to put Paola on its heels and the rest of the Louisburg High School boys soccer team was able to deliver the knockout blow.

Knipp scored two goals in under three minutes and helped the Wildcats to a 5-0 victory over their rival Thursday in Paola. In turn, Louisburg improved its record to 8-2 on the season and have now won four straight games.

“Rivalry games are tough,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “Paola is much better than their record (0-10) shows and they play so hard. We preached all day that we can’t get outworked and we have to get all over them. We kept high-pressuring them and we got two really good looks early. That just got us going and then we could relax a little.”



**Eric Vazquez heads the ball away during Thursday's game against Paola.**

Two minutes into the match, Knipp put Louisburg on the board with a goal and then seconds later added another score on an assist from Scott Murphy. The scored stayed 2-0 at halftime, but the Wildcats were far from done scoring.

Senior Noah Juarez found the back of the net early in the second half to put the Wildcats up three goals and Knipp then finished off what was his best game of the season. Knipp recorded his first hat trick as he tallied his third goal with 13 minutes left in the match.

"It felt absolutely amazing," Knipp said. "After getting the two in the first couple of minutes, I was pushing the whole game to get my third and possibly a fourth. It feels great.

"I think we played as a team a lot better than we did the first time against Paola. We really worked more as a unit than we did individually. We passed the ball and made everything work together like it should."

Junior Raistlin Brewer capped the scoring with a goal in the final minutes to seal the win for the Wildcats. Freshman Landon Johnson, senior Curran Conklin and Juarez also had assists in the victory.

The score could have been even more lopsided as the Wildcats peppered the Paola defense with several shots on goal. Sophomore Jonathan Ventre, senior Ty Martin, junior Grant Ryals and Juarez also had shots that were saved, or sailed just wide of the net.

Although it wasn't tested much, the Wildcat defense of Kris Light, Jacob Benne, Conklin and Kolten Ragan and Calvin Cassida limited Paola's chances, while goalies Ambrose Stefan and Ignacio Huesa combined for the shutout. The Louisburg defense hasn't given up a goal in four straight matches.

"The back line is talking a lot and working well," Conley said. "We have a lot of kids playing a lot of minutes, which I like because I want them to gel a little bit because some of them are playing positions they haven't played before. We are playing really good right now."

The Wildcats have found a lot of success on the pitch as they have already eclipsed last year's seven win total with five games remaining left in the regular season.





**Sophomore Jonathan Ventre has his eyes on the goal for a breakaway Thursday in Paola.**

“I think the boys have had chips on their shoulder this season because they thought they let games get away last year that they should have won,” Conley said. “We are just focused and the guys are fired up right now. We just keeping pushing them and they keep responding. We are getting some great results and playing good soccer right now.”

The games will get more important quickly for the Wildcats. Louisburg, Spring Hill and De Soto are all tied atop the Frontier League standings with one loss each.

Louisburg will travel to Spring Hill on Tuesday and then will host De Soto on Friday in a week that could help determine the league champion.



"Spring Hill is going to be the biggest game of the year for us," Conley said. "You could say that it could be for the league title. Spring Hill, us and De Soto each have just one loss so it is wide open. We just have to take care of business and see what happens and hope things fall our way."

### **Louisburg downs Tonganoxie in overtime**

In regulation, neither team wanted to give in. The match between Louisburg and Tonganoxie was a scoreless one after 80 minutes on Sept. 27 at Tonganoxie High School.

However, less than a minute into the overtime, Louisburg senior Noah Juarez decided he had enough.

The Wildcat midfielder got the ball on the 18, beat two defenders and flicked the ball past the Tonganoxie goalkeeper for the game-winning goal. It left many on the Wildcat sideline stunned.

"The kids didn't know how to react in an overtime game and I told them just to run out there," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "They all went and dogpiled him and it was cool to see."

Louisburg went up against a Tonganoxie team that featured a big, strong midfield, but the Wildcats were able to outshoot the Chieftains 8-2 on shots on goal in regulation. However, it took just one to win the game in overtime and defeat a Tonganoxie team that won eight of its first nine games.

"Tonganoxie is a physical, strong and fast team," Conley said. "Their midfield is probably one of the best midfields we have seen all year. The first 20 minutes we were on our heels a little bit, but then we just took over and we had good chance after good chance."

## **JV wins pair of games**

The Louisburg High School junior varsity soccer team earned a pair of shutouts last week as it defeated Paola 2-0 on Thursday and also downed Tonganoxie 6-0 on Sept. 27.

Against Paola, Chris Williams broke open a scoreless game with a goal in the second half and Jarod Rose followed with another to get the win for the Wildcats. Eli Minster had an assist, while Ignacio Huesa and Thomas Arnett combined for the shutout.

Minster had a big game against Tonganoxie as he had two goals and two assists in the win. Jacob Anderson, Jon Paul Totta and Rose also scored for the Wildcats. Huesa and Arnett once again combined for the shutout.

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## **Wildcats shutout Bonner Springs to end busy week**



Louisburg senior Herman Knipp puts a shot on goal Thursday against Bonner Springs in Louisburg. The Wildcats shutout Bonner Springs 4-0 to finish a span of three games in four days.

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Three games in four days might make some teams a little weary, but for the Louisburg High School soccer team, it had plenty of gas left in the tank.

The Wildcats hosted Bonner Springs on Thursday and used a big second half to pull away for a 4-0 victory to get their second win on the week. Louisburg finished the long week with a 2-1 record and bounced back strong after a tough loss to Piper on Sept. 19 that started the stretch of games.

"I was a little concerned about how guys would handle this hectic week, especially playing Piper first because they are probably the best team we have faced so far this year," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Plus we played the two games previous on turf and that is a big difference. At the same time. I think the boys held up well. I think we do enough fitness during practice to help prepare for this and they took good care of themselves. We actually looked like we were pretty fresh, which was a good thing."

Louisburg (6-2) had plenty of scoring opportunities throughout the contest against Bonner Springs, especially in the first half. The Wildcats had seven shots on goal in the first 40 minutes, but their first goal came thanks to a corner kick.

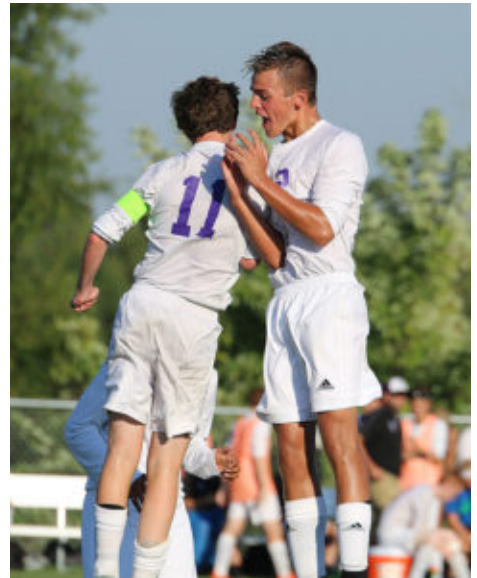
Junior Grant Ryals sent the corner into the box and fellow junior Scott Murphy headed the ball in the back of the net in the 22<sup>nd</sup> minute to give Louisburg a 1-0 lead and the score stayed that way at halftime.

Senior Herman Knipp opened the game with the shot on goal after a pass from Raistlin Brewer but was saved by the Bonner Springs goalie. Senior Noah Juarez just missed on a free kick a few minutes later and also had a shot on goal saved.

Senior Ty Martin, sophomore Jonathan Ventre and Knipp also had shots on goal before halftime, but couldn't increase the Wildcat lead.

Eventually those shots started to go in.

Juarez made it 2-0 early in the second half when he converted a penalty kick after Ventre was fouled in the box. Then in the 52<sup>nd</sup> minute, Juarez made it a three-goal lead when he scored on a breakaway opportunity.



**Kris Light (right) celebrates with teammate Grant Ryals following Ryals' goal Thursday in the win over Bonner Springs.**

"We had a little trouble finishing early, but then the flood gates opened and we did alright," Conley said. "I told the guys at halftime that it was only 1-0 and that anything could happen. We are one bad ball out of the back and we are tied. We came out and I thought we really controlled the pace of the game and I thought we did a great job in the midfield.

"We may not have finished as well as we would have liked, but we didn't hang our heads and kept grinding away and I am definitely pleased with that."

Ryals sealed the win with a goal in the 61<sup>st</sup> minute and the Wildcat defense was able to take care of the rest. Bonner Springs had minimal chances on goal and junior goalkeeper Ambrose Stefan earned his second consecutive shutout.

Louisburg returns to action Tuesday when it travels to Tonganoxie and then will get back into Frontier League action Thursday when the Wildcats travel to Paola.

For a photo gallery of the match, please [click here](#).

### **Louisburg blanks Eudora**

Coming off a frustrating loss to Piper just a day earlier, the Louisburg players didn't seem to let it get them down when they traveled to Eudora on Sept. 20.

The Wildcats jumped on the Cardinals from the start and never looked back in a 4-0 win as they scored pair of goals in each half.

"I was a little worried about our legs at Eudora with back-to-back games on turf in the heat," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We had kids banged up all over the place, but they just grinded and did their job. It was awesome."

Freshman Landon Johnson, juniors Grant Ryals and Scott Murphy, along with sophomore Jonathan Ventre all scored goals for the Wildcats. Senior Noah Juarez had a pair of assists and junior Raistlin Brewer also had an assist.

Louisburg took a 2-0 lead at halftime, but Eudora threatened to cut the lead in half right after halftime with a good look at the goal, but goalie Ambrose Stefan turned the shot away.

"That really was a great save by Ambrose and if Eudora makes that, the game might be a little different," Conley said. "After that save, I think that really hurt Eudora's confidence



and we were able to capitalize.”

### **Wildcats lose in final seconds to Piper**

Louisburg made the journey to Piper High School on Sept. 19 and were minutes away from leaving there with a victory.

Instead, Piper scored two goals in the final three minutes to steal a 2-1 victory from Louisburg. The Wildcats held a 1-0 lead through much of the game after a goal from senior Noah Juarez, but a defensive miscue gave Piper an open look at the goal with three minutes left to tie the match.

With 45 seconds remaining in regulation, Piper took a shot on goal, but the Pirate player accidentally struck the ball off his shin guard instead of his foot, which resulted in a floating shot over the outstretched arms on Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan.

“In the second half Piper changed their formation and they were super direct and aggressive,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “The last 15 minutes we were defending for our lives. It was kind of demoralizing because the boys played well enough to win and that is the part that hurt the most. That is probably on me because when you lose like that it is probably a coach’s issue and I should have done something different.

“It was kind of weird last shot that gave them the winning goal. There really wasn’t anything Ambrose could have done on that. It was just unfortunate for us. But I told the guys we weren’t going to let this loss define our season and we didn’t.”

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# Wildcats pull off big comeback in win over Baldwin



Louisburg junior Grant Ryals passes the ball up the field during Thursday's home contest with Baldwin. The Wildcats scored four unanswered goals to rally for a 4-3 win over the Bulldogs, including a goal from Ryals.

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Down three goals with less than a half to play, the odds were certainly against the Louisburg High School boys soccer team.

The Wildcats were struggling during their home contest with Baldwin on Thursday and the Bulldogs, which had a below .500 record going in, had taken control of the game with a two goal lead at halftime and added another early in the second half.

Despite all that, Louisburg defied the odds and pulled off an improbable comeback. The Wildcats scored four consecutive goals in the second half to rally for a 4-3 win over Baldwin.

With the game tied late in the contest, junior Noah Juarez had a free kick at the top of the 18-yard mark and put it in the upper left portion of the net for the game winner. Just minutes earlier, Louisburg was fouled in the box and Juarez was awarded the penalty kick and tied the match.



**Senior Noah Juarez heads the ball away during the Wildcats' game with Baldwin on Thursday.**

"After being down three goals, it could have been very easy to become selfish and give up, but the boys didn't," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I did love how our kids fought and played with such desired and passion. We showed the will to win and that was great to see.

"We really did not see much adversity yet this season and I was interested to see how we would respond. We just kept attacking and attacking. Sometimes you need to do the intangibles to find success and this was one of those nights."

The Wildcats (4-1) chipped away at the Bulldog lead in the second half as senior Herman Knipp and junior Grant Ryals each had a goal to keep Louisburg in it.

Knipp received a through ball, dribbled past a Baldwin defender and shot it past the Baldwin goalkeeper to give Louisburg its first goal. Moments later, Ryals received a pass from Juarez, got his shoulders over the ball and found the back of the net.

"Herman and I have been working hard on learning the types of runs to make and this was the perfect run with a terrific pass to get us on the board," Conley said. "Grant's goal was a

quality goal. At that point, the boys kept fighting and you could see they believed they had a chance to win and this is when they started to play much better.”

Following Ryals’ goal, the Wildcats controlled more of possession and the Louisburg defense stiffened up. All that set up Juarez’s heroics with the penalty kick and game-winning goal.

As much as the Wildcats were happy with the comeback win, they also realize they made it a little difficult on themselves with a slow start.

“To be quite honest, I feel we didn’t deserve to win that game at all,” Conley said. “Baldwin controlled the game and the pace of play for the majority of the game. As a team, we were flat and did not communicate. We were kind of just going through the motions. To win, let alone, get a positive result, we feel very fortunate.

“This should provide a great example that we can take nothing for granted. I believe they may have been looking at their record and we took something for granted. We had no emotion and were just going through the motions. I believe that this is a great example of what we can accomplish.”

The Wildcats hope to build on that momentum on what will be a busy week. Louisburg travels to Piper tonight to kickoff a stretch of three games in four days. The Wildcats will travel to Eudora on Tuesday and return home this Thursday when they host Bonner Springs.

“This week is going to show what we are made of,” Conley said. “It potentiality could be a great week or a tough week for us. These three games are going to be tough and we are going to have to work for everything. It’s going to be a lot of fun.”

To view a photo gallery from the contest, make sure to click [here](#).

## **De Soto hands Louisburg first loss**

In what was its first loss of the season, the Louisburg boys soccer team never got a chance to mount a comeback thanks to Mother Nature.

Storms delayed the start of the Wildcats' game at De Soto on Sept. 13 and the game was eventually called in the second half due to lightning.

Unfortunately for Louisburg, De Soto's Ethan Rodriguez scored a goal with three minutes left in the first half to give his team 1-0 lead and that is how it finished. Since the two teams completed a full half, the game was considered official and will not be made up.

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## **Wildcats down rival Paola, stay perfect**



Louisburg senior defender Kolten Ragan clears the ball away during the Wildcats' home contest with Paola last Tuesday. Louisburg defeated Paola 3-0 and won its third straight game to begin the season.



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The Louisburg High School boys soccer team experienced the best of both worlds following last Tuesday's contest with Paola.

Not only did the Wildcats get a chance to knock off their rival in a 3-0 victory at home, but Louisburg's victory over Paola also kept the Wildcats perfect in the standings as they recorded their third straight win to start the season.

It wasn't easy as the Paola defense made the Wildcats work for it, especially early on as several Louisburg shots sailed either just wide of the goal or were saved by the Paola goalie.

The Wildcats eventually broke through with a goal in the first half and two more in the second to preserve the win.



**Herman Knipp celebrates with teammate Calvin Cassida (8) after scoring Louisburg's first goal Tuesday against Paola.**

"I feel that we did a great job possessing the ball and making some quality connecting passes throughout the midfield," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I feel we did a very nice job of dictating the pace of play and how the game was

controlled. It is really nice seeing how this team keeps progressing and improving each night out.

"I feel that we did face a little adversity within the final third. I do not think we were aggressive enough or we tried to play that perfect pass. With that being said, the boys work rate was high and we posted a lot of pressure against their back four."

Louisburg's attack did put pressure on the Paola defense early as the Wildcats had several opportunities in the game's opening minutes. Sophomore Jonathan Ventre, junior Christian Scholtz and senior Curran Conklin had shots on goal, while Noah Juarez hit a header off a corner kick but it was saved by the Paola keeper.

Senior Herman Knipp finally snuck one past the Paola defense with a goal in the 35<sup>th</sup> minute on an assist from senior Calvin Cassida to give the Wildcats a 1-0 lead and they would take that into halftime.

In the 56<sup>th</sup> minute, Juarez got in on the scoring as he took a shot from the top of the box and put it in the left corner of the net to give Louisburg a two-goal lead. Knipp then added his second goal in the 73<sup>rd</sup> minute to all but seal the win.

"Herman did a nice job of playing simple and taking what the other team gave him," Conley said. "We have been working on changing the type of run he has been making and it showed. With our scoring the way it has been, we have been very balanced. I feel it shows how any given night anyone is capable of putting a few in the back of the net."

Defensively, the Wildcats didn't give the Panthers much of an opportunity for good looks at the goal. Paola did have two shots on goal in the second half, but the Louisburg defense held on and goalie Ambrose Stefan recorded his second shutout of the season.

The Wildcats were scheduled to square off with Spring Hill on Thursday but due to the weather, the game was postponed and moved to Oct. 17.

Louisburg will try for its fourth straight win this Tuesday when it travels to defending Frontier League champion De Soto. Junior varsity is scheduled for 4:30 p.m., and varsity will play at 6 p.m.

To view a photo gallery from the game, please [click here](#).

### **Junior varsity stays perfect with shutout of Paola**

The Louisburg High School junior varsity soccer team put on a goal-scoring show last Tuesday against Paola as the Wildcats rolled to a 10-0 victory to run their record to 3-0 on the season.

Eli Minster recorded a hat trick with three goals and teammates Chris Williams and David Holiday each had a pair of scores. Ryan Haight, Will Frank and Brian Arnold also added a goal.

Jacob Andersen recorded two assists, while Ignacio Huesa and Holiday added an assist of their own. Huesa and Thomas Arnett combined for the shutout.

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## **Wildcat soccer perfect to**

# start season



**Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan slides in for a save during Thursday's home opener against Ottawa. Stefan and the Wildcats started the season with back to back wins over Ottawa and Fort Scott.**

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There was a little anxiousness and excitement heading into the home opener for the Louisburg High School boys soccer team.

The Wildcats were about to have their first true test of the season Thursday against a team they haven't been able to beat in the last two years. A little anxiousness is to be expected, but one kick seemed to change all that.

Senior Noah Juarez nailed a penalty kick eight minutes into the contest, and from there, the Wildcats settled down and dominated the Cyclones in the 3-1 victory. After a win against Fort Scott earlier in the week, the Wildcats are now off to a 2-0 start.

"That definitely eased the nerves," Louisburg head coach Kyle Conley said. "The first five minutes we were all over the place. We were a little too amped up and running around like crazy. It looked like little kid soccer there for a while. We calmed down a little bit, had a couple great balls through and Herman (Knipp) had a great run. Noah then knocked home the penalty kick. It was a good result for us definitely."

It was all set up by good through ball to senior Herman Knipp,

who was then fouled in the box and the Wildcats were awarded the penalty kick. That play seemed to give the Wildcats all the momentum as they added another goal two minutes later.

Junior Scott Murphy usually spends most of his time on defense, but Murphy got an opportunity to score as he dribbled through the Ottawa defense in the box and his shot went past the diving Cyclone for the goal on an assist from Knipp. Murphy nearly added another goal later in the half, but his shot was just wide of the net.



**Defender Kris Light heads the ball away Thursday against Ottawa.**

"He probably won't get a lot of opportunities on goal, but Scott should have had a second goal too which would have been awesome," Conley said. "He is just a workhorse and that goal he had was just a work goal. That was a great time to get his first varsity goal."

The score gave the Wildcats a little cushion to work with as they took a two-goal lead at halftime. The Louisburg defense, on the other hand, made things difficult for the Cyclones as well.

Conley shifted several players in and out of the backfield and Ottawa didn't many good attempts on goal. When there were



shots, Louisburg goalie Ambrose Stefan turned them away.

Kolten Ragan, Curran Conklin, Jacob Benne, Kris Light, Ty Martin, Calvin Cassida and Murphy all provided crucial minutes on defense.

“Ambrose did a good job in goal and we limited their chances,” Conley said. “We gave them shots from 25 to 30 yards out and he has more than enough time to react and save those. Defensively we were a little shaky at first, but we did OK and there are going to be growing pains. When we played Fort Scott we didn’t get a lot of work, so that was good to see them bend but don’t break.”

Louisburg made it even more difficult for Ottawa as it added another goal early in the second half. Juarez received a pass from teammate Grant Ryals and Juarez took a shot from 18 yards out and put it in the upper right corner of the net to all but seal the win for the Wildcats.

Ottawa added a goal with 23 minutes left in the contest, but could get no closer.

The Wildcats will try to make it three wins in a row today when they host Paola. The varsity match is set for 4 p.m.

“With this league being so good we just have to take it one game at a time,” Conley said. “I don’t think Paola is going to come and lay down for us. It is a rivalry game again and kids have to get hyped up and get after it in practice. It doesn’t get any easier with Spring Hill and De Soto coming up soon and then the gauntlet begins.”

To view a photo gallery from the contest, feel free to click [here](#).

**Wildcats rout Fort Scott**

Once its season opener got underway against Fort Scott, there was little doubt on who was going to win the contest.

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team opened its season in Fort Scott on Aug. 30 and put together an offensive show. The Wildcats pummeled the Tigers with seven first half goals and Louisburg came away with the 10-0 win.

For the game, the Wildcats had 18 corner kicks and never let the Tigers have much of an opportunity on goal.

"I never saw in 18 corners in a game before, but we had tons and tons of pressure," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Our finishing was atrocious. I was really worried about it and we were trying to make that perfect hit instead of just slotting it where it needed to go. Fort Scott is rebuilding with a new coach and he is trying to institute new things. I thought the kids played well though."

Four different Wildcats had two goals on the night. Herman Knipp, Landon Johnson, Jonathan Ventre and Noah Juarez each had a pair of scores, while Christian Scholtz and David Holiday each had a goal.

Juarez added three assists in the victory, while Curran Conklin, Knipp, Scholtz and Grant Ryals each finished with an assist as well.

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## **Wildcats ready to defend regional title with new coach**



**Noah Juarez (right) looks up the field during the team's annual scrimmage Friday. Juarez is one of several returning players returning from last season's regional championship team and was named captain with fellow senior Kolten Ragan (background) and junior Grant Ryals.**

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The Louisburg High School boys soccer team caught fire at the right time last season.

After recording just four wins during the regular season, the Wildcats reeled off three straight victories to capture the program's sixth regional title and a spot in the state quarterfinals.

That may have been nine months ago, but Louisburg hopes it can use some of the momentum and confidence to get off to a good start in 2016.

"I would think the boys should have some excitement in regards to winning a regional title from last year," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "That should give them some confidence with their abilities and success always promotes a positive attitude."

Conley is excited to get going himself as he is in his first season with the Wildcats after taking over for Ben York, who served as head coach for 13 years. In the spring, Conley led the girls' soccer team to a regional title in the program's first year and hopes the boys can experience similar success.

There has been a transition period, but the players are

getting to used what Conley expects and a different style of play.

“Practice has been going well,” Conley said. “According to the boys what we are doing is vastly different than they are use too, but that is to be expected with a new coach. The boys have great attitudes and work ethic and in that regard I couldn’t ask for anything else from them.

“I appreciate the fact that they do not make excuses and try to play the way we want them too. I am very excited to see how this team does. I wish I had another week of practice, like every other coach, but I am very excited to see this team compete.”

The Wildcats have a strong core returning from last season’s squad and it starts with senior Noah Juarez. The Louisburg midfielder is a three-time all-state and all-Frontier League player and will provide stability in the middle of the field.



**Scott Murphy heads the ball away from teammate Chris Williams Friday during the team’s annual scrimmage.**

Juarez was named team captain, along with fellow senior Kolten Ragan and junior Grant Ryals. Junior Christian Scholtz and Ryals will join Juarez in the midfield, which is one of the

team's strengths heading to the season.

Juarez returns as the team's leading scorer as he recorded 11 goals a season ago to go along with nine assists.

"Noah is a quality player and even a better young man," Conley said, "He has a great skill set, but I know he can get even better. So we are going to challenge him to take his game to another level this year. I then expect for his teammates to also pick up their individual game up to try to make his intensity better.

"I envision this year being kind of the icing on the cake to close out Noah's senior year. I feel this year will give him the opportunity to open a lot of doors collegiately. My expectation for him is to push himself to better his game, but also make his teammates better around him."

There has been a lot of competition at some of the other spots so far this season as juniors Raistlin Brewer and David Holiday, along with sophomores Jacob Andersen, Eric Vazquez and freshman Landon Johnson are all competing for spots in the midfield.

Senior Herman Knipp and sophomore Jonathan Ventre will see a lot of time at the forward spot.

However, the position on the field with the most questions for the Wildcats is on defense. Louisburg lost almost its entire starting defense from a season ago and Conley is looking for some new players to step up.

Seniors Jacob Benne, Curran Conklin, Ty Martin, Calvin Cassida, Ragan, along with juniors Kris Light and Scott Murphy will all see playing time in the back. Junior Ambrose Stefan will also begin the season as the team's goalie.

"Defense is a very interesting aspect to our team," Conley said. "We have about six to eight guys who could play four to



five spots depending on our formation. These players are also very similar type players. So it is going to come down to (today) for us to determine starters and to be quite honest, it will be something that will/could change each game. We have several guys with some varsity experience so that helps, but graduating almost our entire defense last year is going to be tough to replace. As of now, Ambrose is going to be our starting varsity goalkeeper. He has beat out the other two goalkeepers and has been the most consistent throughout our preseason."

Like most other seasons, the schedule will be a difficult one for Louisburg. The Frontier League provides several challenges, including teams like De Soto and Baldwin, who have made deep runs in the playoffs in the last few seasons.

"As I think everyone already knows, we play in a ridiculously difficult league," Conley said. "My goal is to make sure we are always prepared, focused, ready to compete and never get outworked in a game. I think we have the skill sets to be a driving force in league this year, but it is going to be very difficult. I feel the boys' league record from last year is also some motivation for this season because they know they are better than that."

Louisburg opens its season Tuesday when it travels to Fort Scott. Varsity is scheduled to begin at 4 p.m. The Wildcats' home opener is set for 4 p.m. on Thursday against Ottawa.