

# Wildcats bounce back with home win over Independence



*(Photo courtesy of Randall Erickson)*

***Louisburg senior Tanner LaBrie celebrates with his teammates following goal Thursday against Independence.***

The Louisburg boys soccer team picked up its first win of the season in convincing fashion last Thursday night, rolling to a 3-1 victory over Independence after what was a tough home opener earlier in the week.

Louisburg earned a 1-1 tie over Basehor-Linwood on Sept. 2, but bounced back to get in the win column at home last Thursday.

"It was great to see the guys earn their first win of the season," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "We showed toughness and discipline, and it was a strong team performance

from start to finish. We controlled possession much better, created a lot of chances, and really kept the pressure on Independence. I thought it was a good step forward, especially after the way we battled earlier in the week. After the Basehor game, we were having to navigate some injury concerns.”

The Wildcats controlled the tempo from the opening whistle, showcasing strong possession and sharp passing throughout the match. Louisburg had 21 shots in the match, while the Wildcats held Independence to just three shots on target.

Senior Owen Marsh led the way offensively, finding the back of the net twice – including a calmly converted penalty kick – to fuel the Louisburg attack.

Marsh also played a role in the team’s third goal, assisting senior Tanner LaBrie, who helped ice the match and extend the Wildcat lead. Ryder Erickson also notched an assist in the contest, helping Louisburg maintain pressure on the Independence defense.



*(Photo courtesy of Randall Erickson)*

***Louisburg's Ryder Erickson races down the field Thursday against Independence.***

"Against Independence, we did a better job keeping possession and stringing together some longer passes, which is something we've been working on," Bovaaid said. "We created 21 shots and forced their keeper to make a lot of saves. Defensively, our back line limited them to just three shots on target, which says a lot about how well our guys communicated and stepped up.

"Owen definitely had a strong game – he scored twice, including the PK, and also set up Tanner's goal. He's been a constant offensive threat and really helped lead the attack."

The win followed a hard-fought 1-1 draw against Basehor-Linwood on Tuesday in the season opener. In that match, LaBrie opened the scoring for the Wildcats off a long pass from Renner Erickson, but Basehor-Linwood answered later in the

half with a goal off a set piece to level the score.

“That match was definitely a battle,” Bovaird said. “We created plenty of chances, out-shooting them 21-18, but we didn’t take care of the ball the way we needed to. At times, we got caught playing their style – more long balls instead of possessing and making crisp passes – and that’s something we’re continuing to improve on. Still, the effort and intensity were there, and the guys showed a lot of grit pushing through two overtimes.

Now 1-0-1 on the season, Louisburg will look to keep the momentum going when they travel to Pittsburg for a road matchup on Sept. 9.

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## **Wildcat soccer ready to take another step forward in 2025**





***Louisburg senior Owen Marsh is the Wildcats' top returning scorer as he is one of 13 seniors on the roster this year.***

Although the 2024 season ended a win shy of a regional championship, the Louisburg boys soccer team made big strides as it improved by five games from the season before and finished with a 9-9 record.

As positive as that season was, the Wildcats will have some retooling to do on the pitch in 2025 as they lost four all-league players from that team, including their two leading scorers and three important pieces to that defense.

With that, the Wildcats do bring experience back as they have a 13-member senior class that will look to guide Louisburg to a winning season this year.

"It's a big advantage," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Last year, we saw the difference a senior class with experience could make, and this group is going to bring us the same thing. They've been playing together for years – from LRC

days through high school – and that chemistry really shows.

“Practice has been great. The guys put in a ton of work over the summer, and it really shows – from freshmen through seniors, the work rate and energy have been outstanding. Numbers are strong, competition has been high, and that’s been pushing everyone to get better every day.”

Louisburg has familiar faces returning on both sides of the pitch and it starts with Owen Marsh. The Wildcat senior tied as the team’s leading scorer as season ago as he finished with 12 goals and 11 assists from his forward spot and was an honorable mention all-league player.

Junior Brody Bovaird also returns, who was an honorable mention all-league player a season ago and will help in the attacking department. Seniors Caleb Feldkamp, Tanner LaBrie and underclassmen Cody Courtney and Ryder Erickson will also look to help fill the scoring void.

“Owen has been showing great leadership all summer,” Bovaird said. “He’s worked hard, and I think he’s going to see that pay off with a big season. We’ve also got several guys ready to step into bigger roles.”

The Wildcats also bring back some experience on the defensive side as well and it starts in between the posts. Senior Evan Moreland returns for his third season in goal and is one of the vocal leaders for the defense.



***Louisburg senior goalie Evan Moreland will help lead the Wildcats as this will be his third year starting in the net. “He’s taller, faster, stronger, and now has the confidence that comes with being a senior,” coach Bovaird said. “Having that kind of anchor behind the defense is huge.”***

Senior Renner Erickson will take the field as the team’s starting defensive midfielder and will be joined in the back by Connor Marsh, Grant Cannon, Ryan Barberich, Wyatt Guetterman and Wyatt Tharp.

“Connor brings in a ton of experience from his club seasons, and he’s already been a vocal leader for us in the back,” coach Bovaird said. “Grant stepped in as a defender in the offseason and has really embraced that role. Ryan is another veteran with lots of varsity minutes and he’s very solid whether he’s at center back or outside back, and he makes great runs forward that give us an extra man in the attack.

“Wyatt Guetterman and Wyatt Tharp are tough, hard-working

defenders who are very coachable and dependable. Renner will be stepping up as our center defensive mid, and his vision of the field makes him key to starting attacks from the back.”

Louisburg will begin its journey toward a playoff run on Sept. 2 as the Wildcats host Basehor-Linwood for a 6 p.m. match. The Wildcats are hoping for a successful season and know they will need several different people to step up to make it happen.

“We have a next man up mentality,” coach Bovaird said. “We graduated a lot of starters, but that doesn’t change our goals or how we approach the season. Our theme this year is fortis et fidelis – ‘strong and faithful.’ We talk about being mentally and physically strong, and about trusting one another and trusting the process.

“Practice has been great. The guys put in a ton of work over the summer, and it really shows – from freshmen through seniors. The work rate and energy have been outstanding. Numbers are strong, competition has been high, and that’s been pushing everyone to get better every day.”

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## **Six Wildcats named to All-Frontier League soccer team**





***The Louisburg boys soccer team had six recently named to the All-Frontier League team. Seniors Colton Blue, Emmett White, Jacob Brown, Ethan Sharp, junior Owen Marsh and sophomore Brody Bovaird all earned all-league honors.***

The Louisburg boys soccer team saw a big improvement during the 2024 season and the Frontier League coaches took notice.

The Wildcats doubled their win total from the 2023 season and reached the regional championship game. Although they ended their season with a 9-9 record, several players began to receive honors last week.

Louisburg earned five spots on the All-Frontier League team that was recently released, including one first team, and one second team selection.

Senior Colton Blue earned first team honors, while senior Emmett White was a second team selection. Seniors Ethan Sharp and Jacob Brown, along with junior Owen Marsh and sophomore Brody Bovaird earned honorable mention.

“Once again, the final four in Kansas 4-1A had a representative from the Frontier League with Baldwin,”

Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Year-in and year-out, our league is really tough. I thought we had pretty good representation, getting one player on the first team. I wish we'd be able to get more on the second team, but again, we had a very tough league this year. I was pretty happy to see our guys getting more and more respect from the league coaches."

Blue was a team captain for the Wildcats and had a strong season in the midfield. He led the team with 12 goals, 11 assists, 37 shots on target and had three game-winning goals as he was a big factor for Louisburg all year.

"Colton has been the 'drill sergeant' of our program," coach Bovaird said "Essentially, the last two years, he's been such a powerful leader for the team. He commands respect not by being feared, but by setting the example, being vocal, and lifting up his teammates. This season, he's led the team in nearly every stat."

White earned second team all-league honors for the second consecutive season, despite battling an injury for most of the year. The Wildcat forward still managed to make a big impact.

On the season, he was third on the team with nine goals and tied a team-high 3-game winning goals. He also had four assists and 25 shots on target.

"Emmett has shown resilience and commitment throughout the season, playing through a serious injury that happened in the fourth game," coach Bovaird said. "I'm so proud of his toughness. He only missed one game this season, and I think this was a huge inspiration to his teammates. Due to his selflessness and grit, he earned the captain's band for two seasons in a row. Even with his ankle injury, he's still our third-highest scorer this season."

The Wildcats earned four spots on the honorable mention, including a pair of seniors in Brown and Sharp.

Brown has seen varsity playing time the last three seasons in the midfield and that continued this year. He tallied three goals and also had eight shots on target.

“Jacob has been like a second assistant coach for me the past two years,” coach Bovaird said. “We often talked about strategy, formations, and practice ideas, which was huge for our team. I felt like he really helped me grow as a coach. His knowledge has been one of the keys to our success, and as a senior leader, his impact on our offense has been invaluable.”

As for Sharp, he was a big piece to the Wildcat defense as a team captain and is a two-year starter on the Louisburg back line. He finished his season with a goal, an assist and contributed to five shutouts.

“As a captain and cornerstone of our defense, Ethan’s leadership on and off the field has been incredible,” coach Bovaird said. “We had four seniors across the back line, which was huge for our team this season. Ethan was a vocal and steady presence from our summer training to game day, anchoring our backline with confidence.”

Marsh was a big-time scorer for the Wildcats this season as he tied Blue with a team-high 12 goals and tallied four assists. He also had 25 shots on target and two game-winning goals.

“Owen built on a strong sophomore season by elevating his play, learning when to make the right pass, and figuring out when to go at the goal and take the shot himself,” coach Bovaird said. “This unselfish approach has led to a season-high goal count, showing the results of his team-focused mindset. His growth from last season and throughout this season led to a surge of success in the stats.”

As for Brody Bovaird, the Wildcats sophomore came off the bench to give Louisburg crucial minutes during several games this season as he had a goal, two assists and eight shots on goal.

“If ‘assists to assists’ were an official stat, Brody would lead by far,” coach Bovaird said. “He’s a playmaker on the wing, combining speed and unselfishness to set up opportunities for his teammates. Several coaches made comments about his speed with the ball as he flew down the wing. His quiet leadership and determination to fight for every ball make him a spark whenever he’s on the field. When he’s on the field for us, he makes things happen.”

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOCCER**

### **First Team**

Jake Rainforth, Spring Hill, senior

Brayden Hayes, Eudora, senior

Cooper Carr, Baldwin, junior

Joshua Audiss, Ottawa, senior

Zach Brueckner, Spring Hill, senior

Colton Blue, Louisburg, senior

Leo Schoenberger, Baldwin, junior

Dylan Kuntz, Baldwin, senior

Alan Calderon, Bonner Springs, sophomore

Aidan Odell, Spring Hill, sophomore

GOALIE: Nate Steinlage, Eudora, senior

### **Second Team**

Jameson Breitzmann, Tonganoxie, sophomore

Ethan Smasal, Baldwin, junior

Nick Odor, Bonner Springs, junior



Emmett White, Louisburg, senior  
Cayden Turner, Ottawa, senior  
Nicholas Johnson, Baldwin, senior

Jude Whalen, Eudora, sophomore

Tito Biles, Baldwin, senior

Daniel Peterson, Eudora, senior

Seth Oberkrom, Spring Hill, senior

GOALIE: Gus Boyle, Baldwin, senior

### **Honorable Mention**

Emery Weiser, Tonganoxie, senior

Owen Marsh, Louisburg, junior

Deion Cruse, Bonner Springs, junior

Alberto Virgiati, Eudora, junior

Rylan Howard, Bonner Springs, sophomore

Caleb Hepner, Ottawa, senior

Cruz Guzman, Paola, sophomore

Beckham Erpelding, Eudora, junior

Carter Hepner, Ottawa, senior

Sawyer Holdsworth, Paola, junior

Jovany Aguirre, Spring Hill, senior

Seth Lovett, Spring Hill, senior

Ayden McArthur, Paola, freshman

Parker Simon, Spring Hill, senior

Ryan Rhoades, Spring Hill, junior

Trenton Ridinger, Eudora, junior

Jayden Soloman, Baldwin, senior

Brody Bovaird, Louisburg, sophomore

Antonio Vaca, Bonner Springs, freshman

Silas Kirchoff, Tonganoxie, senior

Cameron Kahn, Eudora, junior

Jacob Brown, Louisburg, senior

Ethan Sharp, Louisburg, senior

Jordan Jaworski, Ottawa, freshman

GOALIE: Tom Bolarinwa, Bonner Springs, senior; Kaden Applegate, Spring Hill, junior

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## **Week 9 Athlete of the Week: Emmett White**



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week nine of the fall sports season, sponsored by Edward Jones-Craig Holtzen.

## EMMETT WHITE, SENIOR, SOCCER

Louisburg senior Emmett White scored the Wildcats' lone goal last week, but it was a big one. White's first half goal helped give Louisburg a 1-0 win over Chanute during the Class 4-1A regional semifinal game. It was White's third game-winning goal of the season.

White, who battled a high-ankle sprain most of the year, ended the season with nine goals and had three assists as he helped the Wildcats to a 9-9 finish.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the fall season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

## Previous Winners:

Week 1: Myles Vohs

Week 2: McKenna Lohse

Week 3: Ashton Moore

Week 4: Levi Cotter

Week 5: Colton Blue

Week 6: Adelyn Moore

Week 7: Brayden Yoder

Week 8: Truman Ellison

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## Go Wildcats!



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# Wildcats' season comes to an end with loss to Baldwin in regional title game



***Louisburg senior defender Ethan Sharp heads the ball away from the goal Thursday in Baldwin.***

BALDWIN CITY – There wasn't a whole lot that went right for Louisburg on Thursday during the Class 4-1A regional championship game against No. 1 seed Baldwin.

The No 8 seed Wildcats saw their starting goalie get injured prior to the contest and Baldwin used a pair of second half goals to pull away for a 3-0 victory over Louisburg.

The loss ended the Wildcats' season with a 9-9 record as Louisburg saw a big improvement from just four wins a season ago.

“From last season to this season, it was a huge step forward for the program,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “It’s not just the skills we showed on the field; it was also the mindset growth that everyone experienced. We’ve improved in nearly every area – our defense tightened up and we gave up fewer goals, our possession was much better, and we really came together as a team.

“Yes, it was a heartbreaking way to see the season come to an end, but that doesn’t change how proud I am of how far we’ve come and the foundation we’ve built for next year.”

Louisburg gave the Bulldogs a fight, especially in the first half. After playing them week earlier, in which the Wildcats lost 5-2, Louisburg found itself down just 1-0 at halftime.

Toward the end of the first half, the Wildcats had a chance to tie it up when senior Colton Blue crossed the ball to the box and it found the foot of senior Emmett White. His shot was knocked away by the Baldwin keeper and it was the best opportunity the Wildcats had all afternoon.

The Bulldogs doubled their lead five minutes into the second half and added another goal with 12 minutes remaining to pull away for the victory.

“It’s really tough to beat a team more than once in a season, but Baldwin made sure to get things done against us,” Bovaird said. “I thought we showed a great deal of heart and resilience, despite the loss. There were times in the game when we controlled possession very well and made some great offensive threats. While we were unable to capitalize on our chances, Baldwin made the best of their chances. Both teams fought like crazy, and while the game’s outcome didn’t go our way, we battled and never gave up.”



***Louisburg goalie Carter Schneider stretches out to knock a shot away Thursday at Baldwin.***

Louisburg faced some adversity early as starting goalie Evan Moreland suffered a leg injury during warmups and was unable to play.

Reserve goalie Carter Schneider took his spot and made five saves and had two blocked shots in what was his first, true varsity action.

“I’d say that the key to being successful in so many situations is to expect the unexpected,” Bovaird said. “There was no way we could have seen Evan getting hurt like he did during warm-ups, but the great thing was that we had a player like Carter right there, ready to step up and fill a role. That shows the great mindset he had as a player, the depth of our bench, and the faith that the team had in him.

“Evan has been a consistent presence for us in goal all season, and he has been such a vocal leader. I was really



impressed with how Carter stepped up. He was thrown into a high-pressure situation, and he handled it with composure. It's not easy to be called up like that, but he showed his potential and kept us competitive. I think he has a bright future ahead."



***Louisburg senior Jacob Brown dribbles the ball past a Baldwin player Thursday.***

It was also a tough ending for eight Louisburg seniors as White, Blue, Ethan Sharp, Dan Minster, Mika McKitrick, Will Showalter, Cole Clover and Jacob Brown all played their final matches for the Wildcats.

It was a group Bovaird had a chance to work with for several years at junior varsity level and then again as a varsity coach.

"We've been incredibly blessed to have had these eight guys leading our team this year," Bovaird said. "They have been the heart and soul of the team, and I couldn't have asked for a



better group of leaders. Many of them began high school soccer when they played for me on the JV team as freshmen, and then as sophomores they've been right there on the varsity team with me as their head coach.

"They've shown incredible dedication, leadership, and commitment to the program. They've set a standard and created a culture that the younger players can look up to. It's hard to put into words how much they've meant to the team—they've been great mentors and role models, and their legacy will last for years to come."

## **Wildcats edge Chanute to reach regional title game**

Before Louisburg had at the opportunity to play Baldwin for the regional title, the Wildcats first had to get past Chanute in the Class 4-1A regional semifinals on Oct. 29.

The Wildcats battled the Blue Comets and gusty winds to hold on for a 1-0 victory over Chanute.

Senior Emmett White scored the game's lone goal early in the first half on an assist from Colton Blue. The Wildcats controlled possession for much of the contest to get their ninth win on the season.

"Any time you've got the wind blowing straight up the field like it was last Tuesday, you're going to see some adversity for either team," Bovaird said. "Our game against Chanute was challenging, especially with the weather. Wind like that changes everything, and it forced us to adjust our game. Regardless, we did our best to adapt to things. We battled through all that and stayed focused. They didn't let the conditions get the best of them and stayed tough from start to finish."

Louisburg dominated play as the Wildcats outshot the Blue

Comets, 17-3. White led the way with three shots on target, while Blue, Owen Marsh, Jacob Brown and Ryder Erickson each had one.

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## Wildcats battle No. 1 Baldwin in final regular season game



***Louisburg senior defender Cole Clover clears the ball from a Blue Valley player last Tuesday in Louisburg.***

BALDWIN CITY – It wasn't an easy task for Louisburg in its regular season finale Thursday at Baldwin.

The Wildcats had to square off with a Baldwin team that is ranked No. 1 in the state and just clinched a Frontier League

title.

Early in the second half, the Wildcats had the momentum on their side and pushed the Bulldogs. Unfortunately for Louisburg, Baldwin eventually pulled away to hand the Wildcats a 5-2 loss.

"The boys showed a ton of grit and determination against Baldwin," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Sure, the end result wasn't what we wanted, but at the same time, that was some of the best soccer I've seen this group play in the last two years. We're getting ready for a run at state, and that means we have to look at each game one at a time."

Baldwin took a 2-0 lead early in the second half, but the Wildcats responded with a pair of goals of their own to get right back in the match.

Senior Colton Blue dribbled through the Baldwin defense off a throw in and found the back of the net to cut the Bulldog lead in half. A few moments later, the Wildcats struck again.

Sophomore Brody Bovaird was fouled in the box and Louisburg was awarded a penalty kick. Senior Emmett White converted the PK with 25 minutes remaining in the match and it was all tied up.

Louisburg continued its momentum on the defensive end a few minutes later. Baldwin was awarded a penalty kick of its own, but junior goalie Evan Moreland appeared to make a diving save.

However, the officials ruled that he left his line early and the Bulldogs were given another chance and they took advantage to make it a 3-2 contest.

"I'm at a loss regarding that PK," coach Bovaird said. "At that moment in the game, we had tied up the score 2-2, and we were clicking on all cylinders. It's tough to give up a

penalty kick at any point in a game, but when Evan made the stop on the first one, that would have set a tone that Baldwin would have struggled to answer. Then, when the AR called it back, saying Evan had moved off the line prior to the kick, it had a very noticeable impact on the team.

“Everyone was working so hard defensively and offensively up until that point, but that subjective call definitely took a lot of our enthusiasm away. It was tough to bounce back after that.”



***Louisburg junior Evan Moreland makes a diving save last Tuesday at home against Blue Valley.***

The Bulldogs tacked on two more scores to seal the win and the Wildcats finished the regular season with an 8-8 record.

It was the third straight loss for the Wildcats after falling to a Class 6A program in Blue Valley, 8-0, last Tuesday in Louisburg.



“Both games last week, despite them being losses that brought us to a .500 record, showed quite a bit about where we’re at right now,” coach Bovaird said. “Blue Valley is a much better team than their record suggests, and Baldwin is at the top of the 4A division. We made some great stands defensively against both teams, and our communication is definitely improving. We’re showing great movement off the ball, doing better at keeping possession as we transition to the attack.

“At this point in the season, some guys are getting banged up, and the great thing is that our bench depth was a huge plus—players came in ready and kept up the intensity, which is going to be crucial for us in the postseason.”

The postseason begins this Tuesday as the Wildcats earned the No. 8 seed in the Class 4-1A regional tournament. They will host No. 9 Chanute in a 6 p.m. start.

The winner will square off with the winner between No. 1 Baldwin and No. 16 Parsons for the regional championship later this week.

“This group is fired up,” Bovaird said. “There’s a predator mindset that’s set in with each of them – they’re focused on their goals and shutting out the distractions. Ever since last season ended, there’s been a lot of work being put in so that we can prove that the 2023 season was a fluke.

“I can’t quantify how many hours have been put in the weight room, on the practice field, and in giving attention to nutrition and health. This group has been studying the sport, they’ve been extremely coachable, and they are all determined to step up, give 100 percent, and leave it all on the field.”

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# Wildcats cruise to road victory over rival Paola



***Louisburg senior Ethan Sharp scores his first varsity goal during the Wildcats' Oct. 15 road match at Paola.***

PAOLA – It was an up and down week for the Louisburg boys soccer team, but the beginning part was much more memorable for the Wildcats.

Louisburg ventured to rival Paola on Oct. 15 for a Frontier League battle, and the Wildcats made quick work of the Panthers as they cruised to an 8-0 mercy rule win.

“I’m definitely very proud of how the guys stepped up in that game,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We needed a chance to get some things cleaned up as far as our style and strategy. I didn’t want our guys to change the way they played just because it’s our rival or because they’re not having a

great season. I wanted them to stay disciplined and refine some things that we need to improve if we want to win the key games in the postseason.”

The Wildcats got out to a quick start against the Panthers as they scored five goals in the first half and never looked back. Louisburg would go on to score three more goals in the first 15 minutes of the second half to secure the mercy rule win.

Junior Owen Marsh provided the Wildcats with another big performance as he recorded his second consecutive hat trick. Marsh finished with three goals, including one on a penalty kick to end the match in the second half.



***Louisburg junior Caleb Feldkamp scored two goals against Paola last week.***

Another junior, Caleb Feldkamp, scored two second half goals. Seniors Colton Blue, Jacob Brown and Ethan Sharp also scored for the Wildcats. For Sharp, the team’s starting defender, he

recorded his first varsity goal off a corner kick in the first half.

Blue finished with a team-high two assists on the night, while Feldkamp, and seniors Emmett White and Dan Minster each had one. Junior goalie Evan Moreland got the clean sheet for Louisburg.

Louisburg has one final week of the regular season left and it starts tonight as the Wildcats host Blue Valley for a 6 p.m. start. The Wildcats will then hit the road for their regular season finale Thursday at Baldwin.

"We're really hoping to get a solid win this week," Bovaird said. "That will really help determine whether or not we host a regional game or if we have to travel."

## **Wildcats lose close match at Leavenworth**

Louisburg entered its match at Leavenworth on a 3-game winning streak last Thursday and the Wildcats were hoping for a fourth.

Leavenworth had other ideas. Despite a couple rallies, Louisburg couldn't convert on its chances and the Pioneers took full advantage of theirs as they took the match over Louisburg, 3-2.

"They really just capitalized on some key opportunities," Bovaird said of Leavenworth. "We dominated everything except the final score, which was frustrating for us all."

The Wildcats had 56 percent of possession and outshot the Pioneers, 11-4. However, Leavenworth scored on three of its four opportunities.

The Pioneers took a 2-0 lead in the first half, but the



Wildcats were able to answer. Senior Ethan Sharp hit a free kick into the box and it found the foot of Owen Marsh, who made it a one score game.

Leavenworth scored midway through the second half to make it 3-1. With 11 minutes remaining, senior Colton Blue found the back of the net on a free kick from about 30 yards out, but the Wildcats ran out of time.

“There were several moments when we were playing really well, moving the ball around and playing some sharp-looking soccer,” Bovaird said. “It’s just some of those lapses that popped up, and Leavenworth was ready to seize those opportunities.”

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## **Wildcats blank Tonganoxie for Senior Night victory**





***Louisburg senior Dan Minster tries to head the ball for a goal Thursday against Tonganoxie.***

With their Louisburg soccer career coming to close, eight players made sure their Senior Night was one to remember – and so did the rest of their teammates.

The Wildcats hosted Tonganoxie in a Frontier League match Thursday and sent their eight seniors out in style. Louisburg got out to a quick start and never looked back in a 6-0 shutout of the Chieftains.

It marked the second straight win for the Wildcats and left a lot to celebrate following the match at Wildcat Soccer Stadium.

“I felt it was an outstanding game for the team, and it was especially sweet since it was senior night,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “They were focused and determined against

a team that hasn't had the best season. Tonganoxie's record might not be great, but they play a tough schedule and have had some close losses to good teams.

"On Thursday, everyone stepped up and did their jobs on the field. It was a big crowd with lots of energy, and it being senior night made it especially emotional. "It was a very memorable game for all the right reasons."



***Nine seniors were honored prior to Thursday's game against Tonganoxie. They are (from left) Will Showalter, Emmett White, Jacob Brown, Ethan Sharp, manager Ashlyn Kuhlman, Cole Clover, Dan Minster, Colton Blue and Mika McKitrick.***

Prior to the match, the Wildcats honored their eight seniors players – Colton Blue, Jacob Brown, Cole Clover, Mika McKitrick, Dan Minster, Ethan Sharp, Will Showalter and Emmett White – along with senior manager Ashlyn Kuhlman and their parents.

It has been a memorable group for Bovaird as many of them have

been a part of the program when he took over as head coach three years ago.

“I can’t speak highly enough about this senior class,” Bovaird said. “When they were freshmen, they played for me on JV, and then they were sophomores when I first took the role as head coach. Last year, they were thrust into leadership positions and they really matured through that tough season. This year, starting in June when we first began summer practices, they’ve been setting the bar high for leadership.

“They’ve created a culture of belief, commitment, and hard work. When they break down with the word ‘family,’ they mean it, and the younger players have some outstanding role models in them.”

On Senior Night, it was actually a junior who helped the Wildcats get off to a good start. Owen Marsh scored two goals in the game’s opening minutes and finished with a hat trick after scoring another goal in the second half.

Blue also had a big night with three assists, all coming on Marsh’s goals. It was the kind of start the Wildcats were looking for to help put Tonganoxie away early.





***Junior Owen Marsh heads the ball into the net for his third goal against Tonganoxie.***

"Getting off to a quick start and scoring early was key for us," Bovaird said. "When we score first – and score early – it gives us confidence and it puts pressure on the opponent. We were able to play our game, while they had to readjust things without even getting the chance to play their game."

"Owen has been playing with more and more discipline and determination with every game, and that's been so exciting to see. He's been a key offensive player all this year and last year, and he's gritted things out through any frustration. Now, he's seeing the fruits of his hard work pay off. He and Colton connected three times for him to get that hat trick. That's just evidence of how the whole team is playing unselfishly, and that's what it's going to take for us to reach our goals."

Ryan Barberich scored his first varsity goal midway through the first half to put the Wildcats up three, and less than a minute later, junior Caleb Feldkamp scored his first varsity goal as well to give Louisburg a 4-0 halftime lead.

In the second half, Brown got in the scoring column when he converted a penalty kick and Marsh iced the match with a header in the box that found that back of the net.

Sophomore Brody Bovaird was active offensively as he recorded two assists. Blue and Ryder Erickson also had shots on target for the Wildcats.



***Louisburg senior Emmett White settles the ball on his chest Thursday against Tonganoxie.***

Defensively, the Wildcats held Tonganoxie to just eight shots, and goalie Evan Moreland earned the clean sheet with three saves.



Louisburg, which is now 7-5 on the season, will look to end their season strong today as it travels to Paola for a Frontier League match.

## **Wildcats get win with shutout of Parsons**

In a rare Monday match, Louisburg traveled to Parsons on Oct. 7 in hopes of getting back in the win column after a tough loss to Ottawa the week before.

The Wildcats got the win in convincing fashion as they controlled the match and left with a 7-0 result.

Emmett White and Ryder Erickson led the way with two goals each, while Colton Blue, Grant Cannon and Owen Mash also scored for Louisburg.

Blue, Caleb Feldkamp, Renner Erickson and Will Showalter each added an assist in the win.

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## **Week 5 Athlete of the Week: Colton Blue**



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week five of the fall sports season, sponsored by Craig Holtzen and Edward Jones.

## COLTON BLUE, SENIOR, SOCCER

Louisburg senior Colton Blue helped the Wildcat soccer team to a 1-1 week last week, including a blowout of Chanute. Blue scored four goals and had an assist in the Wildcats' 8-0 victory over the Blue Comets.

Blue continued his strong play two days later as he scored a goal and had an assist in a 3-2 overtime loss to Ottawa. Blue, who is a senior captain, currently has nine goals on the season to lead the Wildcat team.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the fall season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

## Previous Winners:

Week 1: Myles Vohs

Week 2: McKenna Lohse

Week 3: Ashton Moore

Week 4: Levi Cotter

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# Go Wildcats!



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**Blue scores four goals to  
lead Wildcats in rout of  
Chanute**



***Photo courtesy of Julie Buckley / LHS Yearbook***

***Louisburg senior Colton Blue scored four goals during last Tuesday's match against Chanute and scored another in Thursday's loss to Ottawa.***

In the midst of a four-game losing skid, the Louisburg boys soccer team had some pent up frustration.

After starting the year with four straight wins, losing four straight takes its toll on a team and the Wildcats took all their frustration out on their next opponent.

Louisburg hosted Chanute on Oct. 1 and the Wildcats wasted no time finding the back of the net as they rolled to an 8-0 victory.

"We had a great deal of energy from the very first whistle against Chanute," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "After experiencing that 4-game losing streak, it was important for us to get our mindsets right. It's a pivotal time for this group, and I'm so proud of their character and determination.

They really embraced the message I gave them before the game – play for a greater purpose, persevere through adversity, and be united as a team from start to finish.”

Wildcat senior Colton Blue had a big night for the Wildcats as he finished with four goals and also tacked on an assist. Junior Owen Marsh also tallied two goals and two assists.

Senior Emmett White found the back of the net and sophomore Eamon Grove scored his first varsity goal late to ice the victory.

Ryder Erickson and Caleb Feldkamp also had assists on the night, while Brody Bovaird, Jacob Brown, Grant Cannon and Erickson each had a shot on target.

Junior goalie Evan Moreland got the clean sheet, while the back line of Mika McKittrick, Cole Clover, Ethan Sharp and Dan Minster limited Chanute’s opportunities.

“We built on each other’s energy and came out with a huge momentum,” coach Bovaird said. “We got two goals midway through the first half, and then with less than a minute left, we put in a third goal. Then, at the start of the second half, we got another goal within the first 15 seconds. We didn’t stop there – nearly 35 seconds later we got one more. That’s three goals in the span of about two minutes, which has been huge for our guys’ morale.”

Louisburg will try to add to the win column today as the Wildcats travel to Parsons for a varsity-only match.

## **Wildcats fall to Ottawa in overtime**

Louisburg was hoping to start a winning streak Thursday at home against Ottawa and the Wildcats were well on their way.

The Wildcats controlled almost every aspect of the game against the Cyclones, but they feel short in the most



important one – the scoreboard

Ottawa scored a late second half goal to force overtime, and then scored in the extra period to hand Louisburg a 3-2 loss.

“We dominated the game in almost every statistical category except the overall score, unfortunately,” Bovaird said. “The guys battled hard, and we are so proud of how they played with grit and strength. We controlled the majority of the game, outshooting our opponent, 23-10, and holding 33 minutes of possession compared to their 25. We recorded 44 pass strings to their 22 and created 9 shots on target to their 4, demonstrating our ability to build play and maintain offensive pressure.

“However, despite these strong numbers, we struggled to convert our chances into goals, and a few key moments of lost focus cost us the win. It feels pretty bad to lose a game like that, but I think it was a pivotal game for us. We’ll bounce back and keep moving forward.”

Junior Owen Marsh opened the scoring just six minutes into the match on an assist from Colton Blue and the Wildcats had a 1-0 lead at halftime.

Ottawa tied it up midway through the second half, but 10 minutes later, the Wildcats took the lead again when Blue dribbled through the Cyclone defense and took the shot inside the box and found the back of the net.

A few moments later, Ottawa tied it up again and forced overtime. In the extra period, the Cyclone goalie punted the ball to the other end of the field. The ball took a high hop and a Cyclone player took a couple dribbles and put it away for the game-winner.

The Wildcats had nine shots on target, including three from Blue and two from Marsh and Brody Bovaird. Ryder Erickson also had a shot on target.