

Wildcats shutout Chanute at home to get second straight win



Louisburg senior Gavin York scored a goal in the Wildcats' 3-0 win over Chanute on Monday in Louisburg.

Louisburg started its first winning streak Monday after its posted a 3-0 shutout of Chanute at home, but the mood wasn't all celebratory.

The Wildcats had in the back of their mind that they could have played better.

Louisburg had 46 shots on the night, with 15 of those on target, and was a little unlucky in the scoring department. Despite that, the Wildcats will gladly take the win and build on it.

"I felt like we played really well against Chanute, and the score definitely didn't reflect the quality of soccer we played," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "Ultimately, a win is a win, and the guys played some solid soccer. We dominated with possession and attacks, but it was just one of those games where we couldn't land our shots the way we wanted to. Four or five great shots rebounded off the crossbar or posts, and we set up some outstanding opportunities."

A couple of those opportunities came in the first half as the Wildcats (3-4-1) were able to get on the board early.

Senior Colin McManigal beat the Chanute keeper for a goal in the sixth minute thanks to an assist from senior midfielder Cade Gassman.



Louisburg sophomore Colton Blue beat a Chanute defender to the ball Monday in Louisburg.

Midway through the first half, the Wildcats struck again. Senior Toby Espina-Roca recorded an assist as he made a pass down the middle of the field. Senior Gavin York chased it down and found the back of the net to put Louisburg up 2-0.

The score stayed that way through halftime, and late in the second half, McManigal scored his second goal of the night on another assist from Gassman to ice the win for Louisburg.

McManigal and York took a bulk of the shots for Louisburg as the two combined for 24, including 12 shots on goal. Espina-Roca and senior Jackson Olson also had shots on goal.

Gassman finished the game with eight shots, while sophomore Emmett White had five. Seniors Ayden Deterding, Brock Varns and Jordan Brown also took shots.

The Wildcat defense wasn't tested much, but senior goalie Brecon Klugman earned the clean sheet – his second of the season.

Even in the win, the Wildcats know they have a lot to work on before the end of the season, but Bovaird is pleased with the progress they are making.

"The possession style of soccer is something we've been working on a lot the past few weeks," Bovaird said. "Keeping things in perspective, we're continually improving from game-to-game. We've got our sights set on the bigger picture and the end of the season, and if we want to accomplish our goals in the postseason, we've got to continue working on a style of play that will beat a solid team."

Louisburg will get another test tonight as the Wildcats host Baldwin in a Frontier League match. Varsity is set to begin at 6 p.m.

Wildcats snap winless skid with victory over Ottawa at home



Members of the Louisburg team surround Cade Gassman after he scored the game's first goal Thursday at home against Ottawa.

It had been more than three weeks since the Louisburg boys soccer team had tasted victory and the Wildcats have gone through their fair share of tough times already this season.

On Thursday at home, the Wildcats got a chance to do a little celebrating again.

Louisburg senior Cade Gassman scored a pair of goals and the Wildcats secured a 2-1 home victory over Ottawa to snap a five-match winless skid. The win improved their record to 2-4-1 on the season.

“That win was greatly needed,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Having a 5-game stretch without a win is demoralizing, that’s for sure. Before the game, we talked about how things in life are cyclical, and sports are no different. They’ve got the talent, the desire, and the work ethic to make the change to get back on the winning track. The previous five games were not a forecast of the rest of the season; they were opportunities to grow and learn, and last night the guys showed they believed in it.”

Gassman got the Wildcats on the board in the first half as he collected the rebound off a shot and put it away from 15 yards out with 22 minutes left in the first half.

The Wildcats took that lead into halftime and doubled it in the second half. Sophomore Colton Blue was fouled while in the box and Gassman took the penalty kick and found the back of the net. It was Gassman’s first goals of the season.



Louisburg sophomore Emmett White heads the ball away Thursday during the Wildcats' win over Ottawa.

"Cade has been a foundational player for the program since he started, and this year has been no different," Bovaird said. "Even though his goals last night were his first two of the season, he's been integral in getting the team going in every game. Sometimes it's tough to see the bigger picture.

"When you've got a key player who's not producing as many goals as he'd like, the challenge is to keep him positive and moving in the right direction. With Cade, we didn't need to step in and guide him – he's got the maturity and drive to refocus and keep on pushing. It's great to see him have some goal-scoring stats in his favor though."

Ottawa scored a goal with about seven minutes left in the second half, but the Cyclones didn't threaten after that. Louisburg goalie Brecon Klugman made a couple big saves early in the first half to keep the match scoreless.

Defensively, the back line of Jackson Olson, Ayden Deterding, Matthew Sword and Owen Barber worked hard in the back to limit

the Cyclone opportunities.



Louisburg senior defender Owen Barber beats an Ottawa player to a 50-50 ball Thursday at home.

“Our keys to the game were using the outside channels to get some crosses sent in, improving on our defensive marking and transitions, and playing possession soccer,” Bovaird said. “We spend lots of time working on the keys to the game leading up to it, and I’d say the guys met the goal to do those things. We’ve got two younger players in the outside mid with Colton Blue and Emmett White, and both of them are capable of delivering some nice crosses.

“The team is getting more confident in getting the ball to these two guys on our attacks. Some of the teams we’ve played this season have been utilizing a lot of movement up top and in the middle, which can disrupt our defense. Last night, I felt like our guys handled Ottawa’s offensive pressure and

transitional runs pretty well. The possession game is something we've been working on quite a bit. Against Spring Hill, we had no strings of passes of more than 3 in a row. We definitely improved on that."

The Wildcats will try and make it back-to-back wins Monday as they host Chanute. Louisburg will then face off with Baldwin on Thursday as the Wildcats get back to playing more Class 4A programs.

"We played Pittsburg (5A), Gardner (6A), Bonner Springs (5A), Lansing (5A), Tonganoxie (4A), and Spring Hill (5A) right off the bat," Bovaird said. "We beat Pittsburg, and so far this year we're their only loss. We have a strong schedule that's meant to challenge us. At the end of the season, we won't have a stellar record because we play so many larger and tougher schools. Five out of our next nine games will be against 5A and 6A teams, too.

"When it comes time to start the postseason run, we're going to have honed our game by facing such tough competition. Next week, we play Chanute and Baldwin. Chanute lost to Pittsburg but beat Paola. Baldwin lost to Eudora but beat Bonner Springs. It's a weird sport – wins and losses over common opponents don't guarantee anything when we face these teams. We just need to keep ourselves focused and moving with an upward trajectory next week."

Wildcats lose to undefeated Spring Hill on road

For the first half of Louisburg's road contest at Spring Hill, the Wildcats were more than holding their own against the undefeated Broncos.

Louisburg found itself down just one goal at halftime and the Wildcats put themselves in position for a possible road win.

Unfortunately for the Wildcats, Spring Hill recorded four goals in the second half and handed Louisburg a 6-2 loss Tuesday.

Spring Hill opened the game with a goal in the first minute, but junior Colin McManigal tied it up a few moments later.

“Take away that first goal, which was 11 seconds into the game, and we find ourselves up 1-0 within the first 10 minutes,” Bovaird said. “We got caught flat-footed with their two first-half goals. The message Coach (Ben) York and I tried to give them at halftime was that this was still a competitive game that could go either way. We needed to step up and go to the ball more, clean up our touches and passes, and get the ball down the side, like we’ve been working on at practice.

“I think one huge positive from that game is that we never really gave up. The boys played hard against a very good team. We stayed disciplined in the face of adversity, which included some solid technical play from Spring Hill, a vocal crowd, and some physical tackles.”

Spring Hill scored three unanswered goals in the second half to take a 5-1 advantage, before Louisburg senior Gavin York found the back of the net.

“A veteran Frontier League coach told me earlier this week that this is the best Spring Hill team he’s coached against, and I thought their teams the last two years were pretty good,” Bovaird said. “This year’s Spring Hill team is definitely going to make some noise in the postseason in 5A. They dominated with their passes and possession, capitalized on transitions, and won the 50-50 balls. They’re a very well coached and experienced team.”

Wildcats tie Tonganoxie in second straight double overtime match



Louisburg senior Matthew Sword battles a Lansing player to clear the ball out of the back during the Wildcats' home match on Sept. 13.

TONGANOXIE – Playing one double overtime match is grueling enough, but Louisburg found itself in its second in a matter of three days.

The Wildcats, who were trying to end their three-game losing skid, found themselves deadlocked Thursday against Tonganoxie. Twice the Wildcats had the lead, only to see the Chieftains tied it back up on both occasions to force overtime.

Louisburg was able to end its losing streak, but not in the manner it wanted as the Wildcats left Tonganoxie with a 2-2 tie. Still, Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird believes his team will use it as a positive and is better than its 1-3-1 record indicates.

“Soccer is a weird sport,” Bovaird said. “How many other games can end in a tie, even after an overtime period? The frustrating thing is coming off a 100-minute game and doing all that work but only being able to say it was a tie. It is nice to see the losing skid come to an end. Louisburg soccer is not used to that sort of start to a season. Granted, we’ve only played 5A and 6A teams up to this point, but we’ve been

competitive.

“With the exception of the Gardner game, we’ve had the majority of possession time in our games. On top of that, we’ve had some pretty good success rates at connecting passes. We’ve been working on playing possession soccer and using that style to wear down our opponents, and with the stats from each game, we’ve been improving every time.”

The Wildcats opened the scoring in the 10th minute as sophomore Colton Blue passed the ball to middle, where the ball was deflected in the box and senior Colin McManigal was there to tap it past the goalie.



Senior Toby Espina-Roca heads the ball away during the Wildcat's match against Lansing on Sept. 13.

The Chieftains tied it up moments later, but in the 34th minute, McManigal put a shot on goal that bounced off the post

and Blue knocked it in to give Louisburg a 2-1 halftime lead.

Tonganoxie tied the match again later in the second half to force the overtime periods, in which both teams had opportunities, but couldn't find the back of the net.

"It's tough to go the distance plus overtime in any game, but when you have two games like that in a span of three days, it takes a toll," Bovaird said. "I think it was good, though, because it's helping us get into game shape. Running and doing drills at practice can only do so much for game conditioning, but real live soccer against an unfamiliar opponent can give us the chance to push ourselves further than we typically could at practice. The important thing is that we take care of our bodies and give them the recovery that they need."

McManigal had five shots on goal to lead the Wildcats and fellow senior Cade Gassman added three in the loss.

The Wildcats will try for their second win on the season Tuesday when they travel to Spring Hill, which is one of the top teams in the Frontier League.

"Louisburg soccer isn't used to having a losing record, but this is a new year and a new team," Bovaird said. "Bringing Coach (Ben) York back on staff has been a huge help with redefining what our program is all about. We're not wiping the slate clean and starting fresh; rather, we're taking what has brought us success in the past and making adjustments based on the strengths of the individuals in the program. I'm hopeful for the next few games. Spring Hill will be a tough one, as always, but in this sport, anything can happen. I love the attitudes of our guys so far this season."

Wildcats fall to Lansing in double

overtime

With just seconds left in its home match against Lansing on Sept. 13, Louisburg was in desperate need of a goal and Colin McManigal came through.

McManigal was in the right spot at the right time as he took the rebound off a Gavin York shot and put it away to tie the match with 56 seconds left in regulation. Unfortunately, the Wildcats couldn't compete the comeback as Lansing scored in the second overtime to hand Louisburg a 3-2 home loss.



Colin McManigal celebrates his game-tying goal on Sept. 13 against Lansing.

The Wildcats were called for a penalty in the box and Lansing was awarded a penalty kick. The Lions converted the opportunity to leave Louisburg with a win.

“On paper and in the match report, we were the more dominant team than Lansing, but in the end, it’s about scoring goals and we weren’t able to do that,” Bovaird said. “We out-possessed them, out-shot them, and out-worked them –

especially in the overtime period – but it came down to an unfortunate situation in the penalty box that gave them the game-winning goal.

“While it was a physical game, I think the things that hurt us were our inability to produce longer strings of passes and possession, along with not being able to get our shots on frame. Don’t get me wrong, the guys played with so much heart and passion, and I’m very proud of them for that. It’s still early in the season, and despite our record, we’re moving in the right direction.”

Louisburg got on the board first as senior Toby Espina-Roca found the upper-right corner of the net on a shot from about 20 yards out to give Louisburg a lead midway through the first half.

Lansing responded five minutes later to tied the match and then took the lead early in the second half.

Then came McManigal’s goal, which gave the Wildcats a jolt of momentum.

“One of the greatest things I’m seeing from Colin is his confidence and his determination,” Bovaird said. “I love the example he’s setting for the younger players. He is so close to turning the corner and hitting the back of the net quite a bit more, and I’m confident that he’ll continue to lead and step up to the challenges in front of him.”

Wildcats suffer first setback

of season at Gardner-Edgerton



Louisburg senior defender Jackson Olson tries to poke the ball away from a Gardner-Edgerton player Thursday at Gardner-Edgerton High School. The Wildcats lost their first game of the season, 3-0.

GARDNER – In just its second match of the season, the Louisburg boys soccer team squared off with one of the tougher teams the Wildcats will see all season.

Louisburg traveled to Gardner-Edgerton and squared off against the Class 6A school, and unfortunately for the Wildcats, left with their first loss.

The Wildcats gave up two first half goals, and had limited chances of their own against the Trailblazers, in their 3-0 loss Thursday at Gardner-Edgerton High School.

‘It was a tough and humbling loss, but Gardner is an improved team from last year,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “They controlled the ball and were much faster on their attacks than we were. It’s good to have this kind of game early in the season. It highlights a lot of things we need to work on.”

The game didn’t stay scoreless for long as Gardner scored in the first four minutes of the match as the Blazers took a shot just outside the 18 for the goal.

Gardner doubled that lead later on in the half when the Blazers scored on a penalty kick and took a 2-0 halftime

advantage.



Louisburg goalie Brecon Klugman jumps up for a save Thursday against Gardner.

Louisburg goalie Brecon Klugman was busy throughout the contest as he made several saves that kept the Wildcats in it, before the Blazers iced the match with their third goal with 24 minutes remaining.

“That game could have easily been 5-0 or 6-0 with some of their attacks, but Brecon had some great plays in goal for us,” Bovaird said. “Watching film of last night’s game, we’re going to have to learn to adapt when our opponent has their outside mids shifting and crossing into the middle of the field. We also need to work on our first touch on the ball, especially on turf, and improve our possession game.”

The Wildcats (1-1) did have a few opportunities on goal as Gavin York, Cade Gassman and Colin McManigal each had looks at the net, but couldn’t convert.

Louisburg will try and get back on track this Thursday when it

squares off with Bonner Springs in the Wildcats home opener. Bovaird believes his team will learn from this loss.

“We’re up to the challenge of taking on 6A and 5A teams,” Bovaird said. “In the long run, having our strength of schedule will set us up for the postseason.”

Wildcats shutout Pittsburg on the road in season opener



PITTSBURG – It may have taken a little while to shake off the rust, but once it did, Louisburg showed what it is capable of accomplishing.

The Wildcats, who led Pittsburg by just a goal at halftime, scored three times in the second half, en route to a 4-0 shutout Tuesday at Pittsburg High School.

A trio of seniors led the Louisburg attack as Colin McManigal and Gavin York each scored a pair of goals, while Cade Gassman earned assists on both McManigal scores.

In the process, Louisburg head coach Bobby Bovaird picked up his first varsity win.

“Before the game, we talked about the keys to winning: communication, mindset, moving to the pockets, and knowing our

purpose on the field,"Bovaird said. "It took a little while to get into the groove, but I feel the game wasn't as close as the score suggested.

"Colin and Cade were connecting really well up top, and that's one of the key things we're looking to make happen. Gavin was a solid player up top as well, maintaining composure and showing the team what tough soccer looks like. Both Colin and Gavin earned some pretty nice goals for our first game of the season."

McManigal broke open the scoreless contest on a goal from about 18 yards out on an assist from Gassman.

The Wildcats took the 1-0 lead into halftime, before McManigal scored again, thanks to another Gassman assist eight minutes into the second half.

York then got into the action with 17 minutes left in the match, then a minute later, scored again on a free kick to all but seal the win for Louisburg.

Senior goalie Brecon Klugman, who started his first varsity game, earned the clean sheet with four saves.

Klugman got some help from his defense as the back line of Matthew Sword, Owen Barber and Caden French held strong and limited the Purple Dragons' shots on goal.

Although the Wildcats may have won convincingly, it was a rough contest from start to finish.

"It was a physical game, and after the game, one of the officials complimented our team for their sportsmanship and respectfulness," Bovaird said. "It could have gotten ugly – physical tackles from behind, contact after the play, and a lot of little comments from the other team – but I'm very proud of how our guys carried themselves."

Louisburg will try for win No. 2 today as the Wildcats hit the

road again, this time at Gardner-Edgerton. The Wildcats will battle the 6A program in a 7 p.m. start.

“One thing we’re going to stress early on in the season is the style of soccer that will win us the key games, like any postseason game,” Bovaird said. “Our style from the beginning needs to be solid and how we play against our competition early on will set the precedent for how we’ll respond later in the season. It’s not about playing to rack up the goal count; it’s about polishing our style so it’s second nature when we face the toughest competition.”

Experienced Wildcats ready for another postseason run



Louisburg’s Cade Gassman is one of 15 seniors of the Wildcat soccer team this season. Gassman is the team’s top returning player as he was a first-team all-league and all-state performer.

The sting from last season’s loss to Bishop Miege in the regional finals is still there for the Louisburg boys soccer team.

The Wildcats, who were the No. 1 seed in the state playoffs, fell to the eventual state champion in a tightly-played match and saw their season come to a close.

It is a loss many of the current players remember – mainly because many of them were a big part of the team.

Louisburg returns 15 seniors, nine of which saw varsity time at different points last season as the Wildcats went on to earn a share of the Frontier League title.

The Wildcats know experience will be key if they want to make a deep run in the postseason.

“They absolutely want that final run at a state title,” Bovaird said. “They’ve had a taste of success two years ago, and they’ve swallowed the bitter pill of a disappointing defeat last year. We’re looking at bringing home a fourth straight Frontier League title, as well as making a push for that elusive championship. This senior class is special, and I believe they can aim high and hit the mark.”

The Wildcat senior class is a large one, and many of those players have played big roles in the team’s previous successes.

Bovaird, who is in his first year as the team’s head coach after he replaced Kyle Conley, feels grateful to have a wealth of experience to work with.

“Having 15 seniors is a rare treat, I imagine, and I feel a little spoiled,” Bovaird said. “I’m very fortunate to be able to step into this role and to have such great leadership from these guys. Many of them will be 4-year letterwinners, and there are a significant number who saw playing time two years ago when we finished third at state. They play club soccer year-round and are bringing in a lot of excellent experience.”



Louisburg's Gavin York goes up for a header against the Bishop Miega last season. York is a team captain this year, along with Cade Gassman and Matthew Sword.

The head of that group is senior Cade Gassman, who enters this season as a four-year varsity starter. Gassman was a first-team all-league and all-state selection as a junior as he finished with 11 goals and nine assists.

Gassman was selected as a team captain, along with fellow seniors Gavin York and Matthew Sword. York was a big piece of the varsity lineup last season at the forward spot and Sword was an honorable mention all-league selection on defense.

"Cade is a very charismatic leader, and one thing I love about him is how he inspires all his teammates – younger and older," Bovaird said. "Sometimes I joke about how obnoxiously enthusiastic he can be, but the thing is – it works. He's a 'life-giver' with his attitude and his daily approach to soccer. He loves the game, has incredible talent, and sets a high bar for leadership.

"He's going to be joined by seniors Gavin York and Matthew

Sword as captains this year. Between the three of them, not only do they have exceptional soccer skills, but they all three fulfill essential leadership roles in various ways. They all exude the qualities that a coach wants – accountability, work ethic, vocalization, encouragement, and more.”

Gassman and York will help lead the Wildcat attack, along with senior Colin McManigal, who was a second team all-league selection last year with 11 goals. Senior Jordan Brown will come off the bench from the forward spot as well.

Senior Toby Espina-Roca will move from defense to the center midfield position and will provide good experience at a key spot. On the outside, sophomores Emmett White and Colton Blue return after earning varsity minutes last season as freshmen. Seniors Andrew Brown and Brock Varns will also provide minutes on the outside.



Louisburg senior Toby Espina-Roca will move from his old defensive spot, to the midfield this season for the Wildcats.

Sword will lead the Wildcat defense from his center back spot, while senior Ayden Deterding will also provide defensive help in the middle. Seniors Caden French and Owen Barber will serve as the team’s outside backs.

Seniors Jackson Olson, Kaven Bartlett, along with sophomores Jacob Brown and Dan Minster, will also see playing time on the defensive side.

A big change for the Wildcats will be in goal, as all-league and all-state goalie Mack Newell joined the football team for his senior season and has been replaced by senior Brecon Klugman.

Bovaird has liked what he has seen so far from his new keeper.

“Brecon has grown so much since joining the program last year – it’s incredible,” Bovaird said. “He’s been working all summer to grow as a goalkeeper. Not only was he at nearly every summer practice, but he would regularly meet up with teammates to have them take shots on him in goal and he would stay after conditioning to get in more reps. He’s showing his teammates how committed he is to being our goalie, and he’s been very coachable along the way.”

Helping Bovaird in his first year is former head coach Ben York, who is now serving as the team’s assistant. York was the head coach for 13 years before stepping away in 2015.

This is a group Bovaird is excited to lead in what the Wildcats hope is a special season.

“First of all, their drive and commitment are going to take them far,” Bovaird said. “They were getting together to practice the week after our season ended last year. They’ve been putting as much time in (if not more) on their own as what we’ve had for organized summer practices. These guys are willing to work hard, and they believe in the process, their teammates, and their coaches. We have experience and maturity on our side this year.”

Louisburg will open its season Tuesday when it travels to Pittsburg. Varsity is slated to begin at 6 p.m.

First week of practice breeds optimism for LHS fall programs



Louisburg head football coach Drew Harding speaks to his players in the huddle during a practice this week. Harding is in his first year as head coach after serving as an assistant for several years.

It's only four days into practice, but all four Louisburg High School fall coaches have liked what they have seen so far out of their teams.

Numbers have been steady as each program has high expectations for the upcoming 2022 season.

There are also plenty of new faces this year as the Wildcats will feature two first year coaches in Bobby Bovaird (boys soccer) and Drew Harding (football). Leanna Willer (volleyball) is in her second season, while cross country coach John Reece is entering his 20th season.

On the gridiron, the Wildcat football team is returning several starters from last year's team that lost to St. James Academy in the first round of the playoffs.

Louisburg currently has 70 players out for football this

season, including 15 seniors that will help lead the way.



Senior Mason Dobbins (left) and junior Declan Battle go up for the ball during practice this week.

“Practice has been going well so far,” Harding said. “We have a lot of competition for spots and competition brings out the best in everybody. We are very excited for the upcoming season. We have a large senior class and a junior class that has gained lots of experience from last year so we are excited to see what we can do.”

Having a new head coach can bring a learning curve, but the Wildcats worked hard over the summer. Along with their annual team camp, they had several scrimmages, 7-on-7 competitions and skill sessions.

“The team did a good job picking up on our installs on both sides of the ball so we were able to get a lot of really good reps that will hopefully help us in this upcoming season,”

Harding said.



Seniors Ayden Deterding (left) and Cade Gassman go through a drill in practice this week.

As for the boys soccer team, the Wildcats will try and reach the state final four for the second time in three years after falling to Bishop Miege in the regional championship match a season ago.

Louisburg returns another experienced group as it enters the season with 15 seniors after earning the No. 1 seed in the playoffs a year ago. Numbers are once again high for the program as 40 players are out this year.

“Nine of them (seniors) saw some pretty solid varsity playing time last year, and five of them got playing time in the state tournament two years ago when we finished in 3rd place,” Bovaird said. “Practice has been running very smoothly. We’re getting a great look at the players during our tryouts this week, and we’re seeing lots of leaders emerge every day.”



First-year head coach Bobby Bovaird speaks to his team during the final day of tryouts.

The Wildcats also had a busy summer with camps and team workouts. It was a good way for Bovaird to get to know his players as a first-year head coach.

“Almost everyone was able to participate,” Bovaird said. “They were getting together for informal kick-arounds, they were either lifting weights with the school’s summer program or they were lifting together on their own, and I’m loving the buy-in that they’ve shown. We’re looking at the potential to have another outstanding season this year. Of course, conditioning is a factor and we’re working on improving that during practice.

“This year, we’ve got the motto ‘United,’ which comes from the fact that many soccer clubs use that word with their club names – Manchester United, New Mexico United, etc. I chose that motto because we have kids with all sorts of experience, from those who play year-round club soccer to kids who only play in the fall. They’ve grown up playing all over the place, whether it’s a club up in the city, Louisburg Rec, or

somewhere in another district or community. But we're here right now, and we have to come together to be united as a soccer family if we want to achieve our goals. This group of seniors has had a taste of state success, and they've had a taste of falling short of the team's goals. I think they have the hunger to buy into what the coaching staff is striving to provide for them and they are willing to make a commitment to get to the top this year."



The Louisburg girls cross country team is currently ranked in the preseason top 5 in Class 4A by Kansas MileSplit.

As for cross country, Reece has liked what he has seen from his runners so far after a successful season a year ago in which both teams qualified for state.

He currently has 25 runners out this season, while 18 are out on the middle school level. The girls team is already being thought of as one of the top squads in the state as they are ranked in the top five in Class 4A by Kansas MileSplit.



The Louisburg boys cross country team will look to earn another trip to the state meet this season.

"We are down a little in numbers but return many state qualifiers," Reece said. "Practices are going well and we are enjoying this stint of cooler weather. We are again focusing on the end of the season and are setting a goal to return both teams to state again. It is going to be an exciting year."

Volleyball also has strong numbers out as they had 36 athletes out for tryouts for the first three days and have settled at 30 for the rest of the season between the three levels.



Coach Leanna Willer speaks to her team at practice Thursday following a 3-day tryout.

Despite losing four starters from last season's team that fell one game short of reaching the state tournament, Willer is excited to see what this group can do.

"We've had a great first few days and are seeing really awesome things from our girls that have us excited about what we'll be able to do at all three levels this year," Willer said. "We see a lot of potential at all ages and we are hungry for the opportunities to keep improving and make some noise in the league."

The squad had a busy summer with its team camp in early June, followed by summer league action for two months and the varsity traveled to the University of Nebraska team camp in July. Add in the normal open gyms and weight sessions, Willer is pleased with how her players have improved.



Senior Claire Brown passes the ball during a drill Thursday.

"This was a very busy summer of all sorts of crazy twists and turns with the high school being under construction and schedules constantly changing," Willer said. "Those that were able to dedicate time and effort consistently throughout the summer improved, not only in skill, but also in confidence. The coaches and athletes were typically here working four days a week with weights, conditioning, and open gyms."

"We love having these summer opportunities to get to know our team better and to start working on our team chemistry as much as possible. As a whole, we have grown a lot over the past couple months and we are looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish here in the next couple."

Bovaird excited to take over Wildcat boys soccer program



Bobby Bovaird was hired as the Louisburg High School head boys soccer coach last month after resignation of former coach Kyle Conley, who left after seven seasons. Bovaird spent the last two season as the Wildcat assistant coach.

When Bobby Bovaird signed on as the Louisburg High School assistant boys soccer coach a couple years ago, it was a reunion of sorts.

Bovaird, who is currently the school's wrestling coach, had just been focusing on that sport and had gotten away from a sport he loved growing up.

"Soccer has been a part of my life since I was in elementary school," Bovaird said. "I'd gotten away from it when I started teaching and taking on head wrestling duties, but I loving being a part of the sport again.

"My son has been getting more and more into soccer the last few years, and I was his rec coach for a long time. When he transitioned to competitive soccer a few years ago, I found myself watching his club coaches quite a bit and looking at how the game has changed, as well as what drills they use."

He had the opportunity to get back into the soccer world and has enjoyed it ever since. With a chance to work under former coach Kyle Conley for the last two years, now he is looking forward to the next step.

Bovaird was hired as the school's new head coach after Conley resigned his position back in May. It is a challenge he is looking forward to taking on as he is just the third head coach in program history.

"I'm really excited," Bovaird said. "The last two years, I got a chance to closely observe one of the best coaches in the state first-hand, and I've become really familiar with how Coach Conley approached his vision for the program. I've also gotten to know the players pretty well.

"We're going to be using quite a few of the familiar drills that we've done in the past, and as we begin the season with those drills, we'll also be implementing new drills to help the team along the way."

Spending time as the team's assistant coach allowed Bovaird to get know the players as the Wildcats try for their second state final four in three years.

Conley spent seven years as the Wildcat head coach and took Louisburg to two state final fours and recorded the program's best finish in 2020. He also guided the Wildcats to the No. 1 seed in the state playoffs last season, before falling to defending state champion Bishop Miege in the regional championship.

Although there won't be wholesale changes to how the program is run, Bovaird said the players will see a few subtle changes along the way.

"Coach Conley left some big shoes to fill, and one of the major changes the team can expect is that I will be bringing a different approach to the game. I love the standard drill series that Coach Conley used, and I firmly believe that repetition of some of these basics is the key to making LHS soccer competitive, not only in the Frontier League, but also in Kansas 4A.

"We're looking at adjusting our formation this season as well. I grew up playing a 4-3-3 formation, and while the 4-3-3 is still in use, it's evolved from what I played back in the day. But I view myself as a student with a focus on continuous learning and improvement, so I have been studying up on the modern game."

Although wrestling and soccer are completely different sports, Bovaird does see a common theme he can use to help his team improve and that is all about having the right mindset.

"For the longest time, there wasn't a lot of overlap between soccer players and wrestlers, but in the last two years we've seen more and more athletes doing both sports," Bovaird said. "I take a holistic approach to coaching – the total person – so that athletes who graduate from programs I coach are better prepared for life beyond the wrestling mat or the soccer field. I've come to highly value the mindset training that has enabled quite a bit of our wrestling success, and I hope to bring that mindset focus to the soccer team as well."

"This summer during our practices, the guys might have noticed that I like to talk through the drills – explaining some fundamentals, explaining why I coach the way I coach, etc. I'm setting the stage for the upcoming season so that the learning curve is over and we can get right to work. As a wrestling coach over the years, I've often found that some of my best teaching moments have been on the mat during practice while I'm working one-on-one with the athletes. Now that I'm taking on the head soccer coach position, I'm finding that I can bring about some more teaching moments while playing in a scrimmage situation with the team."

As for the Louisburg team, the Wildcats are hoping for a big 2022 season. The Wildcats return several starters from a season ago and could feature a senior class that reaches close to 15 by the time tryouts start next month.

“This senior class especially has a ton of talent,” Bovaird said. “The week after our season ended last year, they were already organizing kick-around sessions. I think they’re focused on trying to win state, and they’re putting in the work on their own.

“We’ve had our official summer practices, but they are putting in more time on the field than that. They’re in the weight room, they’re running on their own, and their getting together to play. This season, we’re expecting to compete for another league title, a regional title, and a shot at the Kansas 4A crown.”

Conley’s family atmosphere lifted Wildcat soccer to new heights



Louisburg coach Kyle Conley hugs goalie Sierra Hahn following the team’s fourth place state finish in 2021. Conley stepped down after seven seasons with the Wildcats.

One hundred and sixty wins.

Nine regional championships.

Six state final four appearances.

Two state runner-up finishes.

Those are just some of the many accomplishments the Louisburg High School soccer programs had in the seven years under head coach Kyle Conley.

With all that success, many awards followed and the Wildcats became one of the top teams in Class 4-1A during that seven-year stretch.

In less than a decade, Conley accumulated a resume worthy enough to put him in the LHS Hall of Fame and is considered one of the top coaches in the state.

However, having that much notoriety brings more opportunities and Conley, despite it being a tough decision, has taken on a new challenge as he was recently hired to coach the Blue Valley West soccer programs.

It was one of the harder choices he's ever had to make.



Kyle Conley watches from the bench as his girls team advanced to the state final four in 2021.

“It is bittersweet,” Conley said. “Everything we have established, accomplished and the culture we have at Louisburg has been fantastic. There was just a great teaching and coaching opportunity that came along and it was hard to pass up.”

His decision left a lot his current and former players either sad or shocked – a lot of them probably both.

However, it didn’t make them appreciate him any less and it had nothing to do with the stats listed above. It is about more than just soccer.

It is about life.

It is about family.

Year One

It was a wild first season for Conley as he was hired to start

and lead the girls program in 2016 and was named as the boys head coach later that year.

No one could have imagine the success that followed.

In the girls' first ever season, Conley led the Wildcats to a 14-4-1 record, a regional championship and a spot in the state quarterfinals.

As if that wasn't enough, he guided the boys to their best finish in school history (at the time) as the Wildcats made their first state final four and took fourth.

"For the girls, we just didn't want to suck for three years so they would cancel the program," Conley said. "The community raised \$38,000 for the first four years. We had about 43 girls come out that were interested before the season and then it went down to like 24. We were trying to have a JV and a varsity and hope we would hold on.

"Then I took over the boys job in the summer and we were doing things a little differently and having the boys get used to our expectations and how we were going to do things. It took the boys six games or so for them to truly buy in and then we just went on a tear. They had a really good year. I think we beat Tonganoxie 2-1 in overtime and the boys' confidence really seemed to grow. We made the state final four and it was pretty exciting. It was wild, actually."



Kyle Conley huddles his team up prior to the program's first-ever game in 2016.

Conley put pressure on himself, especially on the girls side, to get a program out of its infancy and grow it into something Louisburg could look on with pride.

The community had just raised more than \$30,000 to fund the program for three years and Conley wanted to show that their hard work wasn't for nothing.

As it turned out, he had nothing to worry about.

Conley guided the Wildcat girls to four straight state final fours, including two state championship appearances in the program's first five years of existence.

The program went from an infant to being a full-grown adult in a matter of no time.

"It was an incredible situation," Conley said. "The kids did really well. The parents bought in, the school bought in and the community bought in and we just took off. It set the standard. The kids just wanted to keep going back and they made that their goal every year. It has been a heck of a run."



Kyle Conley coached the girls program to four state final fours and two state runner-up finishes.

One of the program's first players, Bailey Belcher, saw that Conley was going to have success even before the Wildcats took the field for that first time in 2016.

Belcher, who went on to play for Missouri Southern after high school, saw a person that cared about more than wins and losses.

"Conley has made a huge impact on the soccer programs," Belcher said. "I don't think it would have ever been where it's at, or what it got to, if he wouldn't have started coaching for Louisburg. He knew every player was different and developing them wasn't always the same process. He took the time to get to know his players and learn what they needed to be coached.

"Of course, there were certain things, like fitness, that were done his way, and for good reason. As hard as it was, we got better and it always showed. He gave everyone a chance to be at the best position they could be in. He is the only coach I've ever had that put as much time and effort into each individual player the way that he did."

Raistlin Brewer, who played under coach Ben York before Conley took over the boys program, noticed a change right away.



Kyle Conley gives instructions Brock Bila and Landon Johnson before entering the game.

“One of Conley’s first approaches for us was being in shape, so that meant tons and tons of running, even if it was triple digits outside,” Brewer said. “It wasn’t my favorite thing, but we definitely were in better shape than most teams. I loved having Ben as a coach, but having Conley at the school made things a lot easier. If we ever needed to talk to him about something, he was just down the hall. He would definitely get a little bit animated, but he just wanted us to be our best and to see us succeed.”

Success followed the Wildcat programs for the next six seasons as the boys won three more regional titles and had another state final four appearance in 2020, when the Wildcats finished third overall.

All that success, was due to the work the players – and Conley – put into the program.



The Louisburg boys celebrated their 2016 state quarterfinal win with a bucket dump on head coach Kyle Conley.

"First and foremost he is a great person who cares about every single one of his players," said Braden Yows, a senior on the 2021 team. "One of the big things that differentiates him is the enthusiasm and passion he brings to the program everyday. During his time here we saw both the boys and girls programs grow in the number of players and success. He expected discipline and great effort in everything we did on and off the field."

As much as the Wildcats' accomplishments were formed during the season, Conley never slowed down in the offseason

Recruiting The Halls

Despite the accolades, Louisburg is not loaded with tons of soccer talent.

So, because of that, Conley put on his salesman's hat and hit the hallways – trying to get as many kids out for soccer as he could.

“To be fair, people are always saying we have all these club kids and we don’t,” Conley said. “We have like five or six that play year-round, maybe a little more depending on the year. You buy into a kid, find what they are good at, find what makes them tick and then you just push that kid. Then all of a sudden you have an Erin Lemke.”

Lemke, a freshman in 2017, had plans on competing in track. She had just finished basketball and soccer really never entered her mind.

“Before high school I had only played maybe two seasons of soccer before,” Lemke said. “I planned on running track when I was asked by (Michael) Pickman my freshman year if I would play. Then Conley started asking me in the halls if I would play and to get my friends from the volleyball and basketball team to play. In the end, myself and Carson Buffington were at soccer tryouts that spring.”

Both Lemke and Buffington turned out to be key figures for the Wildcat program.

Buffington went on to be an all-league and all-state goalie, while Lemke had one of the more memorable goals in program history – as a freshman.

Lemke started the 2017 season at the junior varsity level, and due to injuries, moved up and got some varsity time. She saw more and more minutes as the season went along, and in the state quarterfinal game against Piper, scored the golden goal to send the Wildcats to their first state final four.



Erin Lemke is all smiles after she realized she scored the game-winning goal in the state quarterfinals in 2017 against Piper.

"I have used her as an example for a long time," Conley said. "I told other players that they can be like her and not to be nervous. It is just fun to watch kids like that take off and gain confidence in themselves on the field and in life."

One small conversation in the hallway changed Lemke's time in high school for the better.

"Playing for coach Conley created some of my favorite memories at Louisburg High School," Lemke said. "Being on the soccer team built my confidence as a high schooler that has carried into college."

"Conley helped us girls who had never played by teaching the fundamentals of soccer, literally how to kick a ball and who to pass to. Building on each skill and creating relationships with each of the girls really bonded our team."

Lemke's story is not an outlier as Conley has brought on a lot

of first-time soccer players and has had similar successes. It has even trickled down to the younger kids.



Kyle Conley gets dumped with water after one of the girls' state quarterfinal wins.

"We hit the hallways hard and recruited kids to come out and play," Conley said. "We found athletic kids and try to find those who wanted to come out and play soccer. The kids were put off or scared because they thought they had to just run a lot. It wasn't just running, and once we got a kid to practice, we could get them to play.

"When you have kids out there having fun and winning games, it just takes off. I think the youth camps we did helped tremendously. Diana Moore (Louisburg rec director) said that every year they are getting more and more kids play soccer. We just did a good job pushing information out there to kids and their families through social media or whatever."



Head coach Kyle Conley hugs Mackenzie Scholtz following her golden goal in 2018 that sent the Wildcats to their second straight final four.

Garrett Rolofson was another one of those stories as he played his final two years of high school under Conley during the 2019 and 2020 seasons.

He turned into an all-league and all-state goalie with the help of assistant coach Michael Pickman, who worked with the keepers. His time with Conley and the program changed his life for the better.

“Personally, playing for Coach Conley shaped me into the student athlete I was and person I am today,” Rolofson said. “I learned a lot in the two years I played for him. He taught me how to play soccer, understand the game and was very inviting for someone that had never played soccer before. Conley was encouraging when I was learning and encouraging when teaching other newcomers instead of just cutting someone from the team. He truly cared about each individual player no matter the skill or athletic abilities.

“Playing for Conley not only taught me a lot about soccer and athletics but he changed the person I was before playing soccer. My motivation to get better and succeed in sports went up as well as my overall confidence. Outside of sports Conley taught me how to be a leader, how to set an example for others and how to be a good person.”

Rolofson built a relationship with his coach that many other players did as well – one that became even more important after he graduated.

FAMILY

“1...2...3...Family”

That was the breakdown of every huddle – girls and boys – throughout Conley’s seven seasons and it was more than a simple gimmick. It was a mindset.

Soccer became Rolofson’s second family and they were there for him when he needed them the most.

Shortly after he graduated, his mother, Gloria, was diagnosed with cancer. It was a scary time for the Rolofson’s and for Garrett.

During his time as coach, Conley put together a cancer awareness game every season in hopes of raising money for a local family battling the terrible disease.

Little did Garrett know his family would be the ones touched by it all.

So, in the fall of 2020, Garrett found himself back at the field he played on, but this time as a spectator for the annual cancer awareness game as people came out to donate to the family in need – his family.

“My mom was battling breast cancer at the time and I will

never forget watching Conley walk across the soccer field and through the stands directly to me and giving me a big hug,” Garrett said. “Not only did the hug make me cry, but seeing his tears made me cry and really shows how good of a person Coach Conley is and how big of an impact he can have on someone’s life.”



Kyle Conley celebrates with his boys as they won the regional title back in 2017.

Gloria is currently in full remission from her breast cancer diagnosis, and according to Garrett, “She is finally getting back to feeling normal again.”

The Rolofson’s were just one of several families touched by the kindness of the Louisburg soccer family and Conley made it a point to make sure all of his players – current and former – were looked after.

“Conley was the kind of coach that was always there for any of us, no matter what it was,” Belcher said. “He constantly pushed all of us to strive for more and reach our greatest potential in literally everything.

“To me, he and his family were like family to me, even after I graduated. He has always made me want to do more and has shown

me there is always someone in my corner that believes in me, and no matter what it is, he has supported me. He has always been someone I can talk to when I need someone, with the most serious of things or just catching up. He is someone that I will always look up to.”

It was the family atmosphere that brought his players together and a big reason for all of the Wildcats’ success.

“It was an amazing environment to play for Coach Conley,” said Trinity Moore, a 2020 graduate. “The impact he had on my life and for soccer was amazing. He made me more confident and put me where I was needed and it helped impact my confidence and strive to help my teammates.”



The boys soccer team honored coach Kyle Conley following his 100th victory.

Treston Carlson, a 2021 graduate, believed Conley was a unique coach and got the best out of all of his players.

“The impact he had on his players lives and on our program was unmatched,” Carlson said. “The way he coached was different than any coach I’ve been around. He wanted us to realize it took hard work to get better and that nothing is just handed to us. He always made it clear that we had to outwork the other team. The way he affected who we were helped me have a

new mindset to the game.”

It is that family aspect that Conley will miss the most.

“The thing I will remember most is the relationships, whether it is with the kids, the parents or community members,” Conley said. “Having kids invite me to their wedding, or just texting me out of the blue to check in and see how things are going. Those are what mean the most to me in the long run. I am with these kids so much that they are almost like they are my own.”

Fond Farewell

As the final seconds ticked away, Conley realized his time at Louisburg was coming to a close.

The Louisburg girls lost to Topeka-Hayden in the regional championship game – a team they had beaten twice previously in the state semifinals and both in dramatic fashion.

It was Hayden’s turn this go-round and it was time for Conley to let go of a program that grew up before his very eyes.

Despite all the successes, Conley only had one regret with his time at Louisburg.



Kyle Conley gets a hug from Braden Yows following the team's regional championship loss to Bishop Miege in 2021.

"Not beating Bishop Miege," Conley said with a smirk on his face.

Miege ended the Wildcats' season, or handed them a loss in the state semifinals, on seven different occasions – including five on the boys side.

As tough as those losses were, Conley has nothing but great memories of his time as the Wildcat leader.

"At the end of the day, when I reflect on everything, looking back on this ride, I just want people to know that me, my coaches and my family went all in for these programs," Conley said. "I wouldn't do anything different on how we started a program, or how we carried another one on.

"I have zero regrets on how we did it and I think we gave everything we had, and in turn that is when the parents gave everything they had to us. The kids gave everything they had and we fed off each other. We built a fantastic culture and

did things the right way. We talked about improving kids, not just on the field, but in life as well. We wanted to make them better people.”



Kyle Conley embraces his wife, Kelli, following his final game on the Wildcat sideline last month.

Conley seemed to do just that as the seven former players interviewed for this story, echoed each other’s statements.

He changed their life for the better.

“The impact Conley has had in our lives goes deeper than soccer,” Carlson said. “He was a great coach that helped me get a better understanding of soccer, but he also taught us good life lessons to take with us past soccer. He always told us the saying ‘hard work will beat talent when talent doesn’t want to work’ and I think that saying goes way past just the game.”

Rolofson, who had played baseball for most of his life, grew to love soccer thanks to one person.

“I think it’s hard not to say he built an amazing program at Louisburg,” Rolofson said. “I think a testament to him as a

person and coach is his ability to not only attract people that had never played soccer before, but his ability to coach them to enjoy and love the game as it is with all of their teammates.

“What I think makes Conley unique isn’t his winning nature or motivational speeches, I think it’s the fact that he, as a coach, enables his players to enjoy and love the game of soccer. You always hear about athletes that had their dreams and love for their sports crushed by bad coaches at school and club, but you never hear about a coach that can make student athletes fall in love with a game they’ve never played before.”



Now it is time to move on to a new school, with new players and different expectations. However, Conley knows Louisburg soccer has a bright future ahead of itself.

“For me, I know it is a great opportunity,” Conley said. “At the same time, I am asking kids to be loyal to me and buy in and be a part of our family. Part of me feels that I am letting people down, letting the kids down, but at the same time I feel both programs are in a really good place. The girls team was pretty good this year, but they can potentially

be really, really good next season.

“The boys program is absolutely loaded right now. We graduated a few seniors, but there are a lot of boys ready to roll. There are a lot seniors that are ready to lead that program. I am not bailing in a situation where there is talent no longer there. I think I left both programs completely stocked and ready to roll and that makes me feel better knowing that I did the job I wanted to do.”

Bobby Bovaird (boys) and Ben York (girls) will now pick up where Conley left off as they prepare to guide the Wildcats to bigger and better things. Now is a chance for him to follow from afar.

“We will still be fans,” Conley said. “We are still going to live in Louisburg and it will be easy for me to walk up, put up my lawn chair and watch some games when I’m not coaching. We are giving all our social media stuff to Ben and Bobby so that they can continue to grow the programs and we can get ourselves out of it. That way we can follow how the teams are doing and we can become a fan too. We want to support the kids and the program.”

Just like any family member would.

2022 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year Nominees



For the past six years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements and to highlight the athletes.

For the fifth consecutive year, Louisburg Sports Zone will be handing out an Athlete of the Year honor to a male and female athlete at Louisburg High School. I wanted the opportunity to recognize those who exemplify what it means to be an "athlete."

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to be subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female athletes and then I will tabulate the results and determine the winner. The winner will be announced in the coming days.

Below are the nominees for the Male Athlete of the Year award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!



Aiden Barker, Senior, Football and Wrestling

Aiden Barker played big roles on both the Louisburg football and wrestling teams this past season. Barker was a starting lineman for the Wildcat football program and wrestled at 195 pounds for the wrestling team.

Barker was a key fixture on both sides of the ball for the Wildcat football team, but his biggest impact came on the defensive side. He was a first team All-Frontier League selection on the defensive line, where he finished with 58 tackles on the season to go along with 11 tackles for a loss and 5.5 sacks.

On the wrestling mat, Barker finished his season with a 31-8

record and earned a fifth place medal at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. He was named the Wildcats' wrestler of the year and is a two-time first team KWCA Academic all-state winner. He finished with titles at the December Duals, Tonganoxie and Louisburg Invitationals. He finished his career with a program record of career reversals with 74. He will continue his athletic and academic career as a member of the MidAmerica Nazarene University football program this fall.



Brandon Doles, Senior, Football, Wrestling and Baseball

Brandon was a starter on three Wildcat programs during the 2021-22 school year. Doles was the starting linebacker on the football team, he was a varsity captain and 182-pound wrestler

on the wrestling team and played the outfield and pitched for the Louisburg baseball program.

In football, Doles was a key part of the Wildcat defense as he earned first team all-league honors from the linebacker spot. He finished the season with 90 tackles and averaged 11 stops per contest. He also forced two fumbles and had 11 tackles for a loss during the Wildcats' 4-5 season.

Injuries hampered most of Doles' wrestling season, but he was able to make a comeback late in the season and made his way to his third state tournament. At 182 pounds, Doles was win one short of a medal and finished the year with a 9-5 record. Doles ended his career as a two-time team captain and first team KWCA Academic All-State recipient.

On the baseball diamond, Doles was one of the Wildcats' top hitters during the 2022 season that saw them end with an 8-14 record and a spot in the regional championship game. Doles, who started in left field, finished with a .338 average and a .969 OPS. He also had 24 hits, seven doubles and two home runs to go along with 17 RBIs and 22 runs scored. Doles also earned second team All-Frontier League honors.



Kolby Kattau, Senior, Football and Baseball

Kolby was a senior starter for both the Louisburg football and baseball teams this past season. Kattau was the starting first baseman and pitcher for the baseball program that reached the regional championship. He was a two-way starter on the football team at running back and safety.

On the baseball diamond, Kattau thrived for the 2022 season as he was named as a first-team All-Frontier and all-state selection for his play at first base. Kattau had a team-high .471 average in 82 plate appearances. He had an OPS of 1.294 and had 33 hits on the season with seven doubles, five triples and a home run. He also scored 24 runs and had 13 RBIs from the leadoff spot. He started five games for the Wildcats and

earned three wins with 25 strikeouts. Kattau was also selected to participate in the KABC all-star game.

On the football field, Kattau was one of the team's starting running backs and recorded two touchdowns with more than 200 yards of total offense. He also started at safety for much of the season as well, and finished with 27 tackles and three deflections.



Tom Koontz, Senior, Football and Track and Field

Tom was a starting defensive back for the Wildcat football team that finished with a 4-5 record, along with being a hurdler and sprinter on the Louisburg track team.

On the track, Koontz helped the Wildcats to a third place team finish at the Class 4A state meet as he earned a pair of state titles in the hurdles and two more medals on relays. Koontz won the 300-meter hurdles with a school record time of 38.98 seconds and also won the state title in the 110 hurdles for the second straight year in 14.61 seconds.

He also helped the 4×400 relay to a fourth place state finish and the 4×100 relay to a sixth place medal. Koontz was also a part of the 4×100 team that broke the school record earlier in the year. He ends his Wildcat career as a 3-time state champion in the hurdles and garnered eight state medals. He was also a member of the 2021 state championship team.

Koontz also made his presence known on the football field as he was a starting cornerback for the Wildcats. He finished the year with 46 tackles, four deflections and a forced fumble.



Maverick Rockers, Senior, Basketball and Baseball

Maverick played key roles for the Wildcat basketball and baseball teams this season. Rockers was the starting point guard in basketball and made an impact on the baseball team as the starting shortstop.

On the baseball diamond, Rockers helped the Wildcats to their second straight regional championship game and had a big year at the plate. Rockers finished with a .406 batting average with a 1.111 OPS. He recorded 28 hits, seven doubles and two home runs to go along with 22 runs scored and 16 RBIs. He also had just six errors from his shortstop position. Following the season, he was named as a second team All-Frontier League player.

Rockers also had a big year on the basketball court as the team's starting point guard. He averaged 11 points a game to go along with three rebounds, two assists and 1.5 steals a game.



Michael Seuferling, Senior, Soccer and Basketball

Michael had big seasons for the Louisburg soccer and basketball teams in 2021-22. Seuferling was a starting defender for the Wildcat soccer team that made it to the regional championship game and was a starting guard for the Wildcat basketball program.

On the soccer field, Seuferling was one of the best outside backs in the Frontier League and was a first team all-league performer for Louisburg. He was also a first-team all-state player as he helped the Wildcats to a No. 1 seed in the Class 4-1A state playoffs.

Seuferling was also one of the top basketball players in the

Frontier League as earned honorable mention honors after leading the Wildcats in scoring. He averaged 13.3 points per contest to go along with 3.4 rebounds and 2.5 assists per game.



Braden Yows, Senior, Soccer

Braden had a big season for the Louisburg boys soccer team as he helped lead the Wildcats to the No. 1 seed in the Class 4-1A state playoffs and a spot in the regional championship game.

Yows was named as a first-team All-Frontier League and all-state player from his midfield spot and was named team captain. He ended his season with a 17 goals and 11 assists. He will continue his soccer career this fall at the University

of Missouri-Kansas City.