Moore takes third at Wamego Invitational; Lady Cats finish fourth



The Louisburg girls cross country team was all smiles after its fourth-place finish Saturday in Wamego. Members of the team are (from left) Bree Gassman, Carlee Gassman, Trinity Moore, Reese Johnson, Kennady Wilkerson and Ruth Minster.

WAMEGO – The goal for members of the Louisburg cross country team is make the trip to Wamego for the state meet in early November.

Louisburg got a little taste of what state is going to be like Saturday when the Wildcats competed in the Wamego Invitational at the Wamego Country Club.

Senior Trinity Moore felt right at home as the 3-time state medalist mastered her way through the course and finished third overall out of 103 runners. The Lady Cats were also toward the top of the team standings as they finished fourth overall with 189 points.

Buhler won the girls title with 25 points, Baldwin was second with 81 and Eudora was third with 111 points.

“The

girls ran a great race," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "Fourth place as a team was good and it shows us that we need to close the gap between No. 3 and the rest of the team. It is always good to run at Wamego, which we missed out on last year. It is a good barometer for how state might shake out."

Moore made her way through the field for that third place finish as she ran a time of 21 minutes and 2 seconds and was one of three Lady Cats to earn medals. Chapman junior Taylor Briggs, who is the two-time defending state champion, won in 19:12 and Buhler senior Daycee DeWindt was second at 20:57.

"Trinity ran a solid race," Reece said. "She was feeling it as we had two good workouts this last week and it showed a little in her face at the end. She is cranking out the miles and workouts and will be ready for regionals and state."

Sophomore Reese Johnson and senior Carlee Gassman ran strong races as well as both left

Wamego with medals. Johnson took 18th overall in 22:07 and Gassman

was 21st in 22:32.

Freshman

Bree Gassman was fourth on the Louisburg team as she was 78th in 26:11, while junior Kennady Wilkerson (26:17) and sophomore

Ruth Minster

(26:30) finished in 80th and 82nd, respectively.

The
girls weren't the only ones to garner medals.

Senior
Anthony Davis earned his second consecutive medal as he took 29th
overall in 18:42 out of 127 runners in the 18-team meet.

"Anthony
ran well and he sees, by his finish, that he has some work ahead of him and he
will be ready come regionals to qualify for state and hopefully have six other
runners with him," coach Reece said."

As

a team, the Wildcats finished 11th overall with 282 points. Wamego
won the title with 89 points, Buhler was second with 96 and Towanda-Circle was
third with 114.

Sophomore
Ryan Rogers was second on the Wildcat team and ran a 19:25 to take 48th

overall. Junior Carson Houchen finished 56th in 19:32 and junior

Cade Holtzen was 69th in 19:49.

Sophomore

Sawyer Richardson came in 93rd in 20:53 and senior Evan Murphy ran a

21:37 to take 104th.

Louisburg
will be back in action Thursday when it travels to the Wellsville Invitational.
The meet is set to begin at 4 p.m.

Wildcats medal eight in season opener at Garnett



The Louisburg boys cross country team took third overall Thursday in Garnett. Members of the team are (from left) Ryan Rogers, Carson Houchen, Anthony Davis, Evan Murphy and Cade Holtzen. Not pictured were Caden Bradshaw and Sawyer Richardson.

GARNETT – If its season opener had
anything to say about the way the rest of the season will go, then the
Louisburg cross country team will have a lot to celebrate in 2019.

Louisburg traveled to Garnett County Club on Thursday for the Jerry Howarter Invitational and came back home with a lot of hardware to show for its efforts.

The Wildcat boys finished third overall with 77 points to earn a team medal, while five of the seven members also earned individual medals. Iola won the meet with 40 points and

Anderson County was second with 65.

The Louisburg girls also had a strong showing as they had three individuals medal, including senior Trinity Moore who finished second overall. The Wildcat runners were able to overcome a hot, humid afternoon to leave Garnett with a total of eight medals.

“Everyone ran well considering the heat,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “I did not have one complaint when stepping up to the line about it being too hot. They realize they all are in the same boat and they focused on their races. Eight varsity medals was awesome and the boys finishing third as a team was somewhat of a surprise.”

Senior Anthony Davis led the Wildcat boys in seventh overall with a time of 19 minutes and 41 seconds and sophomore teammate Caden Bradshaw wasn’t far behind as he medaled ninth in 19:52.

Sophomore

Ryan Rogers was 15th in 20:05, while juniors Carson Houchen (20:45)

and Cade Holtzen (20:54) came in 24th and 27th, respectively,

to earn medals. Sophomore Sawyer Richardson finished 38th in 21:27

and senior Evan Murphy was 48th in 22:47.

“Our top six are going to be hard to crack as they all ran great,” Reece said. “Anthony, Carson, and Cade bring the experience and the newbies, Caden Bradshaw, Ryan Rogers, and Sawyer Richardson, will improve their racing every week and they

will become a tight pack working together and be a solid team.

“Anthony
is definitely committed to the sport this year. He has been bit by the cross
country bug and really wants it. He ran great.”

On
the girls side, Moore provided the performance of the day as she nearly won the
event. The Louisburg senior, who ran a 22:16 to finish runner-up, was sitting
in third for most of the race.



Louisburg senior Trinity Moore finished second overall Thursday in Garnett.

Moore

made her way toward the front of the pack late, and eventually passed Fort Scott's Macayla McClure about 50 meters to the finish line to take the lead, but McClure eclipsed Moore a few seconds later to take first.

"Trinity and all the others heeded Coach (Paul) Restivo's and my advice to get settled in early and the field will come back to you and when it does, let's go," Reece said. "That is what allowed Trinity to get to the lead and make it a two person race. Everyone moved through the pack in the second half of the race and never stopped pushing."

Sophomore Reese Johnson had a good opening performance as she finished in eighth overall in 23:21 to earn a medal. Senior Carlee Gassman also left Garnett with a medal as she took 13th in 24:06.

Freshman Bree Gassman (28:44) and junior Kennady Wilkerson (29:06) came in 45th and 47th, respectively, to round out the Lady Cats. As a team, Louisburg finished fourth with 92 points, while Baldwin won the meet with 36 points and Fort Scott was second with 77.

The Wildcats return to action Saturday when they travel to the Wamego Invitational. Races are set to begin at 9 a.m.

Moore, Johnson ready to lead LHS cross country back to state



Louisburg senior Trinity Moore (right) will try for her fourth consecutive state medal this season and she hopes to lead the Lady Cat cross country team back to state for the third straight year.

It was an historic finish for the Louisburg cross country team last season and it is one many of the runners haven't forgotten.

For the second straight year, the Wildcat girls team qualified for the state meet, while Trinity Moore and Reese Johnson recorded top 10 finishes. It was the best postseason performance in program history.

Louisburg wants to take it to the next step in 2019.

Moore and Johnson are both returning to help the Louisburg girls as they are one of the top teams in the

state. Kansas Milesplit recently ranked the Lady Cats as the fifth best team in
Class 4A.

“Last year was awesome and we met and
exceeded our goals,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “This year we look to
better ourselves again and the girls’ work ethic shows it. We have several
girls that will be challenging each other to be one of the top seven. The
runners that are there at the end of the season will have earned it. We might
not field a full seven runners for varsity races until later in the season as
we are still working towards getting into racing form.

Moore and Johnson have two of those spots
as they are two of the top returning runners in the state after their
performance last season.

Moore, who is a senior, will be vying for
her fourth consecutive state medal as she tries to improve on her fourth place
finish at state a year ago.

“I am extremely excited for what this
season has to bring for the team this year with new and young runners joining
the team,” Moore said. “I am also excited for myself, and my senior season, to
better my time and hopefully to make it to state with my team once again.

“This year I have many goals for myself.
I want to push myself to get a faster time each race and possibly break a 19

minute 5K. Hopefully I can qualify for state again with my team and bring home
a plaque this year.”



Sophomore Reese Johnson is back to the Louisburg cross country team after finishing sixth at state last season as a freshman.

Johnson will be pushing Moore all season
as the Louisburg sophomore was on Moore’s heels at the state meet a year ago
and took sixth overall. Both runners helped the Lady Cats to a fifth place
finish at the Class 4A meet in Wamego.

Not only did the two runners push each
other last year, but they have also been competing with each other at practice
and in summer workouts. Both athletes hope all that competition will pay off as

the season goes along.

“Reese and I have constantly been training with each other in workouts and long runs,” Moore said. “Training with each other has made us go faster and hard in practice by giving each of us someone to challenge the other. I think down the road it will help us to have faster times individually, but also help lead the team to state again.”

Senior Carlee Gassman will also give Louisburg a nice boost on the girls side as the team’s No. 3 runner, while freshman Bree Gassman and junior Kennady Wilkerson complete the top five runners.

“Trinity and Reese are both bringing it during workouts, along with Carlee, and are really pushing themselves,” coach Reece said. “Trinity definitely put in the time over the summer and is ready to race. Carlee and Reese worked in their summer running when their schedule allowed and are not far behind Trin in the ready to race category.

“Cross country is such a mental sport and they can accomplish great things this season with the right mindset. Our new assistant coach, Paul Restivo, does a great job working with all the runners in promoting a positive mind set to help them prepare to compete.”



Seniors (from left) Anthony Davis and Evan Murphy, along with junior Cade Holtzen, return to lead the Louisburg boys team.

The Wildcats also return several runners on the boys side as well. Seniors Anthony Davis and Evan Murphy are back as the teams' top runners, along with juniors Cade Holtzen and Carson Houchen.

Ryan Rogers, Caden Bradshaw and Sawyer Richardson will also compete for the Wildcat varsity squad this season and Reece believes this group can do some good things as well.

"The boys are returning a lot of experience, along with some newcomers to the sport who have stepped in and are making positive gains within the team," coach Reece said. "Anthony Davis is leading the group, but the other six runners are closing in and making progress. Much like the girls side there are a few right behind them that are going to push and make us

strong.”

Louisburg opens its season at 3:15 today when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational at the Garnett Country Club. It is also a special day as the Wildcat middle school program will compete in its first-ever race.

“Practice is going well,” Reece said. “It has been a change with middle school cross country starting and having 58 runners to work with and two coaches. The high school runners are ready to roll and their eyes are set on the last three meets and are working hard to do better than last year.”

Numbers up for all LHS fall programs as athletes battle through heat



Last fall, each of the four Louisburg High School athletic programs had something to brag about.

Whether it was football's 10-1 season that ended with a regional championship, volleyball's state runner-up finish, cross country's two state medalists and state qualifying girls team or the boys' soccer regional championship appearance – the Wildcats had plenty to cheer about and several athletes took notice.

Numbers are up for all four programs following the first day of practice Monday and the coaches and athletes are excited to get the season started after last year's successes.

The Wildcat football team saw a big jump in numbers as they have 70 students out this season and football coach Robert Ebenstein and has liked what he seen through the first couple days of workouts.

"Our numbers are up and based on the numbers at the middle school and youth programs and I expect them to keep growing," Ebenstein said. "I am very excited for practice to get going. When you finish the season off with a loss in the playoffs it sticks with you and the opportunity to go play another game creates that energy and that eager feeling to get going. So far I am very pleased with our kids' focus and effort. We need to continue to get better every day."

Louisburg volleyball has also seen a spike in its numbers as 40 athletes have attended tryouts. Those tryouts will go through Wednesday and head coach Jessica Compliment believes those high numbers will be beneficial down the road.

"The players are excited, but I think some are nervous as well with tryouts and cuts these first few days," Compliment

said. “Forty is the most we’ve had tryout for quite some time. Generally we have around 35. The higher numbers leads to more competition for uniforms and playing time.”

Cross country head coach John Reece is pulling double duty this season as he, and assistant coach Paul Restivo, will also be leading the new Louisburg Middle School program. The Wildcats have a combined 59 runners out between the two programs, including 37 on the high school side.

Louisburg returns a majority of its girls team that qualified for state a year ago, including its two state medalists in senior Trinity Moore and sophomore Reese Johnson.

Despite a little hiccup with the heat during the first two days of workouts, coach Reece likes what he sees from both teams.

“It was great to get started, and yes the heat caused us to change our workout a little bit, but we still got in our miles,” Reece said. “We had a good turnout during summer running, so as a whole they are ready to get to the good stuff and go compete.

“There is definitely a huge difference with LMS joining the crew. Two coaches managing 59 kids is a lot, and we might need more help for supervision as we get more personalized with workouts for different levels of runners, but this is a good thing for Louisburg’s cross country program. It is going to be a fun year.”

Soccer also saw a big increase in interest as the Wildcats have 44 athletes trying out this season and they will continue the tryout process through Thursday. It is a good problem to have for head coach Kyle Conley and he has liked what he has seen so far as the Wildcats look to take another step forward this year.

“The kids worked hard, but showed we have a lot of work to do,” Conley said. “We had a really, really good summer, but we got a little rusty with the month off. This year we are getting back to focus on our culture and getting back to playing for each other. The boys have been focused and determined to improve this season.”

However, the first two day of practices weren’t without their challenges as intense heat and humidity caused some of the programs to change their schedules, including soccer, which moved its practice to the evening on Tuesday and spent some time indoors Monday.

“The heat was an interesting factor to go along with the late start due to the KSHSAA schedule,” Conley said. “We started in the AUX gym for the first hour and 15 minutes then transitioned outside for an hour. It was frustrating but the boys handled it very well.”

With the heat advisories, teams had to take precautions with their athletes and everything seemed to go smoothly with the hot weather.

“There is nothing you can do about the heat, and it is not centralized to Louisburg, so everybody has to deal with it,” Ebenstein said. “So you just do what you have to do when it comes to moving practice to the evening or whatever. I do not mind these hot early practices as it sets the tone that athletes need to take care of their bodies, and the acclimatization process gets going from the beginning. I would much rather have it this way instead of it being cool and the first hot week comes on a game week.”

With the first day of practice starting later than normal, the start of competition will also be pushed back. Team scrimmages will be the Friday before Labor Day and actual competition won’t start until Sept. 3.

Soccer will host Fort Scott in its season opener on Sept. 3 and volleyball will travel to Paola for dual on the same day.
Cross country opens its season on Sept. 5 at the Anderson County Invitational and football will travel to Spring Hill on Sept. 6.

USD 416 to offer new sports for upcoming year



The Louisburg High School cross country team will have some company this season as Louisburg Middle School is offering cross country for the first time this year and the younger Wildcats will attend many of the same meets as the high school. LHS will also offer boys and girls swimming this year and have discussed girls wrestling for the future.

There are always changes with every incoming school year, but Louisburg residents will see a couple major ones for the 2019-20 school year on the activities side.

Late last spring, the USD 416 Board of Education approved to add three new activities to the Wildcat sports slate in middle school cross county and boys and girls swimming. All three will give students opportunities to try something different for the upcoming year.

Middle school cross country will coincide with the high school season in the fall and those athletes will attend many of the same meets in 2019. Louisburg will open its season on Sept. 5 at the Anderson County Invitational in Garnett.

The Wildcats will then travel to Wellsville and Prairie View on Sept. 19 and 26, respectively, before wrapping its season on Oct. 10 in Eudora for the Frontier League meet.

There will be separate seventh and eighth-grade divisions for the meets and the middle school runners will run two miles, while the high school will continue to run its usual 5-

kilometer course.

Current high school coach John Reece will also serve as the middle school head coach, while Paul Restivo takes over assistant coach duties. It is an exciting time for Reece and the Wildcat program.

“Having a feeder program at the middle school level feeding into the high school level is invaluable,” LHS activities director Scott Hinkle said. “Having a feeder program is what builds and sustains successful programs.”

Louisburg will also participate in boys swimming, which takes place during the winter season, along with girls swimming that competes in the spring. USD 416 approved to co-op with the current Osawatomie-Paola team during the season, and if any swimmers should qualify for the state meet, they will compete on their own for Louisburg.

USD 416 superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann met with interested swim parents last year and worked with the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) in getting the approval to join the Osawatomie-Paola team for this school year.

Hinkle conducted interest meetings late in the spring with current high school students and eighth-graders moving up into high school.

“The students that attended the initial

organizational meeting were very excited and inquisitive," Hinkle said. "We had approximately 24 at the high school meeting – 12 boys and 12 girls. We probably had 10 or 12 show up for the middle school meeting. Usually when you introduce a new sport a lot of kids are interested in hearing about the new opportunity and what options are available to them."

Due to the possible increased numbers for the Osawatomie, Paola and Louisburg team, there was also a new hire made as Maddie Carrigan, who is in her first year as a para at LHS, will be the assistant coach and will help out current head coach Gerri Hart.

When the addition of swimming was first announced, there was talk of how to get the swimmers to and from practice every day at the Miami County YMCA in Osawatomie. If the numbers worked, the parents were going to be allowed to take a school van and do a rotation schedule to take the athletes to practice.

However, due to what could be bigger numbers than anticipated, the district might have to come up with a different option.

"We have explored many options in regard to transportation," Hinkle said. "We may have gotten real lucky in hiring an assistant swim coach who could help with the transportation. If numbers dictate more than a van, then the district is committed to transport the swimmers in a district school bus. The logistics of all of those factors will have to be worked out."

Another activity that the district considered adding was girls wrestling. The sport was approved by KSHSAA as a sanctioned sport last April and it became the 23rd championship sport in Kansas.

Although some schools will begin programs right away, Louisburg head wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird knows it might take a little time to get a team put together here.

“I’m pretty excited for girls wrestling to finally become a sanctioned sport in Kansas,” Bovaird said. “I’m on the state board of directors for USA Wrestling – Kansas, and we’ve been seeing huge numbers out for girls wrestling at the youth level. Because of that, we’ve known for a while that it was bound to happen at the high school level. Neighboring schools have been seeing a big interest in girls wrestling, and I hope we’re able to see some of that same interest here.

“Last year, we had five girls join the Wildcat Wrestling Club, and I think it was a great experience for them. As they get older and continue with the sport, I hope to see them bringing their friends to try it out.”

Louisburg won’t be the only district in Kansas where girls wrestling will take time to develop, but Bovaird has a plan in place for current female athletes to begin their journey into wrestling.

“I plan on working with our AD (Hinkle) to set a plan in place to accommodate interest in girls wrestling at the high school,” Bovaird said. “For the next two seasons, if a tournament only offers a boys

division, then girls
will be allowed to compete against male wrestlers. If there is a girls
division, then they will compete against females only. After the 2020-21
season, all competitions will be separated by gender. For the time being, we're
going to operate as a single program – one practice, one coaching staff, one
team, regardless of gender. As numbers grow and we get closer to the 2021-22
season, we'll need to restructure to accommodate the state's requirement for
separation.

"We have a history of solid female athletics in Louisburg, and I
think the timing is just right for us to expand our wrestling program to
include more females. Since I've been here, we've had girls join the team, but
never in big numbers. I hope to be able to build a foundation for a solid girls
program, especially since I have a 7-year-old daughter whom I'd love to see get
the benefits of the sport of wrestling."

2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Year nominees



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

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. In the next week, I will announce this year's recipients.

Below are the nominees for this year's award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!

FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



CARSON BUFFINGTON – SENIOR – BASKETBALL, SOCCER, VOLLEYBALL

Carson was a 3-time letter winner in her senior season and was named as a team captain in volleyball, basketball and soccer.

In volleyball, Buffington earned second team All-Frontier League honors as she helped lead the Lady Cats to a Class 4A state runner-up performance. She also moved from her starting setter position to the outside hitter spot and had a lot of success for the Lady Cats as she tallied 130 kills in her new position. With all that success, Buffington was also selected to the Greater Kansas City Volleyball Coaches Association Senior All-Star Match.

Buffington also wrapped up a strong career for the Louisburg basketball team as she averaged eight points and seven

rebounds to go along
with three steals a contest. She was named as a Frontier League honorable
mention this past season, and she also was selected as an all-state honorable
mention.

In girls soccer, Buffington was the starting goalie for Louisburg in all 20 games. She posted 13 shutouts, which is a school record and had a .952 goals against average, which is also a school record. Buffington had 90 saves on the season that ended as a Class 4-1A state runner up for the second consecutive year. For her efforts, she was also selected second team All-Frontier League. Buffington was also named first team all-state goalie and was named Goalkeeper of the Year.



ANNA DIXON – SENIOR – VOLLEYBALL

Anna wrapped up her fourth volleyball season as a varsity starter for the Lady Cats and guided Louisburg to its second

consecutive Class 4A-state runner-up finish.

Dixon, who is currently with the Kansas State volleyball team, ended her senior season with 584 kills and had a hitting percentage of .260. She also added 325 digs, 50 aces and 42 blocks as she played all six rotations. With those lofty numbers, Dixon earned several big time honors in her final season.

She was selected as an All-Frontier League first team player and was also named to the 4A State All-Tournament Team. Those honors continued as she was named the Kansas Volleyball Coaches Association Class 4A Player of the Year and earned a spot on KVA All-State First Team.

Following the season, Dixon was also named as an Under-Armour All-American also earned MaxPreps/American Volleyball Coaches Association Player of the Week honors.



ALYSE MOORE – SOPHOMORE – BASKETBALL, SOFTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD

Alyse is a 3-sport varsity letter-winner this past year as she earned letters for the basketball, softball and track and field teams. This past spring season, Moore went to state in two different sports and became the first Wildcat athlete in recent memory to do so.

In her first season in track and field, Moore threw the javelin for the Lady Cats and went on to become regional champion as she eclipsed her personal best throw by almost 25 feet in just her third competition of the season. The following week, she medaled fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a personal best throw of 131 feet and

9 inches.

Moore was also the starting shortstop for the Lady Cats as she helped Louisburg to its first regional championship since 2014.

During the basketball season, Moore was a starter for the Lady Cats and averaged six points, five rebounds and three steals a game.



TRINITY MOORE – JUNIOR – CROSS COUNTRY, SOCCER

Trinity is 2-sport letter-winner for Louisburg this past year as she had state performances in both cross country and soccer.

During the fall, Moore was the top runner on the Louisburg girls cross country team as she helped the Lady Cats to a regional runner-up finish and qualified for state as a team for the first time in school history. Moore medaled fourth at the Class 4A state meet in Wamego and currently holds the school record for the fastest time in program history. She

also earned first-team All-Frontier League honors for her third place finish at the league meet.

In soccer, Moore was a starter on the Wildcat team that recently finished as the Class 4-1A state runner-up for the second consecutive year. At the midfield spot, she finished the season with 12 goals and six assists and was also named to the All-Frontier League first team.



DELANEY WRIGHT – FRESHMAN – BASKETBALL, CROSS COUNTRY, TRACK AND FIELD

Delaney is a 3-sport letter-winner as she took part in cross country, basketball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of those.

Wright found most of her success in track and field as she

earned four medals at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita this past month. She medaled in the long jump, 400-meter-dash, 200-meter dash and as a member of the 4×400-relay.

During the regional meet, Wright broke two school records (long jump, 400 dash) and earned a regional and Frontier League title in the long jump. She also earned a medal in the long jump at the Kansas Relays earlier in the season.

In cross country, Wright was a member of the Louisburg team that finished as a Class 4A regional runner-up and qualified for the state meet as a team for the first time in school history. In basketball, Wright saw playing time at the varsity level as a freshman at different points throughout the season.

MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



BLUE CAPLINGER – SENIOR – BASEBALL, FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING

Blue is a 4-sport letter-winner in football, wrestling, baseball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of the sports.

In football, Caplinger was an All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball as he was named to the first team defense as a defensive back and second team offense as a multi-purpose player. On defense, Caplinger, who helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship, had 31 tackles from the safety spot and also had two tackles for a loss, two fumble

recoveries and an interception. Offensively, he had 544 total yards and six touchdowns.

On the wrestling mat, Caplinger was a regional champion at 170 pounds and finished his season with a 33-5 record. The Louisburg senior fell one match short of state medal with a 2-2 record at the Class 4A state tournament. He currently holds the school record for most career reversals (72) and most career escapes (86). Following the season, he was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

Caplinger split time between baseball and track and field in the spring. Although he spent time as a reserve and pinch-runner on the baseball team, Caplinger found a lot of success on the track.

He qualified for state as a member of two relays. Caplinger was a member of the 4×400 relay team that won the Class 4A state championship in 3 minutes and 25 seconds. Caplinger also helped the 4×100 relay to a fifth place finish and went on to garner two state medals.

Caplinger will join the Benedictine football team this fall.



AUSTIN MOORE – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING

Austin is a 3-sport letter winner in football, wrestling and track and field and was among the state's best in two of the sports.

Moore thrived on the football field for the Wildcats as he helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship. Moore was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and was the league's leading vote-getter. He went on to rack up all-state awards as the Louisburg senior earned Class 4A first team all-state honors as a running back from the Topeka Capital-Journal and the Kansas Football Coaches Association. Moore was also named as a Class 4A first team all-state linebacker from the Wichita Eagle.

When the season was all said and done, Moore tallied 1,554 total yards from the running back spot, including 1,428 yards on the ground,
and had 21 touchdowns before he broke his collarbone during the regional
championship game.

With those numbers, he was named the Kansas Small Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity and was All-Purpose Player of the Year by Kpreps.com. Earlier this year, Moore was also named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl roster.

On the wrestling mat, Moore missed more than half of the season with his broken collarbone, but came back in a big way. Moore won his first 14 matches when coming back at 220 pounds, which included a regional championship. He went on to earn his first state medal as he finished fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a 3-2 record. He was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

During the spring, he was a member of the Louisburg track and field team and threw the javelin for the Wildcats. He was also on the throwers relay that ranked Top 5 nationally at one point in the season.

Moore will join the Kansas State football team this fall.



KIEFER TUCKER – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WEIGHTLIFTING

Kiefer is a 2-sport letter winner in football and track and field and also went to state competition in two activities.

Tucker was a presence on the line of scrimmage for the Louisburg football team as he was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and helped the Wildcats to a 10-1 record and a regional championship.

The Louisburg senior was among on the leaders on the offensive line as he helped pave the way for more than 3,500 yards of total offense. On defense, Tucker recorded 55 tackles from the defensive end spot, including three tackles for a loss, three forced fumbles, a fumble recovery and a sack. Those numbers helped earn him honorable mention all-

state honors and was
also named to the all-state team by the Kansas Football Coaches Association.
The honors kept coming for Tucker as he was recently selected to participate in
the Kansas Shrine Bowl.

During the winter, Tucker was a member of the Louisburg powerlifting team and certainly made his mark there as well. Tucker won the Class
4A state championship in the 220-pound class and broke a 24-year-old record in
the bench press with a lift of 375 pounds.

In track and field, Tucker qualified for state for the first time in the discus. He finished as a regional runner-up and went on to take ninth at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita, just one spot away from earning a state medal.

Tucker will join the Emporia State football team this fall.

Top 10 Stories of 2018

It was a successful, and eventful, 2018 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware to Louisburg.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2018, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can’t wait for 2019 to begin. Looking forward to it!



10. Dillon medals at state golf for second straight year

EMPORIA – All season,
Calvin Dillon had been atop or near the front of leaderboard and that didn’t
change in what was his biggest tournament of the season.

The Louisburg High School sophomore went up against the state’s best during the Class 4A state golf tournament on May 19 at the Emporia Municipal Course and did more than old his own. Dillon earned a state medal as he finished 11thoverall

with a 3-over par 74.

It was the second consecutive state medal for Dillon after he finished 10th overall last season at Wamego as a freshman.

“It is a real honor to earn another state medal, especially with the quality players that were at the state tournament,” Dillon said. “There were lots of good players and lots of good teams.”

It was another notch on Dillon’s list of accomplishments that included a Frontier League title and six straight tournament victories during the 2018 season.

- 

Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein

- 

Louisburg girls soccer coach Kyle Conley

9. Conley, Ebenstein named Class 4A Coach of the Year

Louisburg
girls soccer coach Kyle Conley and Wildcat football coach Robert Ebenstein both
led their respective teams to special seasons.

Those seasons were special enough for both coaches to earn two big awards.

Conley was rewarded for all his hard work in June when it was announced that he was named as the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association’s Girls Coach of the Year for Class 4-1A.

He guided the Wildcats to a 14-7 record and a spot in the
state championship match, where the Lady Cats finished second

overall. The finish was something to remember for Wildcat fans as that was accomplished in just the program’s third year of existence.

He has posted a 41-18-2 record during his time as the Wildcat girls head coach and also guided the Louisburg boys soccer team to its best finish in program history in 2017 with a fourth place finish at state.

As for Ebenstein, he guided the Wildcats to 10 straight victories and a regional championship to start the 2018 season, before getting knocked out in the sectional round against eventual state champion, Bishop Miege.

Following the season, the Kansas Football Coaches Association named Ebenstein as the Class 4A Coach of the Year. Ebenstein, who is just in his second season as head coach, has a 16-4 record with the Wildcats as he guided his team to a Frontier League championship this year.



8.
Holtzen finishes Louisburg career with 12 varsity letters

Once Isabelle Holtzen
received her diploma and walked out of Louisburg High School for the last time
as a student, she officially became one of the most decorated female athletes
in school history.

No, she doesn’t have any individual state championships, or even
one as part of a team. Holtzen’s decorations aren’t ones in the form of
trophies or all-state honors, but instead, they can be found on the front of

her letter jacket.

Holtzen became the first female athlete in at least 20 years to earn 12 varsity letters, which means she lettered on the varsity level in three sports in each of her four years of high school.

In research done by Louisburg Sports Zone, it was unable to find
the last athlete to accomplish the feat, which could mean Holtzen could be the
first Lady Cat to do so. She competed in cross country, basketball and track
and field

The last athlete to come close was in 2001 when Krystal Bowes earned 10 varsity letters before moving on to a collegiate track career at
Wichita State.

“The biggest thing that it means to me is to just have an opportunity to participate in three sports at a school like Louisburg,” Holtzen
said. “The bigger the school that you go to, the harder it is to play multiple
sports at the varsity level and I think Louisburg is unique in that fact. The
best part of this whole journey was I think my freshman year because there was
no pressure and no one was expecting anything from me. It was surprising and
exciting to be able to letter in all three sports.”

Holtzen is currently at
Northern Iowa, where she received a scholarship to pole vault for the Panther
Track and Field Team.



7.
Dixon earns All-American, Player of the Year honors, signs with Kansas State

Louisburg
senior Anna Dixon led the Lady Cat volleyball program all season and she was recognized
for her play on the court.

Dixon was named to the Under Armour Volleyball All-American team as she received a spot on the honorable mention squad when the list was released in November.

Dixon, the 6-foot-3 outside hitter, was recently named the Class 4A Player of the Year by the Kansas Volleyball Association, and along with that was also selected to the all-state first team.

It was the second year in a row Dixon was named player of the year, as she had to share the honor last season with Rose Hill’s Gracie Van

Driel.

The honors certainly didn’t stop there as Dixon was all named to the All-Frontier League first team as she helped guide the Lady Cats to an undefeated league season.

Dixon led the Lady Cats in kills with 584 in 105 sets played. She also finished with 325 digs, as she played all six rotations and also had 50 aces and 42 blocks.

In her four years with the program, Dixon finished with 2,003 kills, which would place that total among the best the school has ever seen.

All that success resulted in a dream come true for Dixon as she made it official last November when she signed to play volleyball at Kansas State.

“I have always known Kansas State was going to be my home,” Dixon said. “Even since I committed as a sophomore, I always wanted to go up to Manhattan and see the girls and spend time with the team. K-State is where I need to be.”



6. Louisburg wrestling sends six to state, Holtzen earns first state medal

SALINA – As the final whistle sounded in his blood round match, Cade Holtzen looked up into the rafters of the Tony's Pizza Events Center and smiled.

He had finally reached his goal.

Holtzen defeated Columbus' Gabe Porter by a 6-0 decision Saturday during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships in Salina and secured his state medal.

"It is one of the best feelings that I have had in my life," Holtzen said. "Just knowing that I'm going to place – you just can't match that with anything else."

It certainly wasn't

easy for the Louisburg freshman as he faced a win or go home with nothing scenario heading into his match with Porter. Holtzen pulled out the victory and eventually finished sixth overall at 113 pounds to give Louisburg a state medalist for the third consecutive season.

“It is pretty cool,” he said. “I have been working for this all season, so to get a state medal is great. It may not have been as high as I wanted, but any state medal is pretty amazing.”

Holtzen had a special year for the Wildcats as he finished with a 45-6 record and broke the school record for most wins in a single season. He won four different tournaments and was a Frontier League and regional tournament runner-up.

To add to his resume, he became only the second freshman in school history to earn state medal – second to only Austin Hood, who would go on to with three state titles.

Austin Moore finished one victory shy of earning his first state medal, while Ryan Adams, Thad Hendrix and Blue Caplinger also picked up wins at the state tournament.



5. Moore, Johnson finished in top 10 at state cross country, girls qualify for second straight year

WAMEGO – It was going to be hard for the Louisburg High School girls cross country team to duplicate its magical season of 2017.

Not only did the Lady Cats qualify their team for state for the first time in program history, but they also had a top five finisher in Trinity Moore.

Fast forward to 2018, Louisburg wasn't able to match that successful run – the Lady Cats took it a step further.

Moore, along with freshman Reese Johnson, each had a top 10 finish during the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships at Wamego Country Club, and it is the first time

in school history that two female runners had medaled at a state meet. Louisburg added on to that as the girls finished fifth in the team standings with 154 points, which is also the highest finish in school history.

Moore, who finished
fifth at state a year ago, bested her performance by one place as she took
fourth with one of her better performances of the season. Johnson was right
behind her as she crossed the finish line in sixth.

Shaylor Whitham, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Delaney Wright and Kennady Wilkerson were also members of the Lady Cats' team to run at state. Emily Williams was a member of the regional team that finished second overall.



4. Louisburg track earns six state medals, Gassman state runner-up in

300 hurdles

WICHITA – Carlee Gassman had broken the Louisburg High School 300-meter hurdle record three different times in 2018 prior to the state track meet.

She picked the perfect time to make it a fourth.

Gassman broke her own school record in the 300 hurdles in May at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita as she ran a time of 45.68 seconds to earn a silver medal as she was the Wildcats' top performer on the weekend. Andale's Abby Smarsh, who is a senior, won the event in 44.73.

It was the Louisburg sophomore's first time competing at the Kansas meet as she transferred in from Iowa last year, where she qualified for
the state meet there in the 400 hurdles.

Gassman's medal in the 300 hurdles was just one of six the Wildcats were able to bring home following the two-day meet. Those six medals
were the most Louisburg has earned since 2011, when the Wildcats combined to
medal in 10 events and the boys won their first team state title.

The 300 hurdles wasn't the only event Gassman found success in as she also medaled in the long jump. Gassman, who hadn't competed in the event
prior to this year, finished fifth with a mark of 17 feet, 0.25 inches.

Isabelle Holtzen
would go on to finish sixth in the pole vault, the boys 4×400 team of Chris
Williams, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins went on to take
seventh. Williams finished eighth in the 400-meter run and

Trent Martin medaled
eighth in the boys pole vault.



3. Louisburg volleyball takes runner-up at state for second straight season

HUTCHINSON – The
feeling was much of the same.

The pride of finishing as a state-runner up was a popular one among the members of the Louisburg volleyball team. At the same time, the
frustration of taking second in state in back-to-back seasons was just as
prevalent.

Louisburg wasn’t quite sure what to feel following its 25-13 and 25-14 loss to Bishop Miege in the championship game of the Class 4A state tournament Saturday at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

In 2017, the Lady
Cats fell to Rose Hill by two points in the championship

match, and fast forward to the present, they were in the same spot – holding the state runner-up trophy. It was the 15th time in program history that Louisburg finished in the top four at state.

The Lady Cats rattled off four straight wins to start the tournament, including knocking off No. 1 seed Independence, and defending state champions Rose Hill and Topeka Hayden. Louisburg then battled back to defeat Andale in the state semifinals.

“The loss was tough,” Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “To come so close to a state title two years in a row, only to come up short is tough. But with that being said, it is a huge accomplishment for this team to get back to the state championship and make it two years in a row. Finishing second is nothing to hang our heads on. Last year’s finish fueled the fire for the team this year, and I challenged the returning players to use this loss and feeling to fuel them for next year.”

Louisburg has been one of the more dominant teams in Class 4A in the last decade as the Lady Cats have made the state tournament seven out of the last nine years and have finished as a state runner-up on three different occasions, along with several third and fourth place finishes. They finished 2018 with a 36-9 record.



2. Louisburg girls soccer advances to title game, has best finish in program history

NORTH NEWTON – The obstacle seemed insurmountable – and it was.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team found itself in the Class 4-1A state championship match in the program's third year of existence, but if they wanted to take it another step further, the Wildcats were going to have to knock the defending state champion of its perch.

Unfortunately, Bishop Miege wasn't about to be moved.

In a state title game that was played in the sweltering heat in late May at Bethel College, the Wildcats couldn't stay with the Stags in a 5-0 defeat. It was the third consecutive title for Bishop Miege, while Louisburg earned a state plaque for the first time in its short history.

It was special season for the Wildcats as the night before they knocked off Topeka Hayden, 1-0, in the state semifinals to secure the program's first state plaque. In 2017, Louisburg

both games in its state tournament appearance and finished fourth.

The road to this state championship appearance has been an interesting one for the Wildcats. More than three years ago, a group of Louisburg parents and citizens raised enough money to begin the girls soccer program and fund it for three years.

Louisburg was in the final year of that funding, and while the program isn't going away, the team realized they needed to play for more than themselves.

"We played for the community tonight," Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher said after the Hayden win. "We have to remember that when they raised money for this program, it was just through this year, so I think we owed it to them to play well. I really think it might have helped with how we played and I think it was one of the best games we played all season."

"It is a third-year program with 41 wins, three regional championships, two state final fours and now a state runner-up," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said after the title game. "We just have kids who come in and work their butt off. They are not soft, they aren't weak and from top to bottom they are going to work hard.

"We worked hard, but we just played Miege. That is one of the best teams in the state, and that stinks, but our kids played hard, worked

their tail off and it was a great year. We had people criticize us for how we
got there, but we won games and that really motivated the kids. It got them
fired up to go do something bigger than themselves. I couldn’t be more proud of
they stuck together and what they accomplished.”



1. Football wins 10 straight, takes Frontier League title and regional championship

It had been almost two
months since Louisburg and Piper squared off on the football field in what was
one of the more entertaining games on the Wildcats’ schedule.

Back in early
September, Louisburg left Piper High School with a seven-point win – a victory
that would help propel them to a Frontier League championship and a perfect
regular season.

The two teams squared off again and the stakes were a bit higher. The game, at least for Louisburg anyway, was even more exciting.

The Wildcats dominated action from the opening kickoff and never looked back in a 48-0 win over the Pirates. In the process, Louisburg won the school's first regional championship since 2016 and are off to a 10-0 start for the first time since 2010.

Louisburg advanced to the sectional round where it fell to eventual state champion Bishop Miege, 55-21, and finished its season with a 10-1 record.

It was as season marked with special moments, including a 28-7 victory over then-undefeated Paola late in the year to secure a league title.

"Being 10-0 and then having that first loss of the season was very disappointing," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "Losing always sucks, but losing in the playoffs and having to wait until next August is the worst. At the end of the day, Miege is a very good team and we did some good things. We got them to fourth down on multiple drives in the first quarter, we just couldn't make the plays on those big downs. Then we got behind a little and started pressing.

"Overall it was a great year. I am very proud of our guys and excited for them that they were able to get double digit wins for only the third time since 2000, and

there was a
lot of really good football played during that time period. It was a lot
fun to be a part of.”



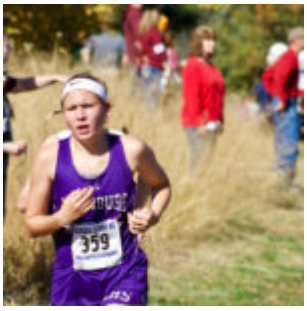
Austin Moore was named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl and was a first-team all-state player for the Wildcats. Moore was also named as the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity.

With all that success, honors
started to roll in for its players as running backs Austin Moore and Blue
Caplinger, along with linemen Brayden White and Kiefer Tucker all earned
all-state honors.

Moore and White went on to be
semifinalists for the Simone Awards and Moore was also selected to participate
in the Kansas Shrine Bowl in the summer of 2019. Ebenstein was also named as
coach of the year by the football coaches association.

Most recently, Moore was named the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year and Running Back of the Year by 810varsity.com, while White was named the Small-Class Lineman of the Year.
Ebenstein was also named Kansas Small-Class Coach of the Year by 810 Varsity.

Moore, Johnson earn state medals, Lady Cats take fifth



Louisburg junior Trinity Moore makes her way toward the finish line Saturday during the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships at Wamego Country Club. Moore finished fourth in the state and teammate Reese Johnson was sixth.

WAMEGO – It was going to be hard for the Louisburg High School girls cross country team to duplicate its magical season of 2017.

Not only did the Lady Cats qualify their team for state for the first time in program history, but they also had a top five finisher in Trinity Moore.

Fast forward to 2018, Louisburg wasn't able to match that

successful run – the Lady Cats took it a step further.

Moore, along with freshman Reese Johnson, each had a top 10 finish during the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships at Wamego Country Club, and it is the first time in school history that two female runners had medaled at a state meet. Louisburg added on to that as the girls finished fifth in the team standings with 154 points, which is also the highest finish in school history.

Baldwin won the state title with 51 points and Eudora was runner-up with 81. Buhler was third at 107 and Bishop Miege was fourth with 128 points.

“It was fantastic to finish in fifth place,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “We ran well and ran our races. From No. 1 to No. 7 is a gap, but our gap was less than other teams and putting two runners in the top 10 was the big difference between last year and this year. We are only losing one of the top 5 runners so next year could be special again.”



The Louisburg girls cross country team took fifth at state on Saturday. Standing (from left) are head coach John Reece, Shaylor Whitham, Kaitlyn Lewer, Kennady Wilkerson, Trinity Moore, Delaney Wright, Carlee Gassman, Reese Johnson and assistant coach Arianne Seidl.

Moore, who finished fifth at state a year ago, bested her performance by one place as she took fourth with one of her better performances of the season. Johnson was right behind her as she crossed the finish line in sixth to earn a state medal as a freshman.

“Coach A (Arianne Seidl) and I were elated with the girls efforts and for Trinity and Reese to both be top 10 was amazing,” Reece said. “I felt they would both medal, but did not see them finishing as well as they did. We are starting to develop an expectation of high performance, not a hope.

“Trinity and Reese both ran smart races. They did not go out with the front girls and let the race come to them. When it did they were poised to move through the field and they did. You always want the best to be your last race and I think it was for them, but they both said there were places that they might have run different that might have placed them differently. I liked that as that tells me they are breaking down their races and are always looking to make themselves better.”

Moore ran strong in the 96-runner field as she ran a time of 20 minutes and 15 seconds and her fourth place finish is now the highest state cross country finish in school history.

Chapman sophomore Taylor Briggs won the individual state title in 18:57 and Bishop Miege senior Fallon Russsell was second in 19:43. Eudora’s Riley Hiebert was third at 20:03.

“Overall, I think I ran pretty well,” Moore said. “The race felt like it went by really fast. I was able to push through

the hills and then surge going out of them. Placing one spot higher makes me feel like I have worked harder, and overall had a better season than last year. I know I have gotten better and had my teammates there to push me all year, so it feels great.

“The race was really intense with the girls competing. I knew I had to work really hard to accomplish my goal of doing better than last year. The weather was really nice so it didn’t affect how I felt during the race. Wamego is a challenging course with hills, but I was able to push through them and could pass people while doing it. I am glad I was able to push myself against the competition and have a great race.”



Freshman Reese Johnson runs down a straightaway Saturday at Wamego.

As for Johnson, she didn’t perform like it was her first state meet. She finished just a few seconds behind Moore to take sixth overall in 20:20.

Johnson went stride for stride with Abilene’s Sydney Burton toward the finish line, but Burton just edged Johnson for fifth in a photo finish.

“I was overly excited to finish sixth,” Johnson said. “I was expecting good results, but not that good. I was really proud of myself and my team. As a freshman, I am just so happy to have done so well.

“When I found out that our team got fifth, I was super excited. I did not think we were going to do that well, but I know that next year we can get in the top three. Having Trinity to run against always helps me go faster because it gives me a challenge and a reason. I really like racing against her and she is a big part of the runner I am. I am so proud of her for reaching her goal.”

To get that fifth place finish, the Lady Cats were going to have to other runners step up and they were able to do that.

Junior Carlee Gassman was third on the team and took 34th overall in 22:01.

Senior Shaylor Whitham (24:13) and freshman Delaney Wright (24:19) were 78th and 79th, respectively. Senior Kaitlyn Lewer (25:03) was 85th and sophomore Kennady Wilkerson (27:57) was 96th.

“I knew we were going to go out and have the race of our lives,” Moore said. “When coach ran over to us and said we got fifth, we all jumped in the air and had a huge group hug. Reese finishing sixth made me super happy. She has had an amazing season and has worked so hard all year. She is an amazing runner and she has great determination.”

It was a great way for Whitham and Lewer to end their Wildcat running careers, according to coach Reese.

“Our seniors this year were awesome,” Reese said. “The three years that I coached Shaylor and Kaitlyn were wonderful. They brought great leadership to the team and showed it during practice and races. I was so happy for them to end their cross country careers at the pinnacle of the season by running at the state meet. They will be greatly missed.

“It was a special year yet again. I want to thank the runners as they were a great group to work with. The parents again supported the team with dinners and snacks and a great cheering section that literally moved from place to place at the meets.”



Louisburg’s Trinity Moore gives teammate Reese Johnson a hug as she crossed the finish line Saturday at the state meet. (Photo courtesy of Adam Trower)

The Lady Cats are already looking forward to next season as they will return five of the top seven runners from this year's team as they try for an even bigger finish at state.

"After this year I am pumped to run again," Johnson said. "I can't even begin to explain how much I already miss practice and I miss the team so much. Next year I am hoping to do even better. Running has become a new passion of mine and I am going to keep running during the off-season. I can't wait to keep getting better and these next few years are going to be great."

Moore couldn't agree more.

"This season has given me a lot of momentum for next year," Moore said. "Even with our first two races getting cancelled this season, I think I was able to work hard to better my personal record and have a great season. My teammates have pushed me really hard and I know they will do the same next year."

Regional runner-up finish sends Lady Cats to state



Members of the Louisburg girls cross country team hoists their regional runner-up trophy following last Saturday Class 4A regional in Ottawa. The Lady Cats qualified for state for the

second consecutive season.

OTTAWA – As runner after runner crossed the finish line during the Class 4A regional meet in Ottawa, doubt began to creep in the minds of the Louisburg High School girls cross country team.

The Lady Cats were hoping to finish in the top three of the team standings and earn a state berth for the second straight season. Louisburg wasn't sure if the results were going to be good enough to equal last year's third place regional finish.

It turned out the Lady Cats had nothing to worry about.

Not only did Louisburg finish in the top three, but the Lady Cats recorded the best finish in school history as they took second with 75 points at the Eisenhower Road Course, 10 points ahead of third-place Paola. Baldwin won the girls regional with 40 points.

Moore, Reese Johnson, Carlee Gassman, Shaylor Whitham, Delaney Wright, Kaitlyn Lewer and Emily Williams will all be making the trip to Wamego this Saturday for the Class 4A state meet.



Louisburg runners and coaches celebrate the announcement of their regional runner-up finish.

“I am just so thrilled that we were able to qualify again as a team,” junior Trinity Moore said. “We have worked so hard this year. We were kind of worried because we didn’t know where we were going to finish. We just had to go out and run our race. When we found out we made it, we were all just overly ecstatic. We have worked so hard and to finish second is great.”

Along with the Lady Cats’ regional runner-up finish, they also had two runners finish in the top three individually. Johnson passed Moore late in the race to finish second overall in 22 minutes and 8 seconds, and was five seconds in front of Moore, who ran a 22:13 to come in third.

It was the first time this season that Johnson, a freshman, eclipsed her teammate in a race as both runners have been

pushing each other in practice.



Louisburg freshman Reese Johnson leads a pack of runners up a hill Saturday in Ottawa.

“I was not expecting it at all,” Johnson said of her second place finish. “Everyone was telling me I could beat Trinity and I was able to do it. To me, this was my favorite course so far, even though everyone else hated it. I loved it. I just controlled myself in the middle and took it up the hill.

“Trinity and I are good friends now. We are always running together at practice and we are hanging out all the time. I was always too scared to pass her cause I knew with her competitive side that she would pass me. It is kind of cool that we can race against each other like that.”

Although the finish might have surprised Johnson, it didn’t

surprise her coach as he has seen her progress all season.

“Reese is a go-getter,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “There is a lot of gas in that tank and there isn’t anything that is going to stop her. She is going to push through anything and it was just an outstanding race for her. The sky is the limit for her and I think she is going to perform well at state.”



Junior Trinity Moore gets ready to take on one of the many hills at the Ottawa course.

As good as Johnson and Moore ran for the Lady Cats, it was the middle three runners that helped secure the Lady Cats’ state bid.

Gassman was third on the Louisburg team with a 15th place

finish in 23:47, while Whitham finished 25th in 24:49. Wright took 31st overall in 25:36. Lewer (26:34) and Williams (27:52) took 36th and 40th, respectively.

“It was amazing,” coach Reece said. “I really had no clue that we would get second. For a long time I thought we were fighting for third. Our three, four and five runners were really huge for us.

“Delaney, Shaylor and Carlee stepped up and had the race of their lives. They ran smart races. They started out like we wanted them to, nice and comfortable, they worked through the middle and ended up passing a lot of kids. The game plan worked.”

The Louisburg boys saw its season come to an end Saturday in Ottawa as the Wildcats took seventh with 163 points. Iola won the regional with 49 points, El Dorado was second with 51 and Fort Scott was fourth with 84.



Junior Anthony Davis led the Louisburg boys with his 27th place finish.

Junior Anthony Davis was the highest finisher for Louisburg as he took 27th in 20:31. Sophomore Cade Holtzen was 29th in 20:39 and junior Evan Murphy took 32nd in 20:49.

Sophomore Carson Houchen (21:26) and freshman Ben McKain (21:39) took 37th and 38th, respectively. Seniors Gareth Baus (22:03) and Jackson Staab (24:28) took 42nd and 54th.

As for the Lady Cats, they hope to put together their best performance of the season Saturday during the Class 4A state meet at the Wamego Country Club. The 4A girls race is scheduled to run at 12:55 p.m.

After running as a team at state last season, and Moore

finishing fifth overall to earn her second state medal, Louisburg is hoping for even bigger things this time around and a few less nerves.

“I think it will be huge for the girls that went to state last year to show the ones that didn’t run there last year and help them out,” coach Reece said. “I think when you have girls like Trinity, Carlee and Kaitlyn who ran it last year, I don’t think there will be those nerves this year, and that will help the ones who didn’t run like Reese, Delaney and Shaylor. They will have a good group to lean on.”

For a photo gallery from the regional meet, make sure to click here.



PHOTO GALLERY: LHS girls cross country qualifies for state



Members of the Louisburg girls cross country team (from left) are Kaitlyn Lewer, Shaylor Whitham, Reese Johnson, Trinity Moore, Delaney Wright, Carlee Gassman, Emily Williams and alternate Kennady Wilkerson pose with the Class 4A regional runner-up plaque Saturday in Ottawa.

The Louisburg High School girls cross country team is headed back to the Class 4A state meet this weekend in Wamego. The Lady Cats finished second at the regional meet in Ottawa last Saturday and qualified the entire team for state.

Trinity Moore, Reese Johnson, Carlee Gassman, Shaylor Whitham, Delaney Wright, Kaitlyn Lewer and Emily Williams led the Lady Cats to their first ever regional runner-up trophy. Louisburg also added a pair of individual medalists as Johnson finished second overall and Moore was third on what was a difficult, hilly Ottawa course.

Here is a photo gallery from Saturday’s meet, which also included the Wildcat boys’ final race of the season. The Lady Cats are scheduled to run at 12:55 p.m. this Saturday at the Wamego Country Club. Congrats again to all the runners!

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PAOLA
710
673
672
574
OTTAWA
704
703


BALDWIN
KSHSAA
601
FORT SCOTT
KSHSAA
628
Anderson
KSHSAA
576
KSHSAA
678



Junior Trinity Moore gets ready to take on one of the many hills at the Ottawa course.


KSHSAA
675
KSHSAA
57
Anderson



Louisburg freshman Reese Johnson leads a pack of runners up a hill Saturday in Ottawa.


PAOLA
KSHSAA
709
KSHSAA
679


LOUISBURG
672
LHS
650


FORT SCOTT
KSHSAA
676
LHS


KSHSAA
673


LOUISBURG
672
LHS


KSHSAA
676


LOUISBURG
KSHSAA
674
LHS


KSHSAA
684
KSHSAA
587


FORT SCOT
KSHSAA
683
LOUISBURG
FORT SCOT
KSHSAA
645


LOUISBURG
688
KSHSAA
687
719


608
609
LOUISBURG
688
LHS


FORT SCOTT
KSHSAA
686
LOUISBURG
LHS
KSHSAA
663
640


LOUISBURG
KSHSAA
LHS



Louisburg runners and coaches celebrate the announcement of their regional runner-up finish.


LOUISBURG
TRACK & FIELD
LHS
UNDER CONTROL
YOU'RE NOT
RUNNING FAST


LOUISBURG
CROSS COUNTRY
RUNNER-UP
REGIONAL
673
LHS
LHS
WILDCATS
K-STATE


LOUISBURG
CROSS COUNTRY
RUNNER-UP
REGIONAL
KSHSAA
673
LHS
WILDCATS
K-STATE


IF YOU'RE
EVERYTHING
UNDER CONTROL,
YOU'RE NOT
RUNNING FAST
ENOUGH!
LHS


2018
RUNNER-UP
REGIONAL
GIRLS
CROSS COUNTRY
CLASS 4A
Nikon