

# 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.

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# Barker excited to join MidAmerica Nazarene football program



*Louisburg senior Aiden Barker recently signed his letter of intent to play football at MidAmerica Nazarene University this coming fall.*

Football has always been a big part of Aiden Barker's life, and by the time his high school career was done, Barker wasn't ready to leave the sport he loves in the rear view mirror.

Instead, Barker gets a chance to fulfill a lifelong dream close to home.

In late April, the Louisburg senior signed his letter of intent to play at MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe next season and he is ready to get started.

"College football has been a dream of mine since I was a little kid running around with a football in my hands hoping to be the next great player," Barker said. "It meant a lot to me to sign in front of my friends and family and to have all those who have supported me and pushed me to get where I'm at

now being able to sign and play at the collegiate level.”

Barker was a force on the offensive and defensive lines for the Wildcats, but it was his performance on the defensive side where he made his mark.

As a defensive end, Barker was a first-team All-Frontier League selection as he finished with 58 tackles on the season to go along with 11 tackles for a loss and 5.5 sacks.



***Louisburg’s Aiden Barker signed his letter of intent to play football at MidAmerica Nazarene in late April. Seated next to Aiden are his parents Dave and Gail Barker and his brother Cameron Barker.***

He will be playing a similar position with the Pioneers, but one that offers more flexibility and fits his strengths better. He will be playing as a standup defensive end that will drop back and play like a linebacker.

Although it is going to be a big transition for him, Barker knows he will have a chance to succeed if he puts the effort into it.

“I’m really excited to move onto the next level of football,” Barker said. “I put pretty high expectations on myself to go

out and perform at my best.”

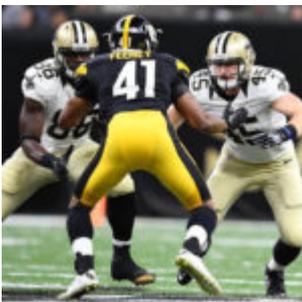
When weighing his options, Barker felt right at home when he made his visit to MidAmerica and he felt at ease with the Pioneer coaching staff, and head coach Paul Hansen.

“I picked this coaching staff because they came off as great people and they really wanted to get to know you so that they could evaluate if you could fit in with the others and if you were going to be able to build a better program in the future.,” Barker said.

“I liked MidAmerica because they stood out to me as really genuine people and I think that the program is going to be able to mold me into a better player.”

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## **Griffin moves on from New Orleans, signs with Detroit Lions**



***Garrett Griffin, who spent the last six seasons with the New Orleans, will sign a contract with the Detroit Lions according to multiple reports.***

After six seasons with the New Orleans Saints, Garrett Griffin will have a new home in the National Football League.

According to multiple reports from NFL writers Aaron Wilson and Tom Pelissero, Griffin will sign with the Detroit Lions. Griffin is currently in Colorado Springs taking care of his yearly commitment with the Air Force Academy.

*Garrett Griffin (Saints) is signing with the Detroit Lions, per a league source. Griffin played for Dan Campbell when Campbell coached tight ends for the Saints. Griffin is currently taking care of his yearly Air Force commitment in Colorado Springs*

*– Aaron Wilson (@AaronWilson\_NFL) March 17, 2022*

*Former #Saints TE Garrett Griffin is signing with the #Lions, per source. Griffin played for Dan Campbell when Campbell coached TEs for the Saints. Griffin is currently taking care of his yearly Air Force commitment in Colorado Springs.*

*– Tom Pelissero (@TomPelissero) March 17, 2022*



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Griffin, who is a 2012 graduate of Louisburg High School, worked his way on to the Saints roster in his five years, despite battling numerous injuries. He recorded five catches

for 43 yards in the regular season during those five years.

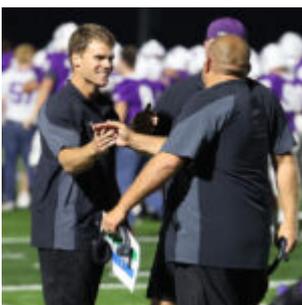
His most memorable moment came in the NFC Championship game in 2018 when he caught two passes for 12 yards, including a touchdown from Drew Brees.

According to those reports, Griffin chose the Lions based on his relationship with Detroit head coach Dan Campbell. Campbell served as the Saints tight end coach during much of Griffin's time in New Orleans.

Last season, the Lions finished with a 3-13-1 record and finished fourth in the NFC North.

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## **Harding excited for opportunity as Wildcat head football coach**



***Drew Harding was hired to be the next Louisburg High School head football coach last week after the district decided not to renew the contract of former coach Robert Ebenstein.***

The Louisburg football program will have a different leader on the sidelines starting next season.

The USD 416 Board of Education approved the hire of LHS assistant coach Drew Harding to be the team's new head coach

last Monday after the district decided not to renew the contact of former coach Robert Ebenstein.

Harding has spent the last five seasons as a Wildcat assistant coach, including time as a defensive coordinator. He is a 2010 Louisburg graduate and was a big part of the Wildcat program during his time as a student-athlete at Louisburg High School.

However, Harding didn't see himself be a head coach of any sport coming out of college.

"It means a lot," Harding said. "When I got out of school, I didn't get into education right away and started somewhere else. I decided to get into education because of the impact my former coaches at Louisburg had on me. To come full circle and to be in the position that I am in now, is pretty surreal. I am really excited for the opportunity and hopefully I can have the same type of impact on student athletes as they come through the program."

Ebenstein has the been the head coach the last five seasons and helped the Wildcats to a 30-18 record during that time, including a Frontier League and regional title in 2018. He had a winning record three of those five seasons.

He was also named the KFCA Coach of the Year during that season and was selected to be an assistant coach for the Kansas Shrine Bowl. He was an assistant coach for the Wildcat program for five years before earning the head coaching job.

"I appreciate the time and dedication coach Ebenstein put into the football program and summer weights and conditioning," Louisburg activities director Michael Pickman said. "In his time as head coach of Louisburg, he had successful seasons and accolades as well. I wish him the best moving forward."

Ebenstein was hoping to continue on as the Wildcat head coach, but he wanted to thank all of those that have helped him along the way.

“I would just like to take a moment to thank every player who I had the opportunity to coach for all of their effort and time,” Ebenstein said. “All of the managers, parents, announcers, and kitchen support for all of the countless hours they put into Louisburg Football. Also, a huge thank you to all of the amazing guys that I had the honor to coach with, I know they will continue to lead as they always have.”



***Kicker Drake Varns leaps into the arms of Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein after making a field goal during a previous season.***

“I know Coach Harding is a great coach, mentor, and friend and

will do an amazing job as head football coach. I wish him and the football family nothing but the very best. With the talent that will be returning next year, with a season's worth of experience, the sky's the limit. When learning has to take place, I hope that Coach Harding gets the support that he and all coaches deserve."

When the district decided to move in a different direction at head coach, Louisburg interviewed a handful of candidates, but Harding stood out among the rest.

"I am excited for Drew Harding to have the opportunity to lead the football program," Pickman said. "He will bring an energy and passion that will provide a culture of hard work, accountability and family on and off the field. He is well respected by the staff and students and knows the current players and the league and the community, which gives him the ability to relate to all patrons and players of the program being familiar with the tradition and expectations Louisburg has of its football program and all the benefits a Louisburg educational and athletic opportunity has to offer.

"He started as a dedicated player and graduate at Louisburg, has been a dedicated assistant coach and teacher, and now enters the next chapter as head coach of Louisburg football. This Louisburg foundation and experiences in his time will allow him to build upon strong relationships he already has and instill those high expectations to which he holds himself to the athletes he coaches so they can rise to those same expectations and levels of success."

Harding was a starting quarterback for the Wildcats during his time in high school and helped Louisburg to a playoff run before falling to Bishop Miege in 2009.

Since coming back to Louisburg as a teacher, Harding began his coaching career an assistant basketball before joining the assistant ranks for the football team. He hopes that his

coaching experience, and being an LHS graduate, can be a positive in his transition.

“It does help,” Harding said. “I am really lucky that when I came through high school that we had some really good teams and really good athletes at that time. I think it helps me to have seen that and experience that. All the coaches that have come before me have set the foundation for what this program is and have set me up for success.

“It is not like I need to reinvent the wheel or anything, I just need to carry on the tradition that was already there. For me being an assistant was huge to see how things work and how to approach things and learn from all the other coaches.”

Harding has had many positive experiences in being an assistant for Ebenstein and Ty Pfannenstiel on the basketball side.

“I just pick things up from other coaches,” Harding said. “Coach Pfannenstiel is big in developing the athlete overall. He is big on preaching character and commitment and stands by his word and holds kids accountable on the court and outside.

“Coach E (Ebenstein) always had a great way that he could relate and interact with kids. I think that they respected him and he was a guy that was always there for his assistant coaches. He always stood up for his assistants, delegated tasks and let his assistants run with it. Those are really some of the biggest takeaways that I have working under those two guys.”

According to Harding, all of the assistants will return for next season and will have one open position to hire later in the year.

He is looking forward to putting his own stamp on the program and doing so with several returning varsity players.

“I have to be me,” Harding said. “There are certain things that will change, but I am not going to reinvent the wheel and do things 100 percent different. There will be some changes that I’ll do because I have to be me. There have been a lot of really good coaches that have come before me that have set the stage, and my job is to keep that going and put my stamp and flair to the program.

“It is exciting to be a head coach and already having a relationship with the kids. It give us an ability to go on a nice little run right out of the gate. We have a solid junior class, a solid sophomore class and a good freshman class. I’m looking forward to combining all their talents and be competitive.”

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## **Wildcats earn 11 spots on all-league football; four selected first team**



It was an up and down season for the Louisburg football team, but it was one that saw the Wildcats earn four league victories.

Several Wildcats were recognized on the All-Frontier League team, that was released on Monday.

Louisburg earned 11 spots on the all-league squad, including four first-team selections. Seven Wildcats earned honors overall.

“This year the Frontier League was extremely tough and every week was a challenge,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Every team had at least one loss to another league school, so it was very competitive all year long. As for our all-league representation, we did very well considering how tough the league was. We had four guys represented on the offensive side of the ball, five guys on the defensive side and two in the special teams category.”

The league coaches were impressed with the talent the Wildcats had on defense as they earned seven spots on that side of the ball.

Junior J.R. Rooney (defensive tackle), senior Aiden Barker (defensive end), senior Brandon Doles (linebacker) and junior Jase Hovey (defensive back) were each named to the first team.

TACKLES	90
TPS	11.3
TFL	11
F. FUMB	2

**L**

**BRANDON DOLES**

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE FIRST TEAM DEFENSE

LOUISBURG SPORTS ZONE

Another junior, Layne Ryals, was also named as a second team punter, and honorable mention kicker and multipurpose defensive player.

“Our defense played really really well in most games,” Ebenstein said. “We knew going into the season that our run defense was going to be a strength of our team, and it certainly was. Then to add safeties like Jase Hovey and Layne Ryals with the run support they could provide in the alleys it was tough to establish the run against us.”

Starting on the inside, Rooney was disruptive up the middle as he had 56 tackles on the year, including 9.5 tackles for a loss. Barker was just as tough on the outside as he had 58 stops, 5.5 sacks and 11 tackles for a loss.

From the linebacker spot, Doles finished with 90 tackles and averaged more than 11 per game. He also forced two fumbles.



Hovey led the Wildcats with 99 tackles on the season, including 58 stops and had two interceptions in the secondary.

“All four of our first team guys played very well all year, and when you think about the type of football we play it makes sense that a unit would have four first team players,” Ebenstein said. “We always preach about doing your job, and your job only. If everyone does their job you begin to have





Barker was an all-league selection on both sides of the ball as he was second team on the offensive line.

Junior Mason Dobbins was a second team wide receiver as he finished with 30 catches, 519 yards and four touchdowns.

Sophomore quarterback Declan Battle had a big first year for the Wildcats as he led the team with 1,000 yards through the air to go along with seven touchdowns.



Battle was also the team's leading rusher with 810 yards and 13 touchdowns.

Senior Kolby Kattau was named as an honorable mention running back as he had two touchdowns and more than 200 yards of total offense.



## ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL

### OFFENSE

#### First Team

**LINEMAN** – Antonio Caballero, Bonner Springs, senior; Tyler Neis, Eudora, senior; Dalton Picek, Paola, senior; Camden Beebe, Piper, junior; Aiden Palmer, Spring Hill, senior

**RUNNING BACK** – Brayden Beerbower, Eudora, senior; Jovanni Blackie, Paola, senior; Caden Rhamy, Paola, senior

**QUARTERBACK** – Gage Hayden, Eudora, senior

**WIDE RECEIVER** – Adrion Seals, Eudora, sophomore; Divante Herrig-Brittian, Piper, senior; Daniel Mitchell, Spring Hill, senior

TIGHT END – Jaden Hamm, Eudora, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – Sam Kleidosty, Tonganoxie, senior

KICKER – Jackson McWilliams, Tonganoxie, sophomore

RETURNER – Zach Knowlton, Spring Hill, senior

### **Second Team**

LINEMAN – **Aiden Barker, Louisburg, senior**; Kale Murdock, Paola, junior; Cameron Rogers, Piper, junior; Connor Bruch, Tonganoxie, senior; Logan Blancarte, Tonganoxie, senior

RUNNING BACK – Zion Woodin, Ottawa, junior; Draven Pipkin, Spring Hill, junior; Colton Brusven, Tonganoxie, sophomore

QUARTERBACK – Fletcher Pankey, Spring Hill, senior

WIDE RECEIVER – **Mason Dobbins, Louisburg, junior**; Ethan Walker, Piper, senior; Isaiah Holthaus, Tonganoxie, sophomore

TIGHT END – Colin Vigil, Piper, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – Zach Knowlton, Spring Hill, senior

KICKER – Dominic McCoy, Paola, senior

RETURNER – Adrion Seals, Eudora, sophomore

### **Honorable Mention**

LINEMAN – Jake Van Horn, Baldwin, freshman; Zane Clark, Bonner Springs, senior; Ben Suber, Eudora, senior; Derek Gomez, Ottawa, junior; Adam Doran, Ottawa, senior; Grant Celano, Paola, senior; Aidan Wegele, Spring Hill, senior

RUNNING BACK – Peyton Parks, Bonner Springs, junior; **Kolby Kattau, Louisburg, senior**; Layton Brandt, Paola, senior

QUARTERBACK – **Declan Battle, Louisburg, sophomore**; Blake Porter, Piper, senior; Noah McCullough, Ottawa, senior

WIDE RECEIVER – Sam Darnell, Baldwin, junior; JD Andrewjeski, Bonner Springs, senior; Kameron Crotchett, Spring Hill, senior

TIGHT END – Zayne Now, Baldwin, senior; Andrew Colvert, Tonganoxie, senior

MULTIPURPOSE – Silas Etter, Eudora, senior

KICKER – **Layne Ryals, Louisburg, junior**; Reese Fogle, Ottawa, senior; Zane Busick, Piper, junior

RETURNER – Jouse Navarro, Ottawa, sophomore; Divante Herrig-Brittian, Piper, senior

## **DEFENSE**

### **First Team**

TACKLES – **J.R. Rooney, Louisburg, junior**; Cameron Rogers, Piper, junior; Connor Bruch, Tonganoxie, senior

ENDS – **Aiden Barker, Louisburg, senior**; Mark Debiak, Spring Hill, sophomore

LINEBACKERS – Mason L'Heureux, Piper, junior; **Brandon Doles, Louisburg, senior**; Caden Rhamy, Paola, senior; Austin Rivers, Spring Hill, senior; Andrew Colvert, Tonganoxie, senior

BACKS – **Jase Hovey, Louisburg, junior**; Zach Knowlton, Spring Hill, senior; Sam Kleidosty, Tonganoxie, senior; Ethan Walker, Piper, senior

MULTIPURPOSE – Colin Vigil, Piper, junior

PUNTER – Caleb Chandler, Spring Hill, senior

### **Second Team**

TACKLES – Antonio Caballero, Bonner Springs, senior; Kale Murdock, Paola, junior; Camden Beebe, Piper, junior

ENDS – Dalton Picek, Paola, senior; Lamar Lynch, Piper,

sophomore

LINEBACKERS – Brandin Andrew, Bonner Springs, senior; Trenton Long, Eudora, senior; Layton Moore, Paola, senior; Garrah Bauer, Spring Hill, senior

BACKS – Kale Hammerschmidt, Eudora, junior; Divante Herrig-Brittian, Piper, senior; Carter Meade, Spring Hill, senior; Wyatt Harris, Tonganoxie, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – Brayden Beerbower, Eudora, senior

PUNTER – **Layne Ryals, Louisburg, junior**

### **Honorable Mention**

TACKLES – Micah Barron, Eudora, junior; Adam Doran, Ottawa, senior; Keanu Tiafau, Spring Hill, sophomore

ENDS – Evan Cameron, Piper, sophomore

LINEBACKERS – Wesley Martin, Baldwin, junior; **Nathan Vincent, Louisburg, junior**; Parker Guge, Ottawa, sophomore; Clayton Forrest, Paola, senior; Terrel Anderson, Piper, junior

BACKS – Miguel Andazola, Baldwin, senior; Adrion Seals, Eudora, sophomore; Tiernan Reed-Cox, Ottawa, senior; Trey Moala, Paola, senior; Carter Meade, Spring Hill, senior; Wyatt Harris, Tonganoxie, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – **Layne Ryals, Louisburg, junior**

PUNTER – Jayce Smith, Bonner Springs, senior; Reese Fogle, Ottawa, senior

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# St. James ends Louisburg's season in first round of playoffs



ROELAND PARK – After finishing the regular season with a .500 record, Louisburg had a chance to start a new season – playoff football.

The Wildcats, however, got maybe the toughest draw in the Class 4A bracket.

No. 9 Louisburg ventured to play No. 8 St. James Academy – the defending state champion from a season ago. The Wildcats saw just how tough of a test it was from the opening kickoff.

St. James scored six unanswered touchdowns in the first half and the Thunder handed Louisburg a 56-22 loss at Bishop Miege High School.

“St. James is very good,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “In my opinion they are much better than they were last season when they won a state championship. They got a few new players on both sides of the ball that can really play. I would expect them to make a run here and put up some major points.

Despite being down 42 points at halftime, the Wildcats answered with three consecutive touchdowns in the third quarter to try and get back in the game.

Louisburg (4-5) opened the third with an 11-play drive that ended on a 1-yard touchdown from quarterback Declan Battle. He then went on to convert the 2-point conversion

The Wildcats also converted a pair of onside kick opportunities, thanks to kicker Layne Ryals, to give the Wildcats the ball right back.

Battle scored on a 17-yard touchdown run that was set up by a 30-yard pass to Mason Dobbins. Ryals' extra point made it 42-15.

Louisburg recovered another onside kick and then Battle found Dobbins for a 29-yard touchdown to cut the Thunder lead in half.

"Our kids have created an atmosphere where they will battle all game long, week in and week out," Ebenstein said. "I am very proud of their resilience and their determination to continue to fight and play hard. Our seniors set that example and our underclassman have received the message and will battle with anyone. Just as an example, our backfield on Friday was two sophomores and a freshman and never once did they back down."

St. James responded with two more touchdowns in the fourth quarter to pull away and ended the Wildcats' season.

Battle completed 17 of 35 passes for 206 yards and a touchdown. He also led the Wildcats with 82 yards on the ground.

His favorite target was Dobbins who had a season-high six catches for 158 yards.

On defense, the Wildcats had three players that finished with double digit tackles. Junior linebacker Nathan Vincent led the Wildcats with 19 stops, while senior Brandon Doles finished with 14.

Junior lineman J.R. Rooney finished with 10 stops, including three tackles for a loss. Junior safety Jase Hovey added nine tackles.

Not only did it end the Wildcats' season, but they also had to say goodbye to their 10 seniors, including starters Aiden Barker, Kolby Kattau, Doles and Tom Koontz.

"These seniors have had quite a ride over the past three seasons of Louisburg football," Ebenstein said. "I am honored to be their coach and they will be greatly missed. With the life skills they have developed in this program, I know they will step out into this world ready and able to conquer anything they set their mind to."

**LOU 0 0 22 0 – 22**

**SJA 28 14 0 14 – 56**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

### **First quarter**

S: Jackson House 5 run (kick good)

S: Blake Boydston 39 interception return (kick good)

S: Tiave Watts 28 run (kick good)

S: Ben Wheeler 20 pass (kick good)

### **Second quarter**

S: House 13 run (kick good)

S: Watts 1 run (kick good)

### **Third quarter**

L: Declan Battle 1 run (Battle run)

L: Battle 17 run (Layne Ryals kick)

L: Mason Dobbins 29 pass from Battle (Ryals kick)

#### **Fourth quarter**

S: Watts 5 run (kick good)

S: Watts 78 run (kick good)

#### **STATISTICS**

RUSHING – Declan Battle 24-82; Ashton Moore 6-6

PASSING – Battle 17-35-206

RECEIVING – Mason Dobbins 6-158, Caden Caplinger 6-34, Jase Hovey 3-14

TACKLES – Nathan Vincent 19, Brandon Doles 14, J.R. Rooney 10, Jase Hovey 9, Tom Koontz 7, Carson Wade 6, Wyatt Holland 5, Layne Ryals 4, Jackson Howard, Aiden Barker 3, Hunter Heinrich 2, Ashton Moore 1

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## **Wildcats fall short against rival Paola on Senior Night**



*Louisburg seniors Aiden Barker (54) and Brandon Doles team up to stop Paola running back Jovanni Blackie at the line of scrimmage Friday at Wildcat Stadium.*

Down two scores going into halftime, Louisburg needed a jump start offensively and the Wildcats got it Friday at home against rival Paola.

The Wildcats took the opening drive of the second half and scored on a fourth down. The momentum seemed to be on their side.

However, two more fourth downs didn't quite the Wildcats' way.

Louisburg failed to score on a fourth and goal from the 2 on its next drive and the Panthers took advantage. Paola used that opportunity to score its third touchdown of the game and hand Louisburg a 21-7 loss in its annual rivalry game.

The Wildcats tried to get back in the contest, but two turnovers threw a wrench in those plans. Louisburg finished its regular season with a 4-4 record and earned a No. 9 seed in the state playoffs.

It was also Senior Night for the Wildcats and the final time Brandon Doles, Aiden Barker, Tom Koontz, Kolby Kattau, Luis Rios, Terrance Foster, Liam DeVary, Gavin Whisenhunt, Bryce Gage and Reid Justesen will play on their home field.

Although their season isn't over, it was a tough loss to take for many of the Wildcats.



***Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle makes a pass over a Paola defender Friday at Wildcat Stadium.***

“We got the ball again to the 1 but couldn’t get in, then you have a fumble and an interception and it goes downhill from there,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “You can’t do that against a good team.

“They are a good team obviously and (Paola) coach (Mike) Dumpert is a good coach and he has been around forever. You have to be on top of your game. That first half we lost two offensive players and that kind of put us in a shuffle to try and figure it out. We went into halftime and made a plan and we came out and executed.”

It didn’t start well for the Wildcats as Paola scored on the game’s opening play on a 80-yard run by Caden Rhamy.

Louisburg was down 13-0 at halftime and the Wildcats couldn’t

find any rhythm offensively. That changed in the second half.

The Wildcats took the opening drive of the third quarter down to the 3-yard line. On a fourth-and-goal from the 3, quarterback Declan Battle scrambled to find Jase Hovey for a touchdown.



***Freshman running back Ashton Moore leaps over a Paola defender Friday at home.***

The drive was helped by a couple 20-yard passes to receiver Mason Dobbins and 15 yard passes to Caden Caplinger and Ashton Moore.

Dobbins, who normally has a height advantage over his opponent, was shadowed by Paola's Trey Moala as both are around 6-6. Still, Dobbins was able to get going in the second half and had 59 yards receiving.

"We had to be careful where we were sending him (Dobbins) and we were trying to get their big corner's hips to open up and put the ball on Mason," Ebenstein said. "We did that in the second half, but we didn't capitalize on the chances we had."

The Wildcat defense came up big and forced a Paola punt and Louisburg drove the ball down the field again.

After a roughing the passer penalty called on Paola, Moore broke free for a 26-yard run. Then Battle, on third down, scrambled for a 20-yard keeper.

Louisburg eventually got down to the 2-yard line. Then on a fourth-and-goal from the 2, the Panther defense stuffed Battle short of the end zone, preventing another Wildcat score.

That defensive stance propelled the Paola offense. The Panthers drove 99 yards for touchdown that ended on a 12-yard run from Moala early in the fourth quarter to put Paola up 21-7.

On that drive, Paola faced a fourth down choice of its own as it had a fourth and inches from their own 10-yard line. The Panthers decided to go for it and Moala got the first down on a quarterback keeper.

"They took that and went 99 yards," Ebenstein said. "That is tough to bounce back from. That is their style and they are good team. If it is fourth and less than 2 they are probably going for it. That is what they did. We were there on the play to stop it, but they have a 6-6 quarterback and all he had to do was lean forward."



***Louisburg junior Jase Hovey stretches out to bring down Paola quarterback Trey Moala on Friday. Hovey led the Wildcats with a team-high 29 tackles.***

The next two Louisburg drives resulted in a fumble and an interception that helped seal the win for Paola.

Defensively, junior Jase Hovey was all over the field from his safety spot. Hovey finished the game with 29 tackles, including 18 solo stops.

Linebackers Brandon Doles and Nathan Vincent were also active with 18 and 15 tackles, respectively. Junior lineman J.R. Rooney also had double digit tackles with 10.

“That drive for 99 killed us,” Ebenstein said. “Paola has some big kids. They have three senior lineman, a couple senior running back, a senior quarterback and a senior receiver. Those guys played like seniors and we have some guys that

played like sophomores because we are a young team. We are getting better and we have another week of practice, so we will see what we can put together.”

Louisburg will face its toughest challenge yet as the Wildcats will travel to meet No. 8 seed St. James Academy in the first round of the playoffs. St. James is the defending Class 4A state champion and also ended Louisburg’s season a year ago.

Kickoff is set for 7 p.m. at Bishop Miege High School and Ebenstein knows the challenge ahead for his team.

“They are very good, and to be honest they look better this year than they did last year, but I know we are better as well and much more well rounded,” Ebenstein said. “This year from what I have seen they battled some injuries early, but then bounced back to give St. Pius X (Missouri) their only loss on the season, then beat Blue Valley Southwest, Blue Valley North, and then last week beat Bishop Miege by three possessions.

“When you watch film on most 4A schools you can find a weakness or a tendency that you can exploit, teams like St. James do not have those weaknesses, so you have to make sure you have a balanced approach and try to take away their strengths while not exploiting yourself. They have multiple kids that are receiving interest from Division 1 and II programs. So we have to be sure that we have a clean game plan on both sides of the ball and be able to have success running our basic stuff and keep the chains moving and keep their offense off the field for as long as possible.”

**LOU 0 0 7 0 – 7**

**PAO 7 6 0 8 – 21**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

**First quarter**

P: Caden Rhamy 80 run (kick good)

### **Second quarter**

P: Trey Moala 2 run (kick failed)

### **Third quarter**

L: Jase Hovey 3 pass from Declan Battle (Layne Ryals kick)

### **Fourth quarter**

P: Moala 12 run (2-point conversion good)

## **STATISTICS**

RUSHING – Ashton Moore 6-54; Declan Battle 15-41

PASSING – Declan Battle 16-30-144

RECEIVING – Mason Dobbins 5-59; Caden Caplinger 4-55; Ashton Moore, 2-14; Jackson Kush 1-8; Kolby Kattau 1-4; Jase Hovey 1-3

TACKLES – Jase Hovey 29, Brandon Doles 18, Nathan Vincent 15, J.R. Rooney 10, Carson Wade 4, Tom Koontz 4, Jackson Howard 4, Kolby Kattau 3, Aiden Barker 3, Will Hutsell 3, Hunter Heinrich 2, Layne Ryals 2

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# **Wildcats cruise past Ottawa for their third straight victory**



***Louisburg junior Isaiah Whitley looks in his touchdown catch in the fourth quarter Friday against Ottawa. The Wildcats defeated the Cyclones, 40-13.***

OTTAWA – Louisburg hasn't had the opportunity to be on the right side of a blowout so far this season, that was until Friday.

The Wildcats traveled to Ottawa and scored 33 first half points en route to a 40-13 victory over the Cyclones to give Louisburg its third straight victory.

In the process, Louisburg moved to over .500 for the first time as the Wildcats improved their record to 4-3 on the season.

"It was nice to put a full game together and take care of a team that has been able to hang with other teams for the most part," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "Coming out hot, and getting stops and putting the ball in the endzone was really good for us. Being able to extend some varsity times to players who bust their butt on scout team is always a goal of ours. Watching some new guys get in there and execute is what is is all about."

Louisburg has been a run-first team all season, but the Wildcats changed it up against Ottawa and caught the Cyclones off-guard.

The quarterback-receiver combo of Declan Battle and Mason Dobbins caused the Cyclones fits for most of the night.



***Louisburg receiver Mason Dobbins hauls in a catch in-between two Ottawa defenders.***

The two hooked-up for a 14-yard touchdown pass to open the game and competed several more down the stretch. In all, Dobbins caught five passes for 89 yards and two touchdowns.

“We honestly will take whatever teams want to give us,” Ebenstein said. “Ottawa obviously watched film and decided they wanted to take away the strong side run game, which left them vulnerable in other places. Mason was the guy in position to make big plays and he made them.

“We have a comprehensive offense and can take advantages of whatever someone wants to give us we just have to make the plays when it is time to make them and Mason did just that.”

Battle was just as dangerous as he racked up 271 yards of total offense. The sophomore quarterback completed 12 of 20 passes for 164 yards and led the Wildcats in rushing with 107 yards on the ground. He also finished with four touchdowns,

including three through the air.

“Declan is always ready to go no matter what we ask him to do,” Ebenstein said. “Whether it is the Eudora game and we ask him to carry the ball 35 times, or this week where we ask him to throw it 20 times. He is going to make plays, but again it just depends what the defense wants to give us as to what that will look like.”



***Louisburg junior linebacker Nathan Vincent drags down an Ottawa runner Friday in the Wildcats' third straight win.***

Defensively, outside of a long touchdown run by Ottawa quarterback Noah McCullough, the Wildcat first team defense held the Cyclones in check for most of the game.

Linebacker Nathan Vincent was all over the field for the Wildcats as he led the way with eight tackles and a fumble recovery. Senior linebacker Brandon Doles and junior safety Jase Hovey each added seven.

“Defense has been playing really well, honestly since the Piper game,” Ebenstein said. “They have put us in a position to win games every week, and Friday was just another example of that. Not noticing any one specific player on our defense is what Louisburg football is all about – 11 guys just doing their job and making plays where they need to. We did give up one long play, but to be honest we were there and just didn’t execute at that point at their quarterback made a great play.”

Following the Battle to Dobbins opening touchdown, the Wildcats answered on their next drive of the first quarter when Kolby Kattau scored on a 5-yard touchdown run.



***Linebacker Brandon Doles puts pressure on Ottawa quarterback Noah McCullough Friday in Ottawa.***

Early in the second quarter, the Wildcats scored their third straight touchdown on a 39-yard pass from Battle to Dobbins.

Freshman Ashton Moore recorded his first varsity touchdown on a 17-yard run to make it 26-0. After an Ottawa score, Battle found the end zone on a 9-yard touchdown run to give Louisburg a 33-6 halftime lead.

In the fourth, Battle hit junior tight end Isaiah Whitley for a 22-yard score. It was also Whitley's first varsity touchdown. Layne Ryals' extra point, who had four on the night, made it 40-6 and sealed the win for the Wildcats.

"The overall moral and energy of our team was the most impressive thing about Friday's game," Ebenstein said. "Our kids are great young men and support each other and enjoy this game and that is great to see."

Louisburg will end its regular season this Friday when the Wildcats host rival Paola on Senior Night.

"To be honest there are no words to describe the opportunity to host Paola in the final week of the regular season," Ebenstein said. "Let's just say our guys will be ready to go."

**LOU 13 20 0 7 – 40**

**OTT 0 6 0 7 – 13**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

### **First quarter**

L: Mason Dobbins 14 pass from Declan Battle (Layne Ryals kick)

L: Kolby Kattau 5 run (2-point failed)

### **Second quarter**

L: Dobbins 39 pass from Battle (2-point failed)

L: Ashton Moore 17 run (Ryals kick)

O: Noah McCullough 77 run (2-point failed)

L: Battle 9 run (Ryals kick)

#### **Fourth quarter**

L: Isaiah Whitley 22 pass from Battle (Ryals kick)

O: McCullough 25 run (kick good)

### **STATISTICS**

RUSHING – Declan Battle 17-107; Kolby Kattau 13-52; Ashton Moore 9-40; Caden Caplinger 1-9

PASSING – Declan Battle 12-20-164

RECEIVING – Mason Dobbins 5-89; Isaiah Whitley 2-29; Caden Caplinger 2-28; Jackson Kush 1-9; Liam DeVary 1-8; Kolby Kattau 1-1

TACKLES – Nathan Vincent 8, Brandon Doles 7, Jase Hovey 7, Kolby Kattau 5, Aiden Barker 5, J.R. Rooney 5, Wyatt Holland 3, Tom Koontz 3, Layne Ryals 3, Jackson Howard 3, Noah Cowell 2, Brady Hickey 2, Carson Wade 1, Ashton Moore 1

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## **Week 7 Athlete of the Week: Mason Dobbins**



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

Craig Holtzen.

## **MASON DOBBINS, JUNIOR, FOOTBALL**

Louisburg junior Mason Dobbins was a pain for the Ottawa defense last Friday night. The Wildcat wide receiver torched the Cyclone secondary for five catches, 89 yards and a pair of touchdowns in the Wildcats' 40-13 road victory over Ottawa.

On the season, Dobbins has 19 catches for 302 yards and three touchdowns. The Wildcats are currently on a 3-game winning streak as they head into Friday's rivalry game with Paola.

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

Previous Winners:

Week 1: Jaden Vohs

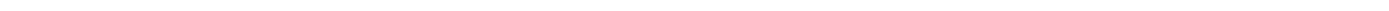
Week 2: Declan Battle

Week 3: Corinna McMullen

Week 4: Emma Vohs

Week 5: Braden Yows

Week 6: Mack Newell



# Trick plays, defense help Wildcats to road win over Bonner Springs



*Louisburg sophomore Caden Caplinger celebrates a touchdown in the second half of Friday's game at Bonner Springs.*

BONNER SPRINGS – Every football team has a bag of tricks they like to pull out on occasion.

Louisburg almost emptied its bag Friday on the road at Bonner Springs. Whether it was an onside kick, fake punt or a halfback pass – the Wildcats pulled out all the stops against the Braves.

It worked like charm as Louisburg pulled out a 29-7 victory for its first road victory of the season. The Wildcats also won back-to-back games for the first this year and improved their record to 3-3 on the season.

“This was huge for us, especially since we haven’t won on the road yet,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Coming out on someone else’s field and having to come out and execute in a different environment was big for us, especially with some young kids in some key spots.”

Kicker Layne Ryals was the main “instigator” in the trickery as he tried two onside kicks, one of which Ryals recovered himself. He also completed a pass on a fake punt to go along with a 24-yard field goal in the second quarter to open the

scoring.

Ryals, who is also the team's starting safety, was a big part of the Wildcats' success Friday.



***Louisburg kicker Layne Ryals converts a 24-yard field goal in the first half Friday at Bonner Springs.***

“He is a stud safety and he is the smartest kid out there,” Ebenstein said. “Layne is a football player. He broke his wrist, casted it up and was back at practice that day. He didn’t miss a practice and he does it all. The one time I wanted to yell at him, he came over and told me what he did wrong. He kicks really well and could have a future in that for sure.”

Louisburg tried two onside kicks in the first half and recovered the second one after Ryals’ field goal.

Although the Wildcats couldn't score on the drive, Ebenstein was happy to see his special teams come through.

"We literally said we were going to keep doing it (onside kicks) until they put a fifth guy up on the front line," Ebenstein said. "The first one was there and Layne was a little too juiced and get kicked 16 yards instead of nine. We squibbed it again and we executed and it was nice."

The next trick came with seconds left in the first half. The Wildcats ran out of bounds to stop the clock, but the clock kept running and Bonner Springs was flagged for a penalty.

It took awhile for the officials to sort it all out, which gave the Wildcats coaches a little bit of time to think of something to catch the Braves off-guard.

Then came the halfback pass as quarterback Declan Battle pitched the ball to Kolby Kattau, who found Mason Dobbins for a wide open 56-yard touchdown pass with 27 seconds left. After a blocked extra point, the Wildcats led 9-0 at halftime.



***Sophomore Wyatt Holland returns a fumble 45 yards for a touchdown in the fourth quarter Friday at Bonner Springs.***

“We actually ran that play in practice the day before just goofing around,” Ebenstein said. “On Thursdays, coach (Kade) Larson gives us a 2-minute drill situation and the situation was being on our own 44-yard with 29 seconds and one timeout. We ran that play yesterday against our defense and scored. Coach (Ty) Pfannenstiel said we should the run the play and it worked great.”

Defensively, the Wildcats held the Braves offense in check the entire night as they pitched a shutout. Bonner Springs’ lone scored was a fumble return for a touchdown in the third quarter.

Louisburg held Bonner Springs to just 134 yards of total offense on 56 plays. The Wildcats also forced a fumble as Aiden Barker sacked the Braves quarterback and Wyatt Holland

returned it 45 yards for a touchdown to seal the win.

Linebacker Nathan Vincent led the Wildcats with 10 tackles on the night, while Holland and junior J.R. Rooney each finished with nine. Barker had eight tackles along with a sack and a forced fumble.

“They played lights out on defense and we gave up the score on offense and that is on us,” Ebenstein said. “Overall, we executed for the most part and we beat a good, scrappy team who plays hard.”

The Wildcats pulled out another trick play early in the third quarter when Ryals found Caden Caplinger for a 19-yard pass on a fake punt. Caplinger then hauled in another 19-yard pass, this time from Battle, for a touchdown.



***Freshman running back Ashton Moore tries to break a tackle***

## ***Friday against Bonner Springs.***

Battle, who led the Wildcats with 106 yards on the ground, scored on a 5-yard touchdown early in the fourth quarter to widen the lead even more.

The one setback the Wildcats had was turnovers as they fumbled twice on drives they were about ready to score, along with an interception.

“We were moving the ball, interception, moving the ball, fumble for a touchdown and then fumbled the ball again,” Ebenstein said. “The good thing about it was all those kids came back and made plays after those turnovers. Mason had a drop for a touchdown early in the game, but I told him we were going to come back to him and then caught a touchdown later.”

Freshman Ashton Moore had a strong game on the ground with 90 yards on 14 carries and the Wildcats totals 232 yards rushing and 147 through the air.

The Wildcats will hit the road again as they try for three straight wins this Friday when they travel to Ottawa. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

**LOU 0 9 6 14 – 29**

**BS 0 0 7 0 – 7**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

### **Second Quarter**

L: Layne Ryals 24 FG

L: Mason Dobbins 56 pass from Kolby Kattau (kick blocked)

### **Third quarter**

L: Caden Caplinger 19 pass from Declan Battle (2-point failed)

B: Brandon Andrew 35 fumble return (kick good)

## **Fourth quarter**

L: Battle 5 run (Ryals kick)

L: Wyatt Holland 45 fumble return (Ryals kick)

## **STATISTICS**

RUSHING – Declan Battle 22-106, Ashton Moore 14-90; Kolby Kattau 13-35

PASSING – Battle 6-17-78; Kattau 1-1-50; Ryals 1-1 19

RECEIVING – Caden Caplinger 5-82; Mason Dobbins 2-59; Jackson Kush 1-6

TACKLES – Nathan Vincent 10, Wyatt Holland 9, J.R. Rooney 9, Aiden Barker 8, Brandon Doles 7, Jase Hovey 7, Tom Koontz 4, Jackson Howard, Layne Ryals 3