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

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

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

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

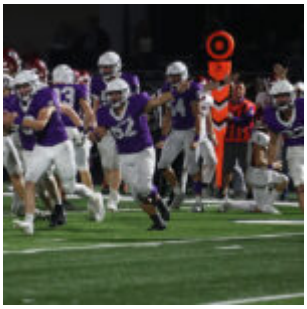
RUSHING – Declan Battle 22-106, Ashton Moore 14-90; Kolby Kattau 13-35

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

Wildcats run over Eudora to get dramatic win in final seconds



The Louisburg defense celebrates a big fourth down stop of Eudora on Friday during the Wildcats' 13-12 victory at Wildcat Stadium.

Fourth down, with the ball sitting on the 1-yard line and 15 seconds left in the game, one play was going to decide it all.

Louisburg was down five points and the Wildcats had just one play left to win the game. It was then that coach Robert Ebenstein saw something that gave him hope.

Eudora had overloaded the strong side, but Ebenstein and quarterback Declan Battle had a plan for that.

“We had run our ‘nasty’ set the whole half and we got them where we wanted them on the strong side,” Ebenstein said. “We told them all week that Eudora would overload it, and that when they did, we would go weak side. It just so happened to be on 4th and 1 for the game winner.”

Battle took the snap, went weak side, and followed blocker Kolby Kattau into the end zone as he stretched out for the winning touchdown and the 13-12 victory.

“In that situation it was Kolby and Declan versus their outside guy and I will take that all day,” Ebenstein said.



Junior receiver Mason Dobbins leaps over a Eudora defender Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

It was the second win of the season for the Wildcats and both have come in dramatic fashion as they defeated Tonganoxie in overtime earlier in the year. This win snapped a two-game losing streak for Louisburg.

“This win was huge and our kids really needed that,” Ebenstein said. “This was our best week of practice all season so far. I am not sure why, and I don’t know what changed, but they had a great week. For them to get a win on their home field, on homecoming night against a team with a lot of talented kids is awesome.”

Louisburg trailed 12-7 at halftime, but Ebenstein wanted to make a change to help get his offense going, so the Wildcats went to their “nasty” package.

It was their offensive line, tight end, and then brought in another offensive lineman, Nathan Vincent and running back Ashton Moore to the right of quarterback Declan Battle. Kolby Kattau was also next to Battle in the shotgun package and made an emphasis to run the ball.

“We just wanted to get a mentality,” Ebenstein said. “Numbers and X’s and O’s aside, we just wanted to will ourselves to get positive yards – 3 or 4 at a time. We wanted to show we had more heart than they did and those guys came out and did it.”



Quarterback Declan Battle gets as pass off downfield thanks to block of tackle Will Hutsell on Friday against Eudora.

The offensive line of Will Hutsell, Brayton Brueggen, Scott Thornton, Reid Justesen and Aiden Barber, along with tight end Isaiah Whitley, all helped pave the way up front. Ebenstein especially liked what he saw from Hutsell at the tackle spot.

“Our offensive line, these guys don’t get much credit and I am on their butt all the time,” Ebenstein said. “Will Hutsell came out and really played like a man out there. He really came out and played some football.”

That line helped create holes for Battle, who finished the game with 142 yards on the ground and two touchdowns to lead the way for the Wildcats. Senior Kolby Kattau also rushed for close to 50 yards.

That mentality on offense made the defense’s job easier in the second half as the Wildcats dominated the time of possession. Eudora had just three possessions in the second half – one that ended in three plays and a punt, a turnover on downs on just four plays and a couple more plays in the final seconds after the Wildcats scored late.



Louisburg defenders (from left) Jase Hovey, J.R. Rooney and

Layne Ryals team up to bring down a Eudora player.

Still, when they were out there, the Wildcats got the stops they were looking for as they shut down the Cardinals' rushing attack.

"The coaches on the defensive side – (Drew) Harding, (Alex) Gentges and (Kade) Larson – are just doing a great job," Ebenstein said. "Eudora did something different than what we were preparing for and those guys went inside at halftime and just fixed it. Our guys played well."

Senior linebacker Brandon Doles led the Louisburg defense with 11 tackles and juniors Jase Hovey and Vincent each finished with nine.

Louisburg will try to continue this momentum this Friday when the Wildcats travel to Bonner Springs for another Frontier League matchup. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

LOU 0 7 0 6 – 13

EUD 6 6 0 0 – 12

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

E: Silas Etter 19 run (kick blocked)

Second quarter

L: Declan Battle 2 run (Layne Ryals kick)

E: Gage Hayden 8 run (2-point failed)

Fourth quarter

L: Battle 1 run (2-point failed)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Declan Battle 35-142; Kolby Kattau 13-49; Mason

Dobbins 1-2; Ashton Moore 1-1.

PASSING – Battle 3-11-23

RECEIVING – Dobbins 3-23

TACKLES – Brandon Doles 11, Jase Hovey 9, Nathan Vincent 9, Wyatt Holland 6, Tom Koontz 6, Kolby Kattau 4, Layne Ryals 4, Aiden Barker 3, Hunter Heinrich 2, J.R. Rooney 2, Jackson Howard 1

Wildcats' rally not enough in home loss to Piper



Louisburg safety Jase Hovey wraps up Piper quarterback Blake Porter, while linebacker Bryce Gage tries to knock the ball loose with his helmet Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

For most of the game's 48 minutes, Louisburg's offense couldn't gain any traction.

However, the final six minutes gave the Wildcats some hope in their home contest against Piper. Louisburg came through with a pair of touchdowns, but time eventually ran out on the Wildcats.

Piper scored 23 unanswered points to start the game and held on to hand Louisburg its second-straight loss, 23-15.

It proved to be too little, too late for the Wildcats.

“All the credit to Piper’s defense for sure, but we just kept shooting ourselves in the foot,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “We had some inexcusable mistakes on the offense line for a Friday night, a lot of penalties and turnovers. It was a lot of self-inflicted wounds, but Piper played a great defensive game.

“Our kids have a lot of fight. I have never doubted their character. We just need to find a way to put it all together.”

The Pirates caused the Wildcats fits for most of the night as they forced three Louisburg turnovers, including one that was an interception return for a touchdown to begin the second half.



Freshman running back Ashton Moore stiff arms a Piper defender

Friday.

Piper starting quarterback Logan Laddish left early in the game with an injury, but the Pirates were able to move the ball in the first half.

Running back JJ Jarrett broke free for a 30-yard run in the first quarter and then quarterback Blake Porter hit Divante Herrig-Britton for a diving 9-yard touchdown to put the Pirates up 14-0 at halftime.

Then right after halftime, the Pirates made it a three-score game when Terrel Anderson intercepted a Declan Battle pass and returned it 42 yards for a touchdown.

“That was tough,” Ebenstein said. “We actually shouldn’t have motioned on that play. It was just one of those inexperience things. You have me talking to two sophomores and a freshman. That motion brought the linebacker into the play and that really falls on me. I should have made sure we didn’t motion there.”

Still, the Wildcat defense held down the Piper offense for the rest of the second half, allowing just a field goal in the final two quarters to help keep Louisburg in it.

Junior safety Jase Hovey, senior linebacker Brandon Doles and senior lineman Aiden Barker all made plays for the Wildcat defense. Hovey led everyone with 18 tackles on the night, including a forced fumble and a sack.



Brandon Doles brings down Piper quarterback Blake Porter for loss Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

Doles finished with 16 tackles and four tackles for a loss, while Baker added 13 and five tackles for loss. Nathan Vincent recovered a fumble and junior lineman J.R. Rooney had nine stops.

“Defense played a great second half,” Ebenstein said. “They bailed us out multiple times on offense. I don’t know that we fixed anything, but we just need to realize that the game will slow down and go out and make plays. We have a lot of young kids in some pretty big spots, so we are just trying to get them up to speed.”

With just under six minutes left in the game, the Wildcats were able to find the end zone when Battle broke free for a 68-yard touchdown run. He then ran in the 2-point conversion to make it 23-8.

The Wildcat defense forced another Pirate punt and Louisburg went to work again.

Battle engineered another drive with several big passes to Mason Dobbins and topped it off with a 1-yard touchdown run by Kolby Kattau. Layne Ryals' extra point made it 23-15 with 47 seconds remaining.



Senior running back Kolby Kattau finds a hole to sneak in the endzone Friday against Piper.

Louisburg tried the onside kick, but was unsuccessful and the Pirates were able to run out the clock.

Battle led the Wildcat offense with 106 yards on the ground to go with 70 yards through the air. Dobbins also had five catches for 61 yards to lead Louisburg.

The Wildcats will try to stop their losing skid this Friday

when they host Eudora for homecoming. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

“I know Eudora is getting to where their younger kids are upperclassmen now and they have three kids that have gotten some national attention when it comes to recruiting,” Ebenstein said. “We are just going to study film, and no disrespect to Eudora, we need to focus on ourselves. We need to fix our mistakes.”

LOU 0 0 0 15 – 15

PIP 7 7 9 0 – 23

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

P: JJ Jarrett 30 run (kick good)

Second quarter

P: Divante Herrig-Brittian 9 pass from Blake Porter (kick good)

Third quarter

P: Terrel Anderson 42 interception return (2-point failed)

P: 26 yard field goal

Fourth quarter

L: Declan Battle 68 run (Battle run)

L: Kolby Kattau 1 run (Layne Ryals kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Declan Battle 17-106; Kolby Kattau 3-4

PASSING – Battle 7-21-70

RECEIVING – Mason Dobbins 5-61; Ashton Moore 2-9

TACKLES – Jase Hovey 18; Brandon Doles 16; Aiden Barker 13; J.R. Rooney 9; Nathan Vincent 8; Wyatt Holland 7; Kolby Kattau 6; Layne Ryals 5; Jackson Howard 3; Tom Koontz 2; Hunter Heinrich 2; Trace Eslinger 2; Bryce Gage 1; Carson Wade 1; Ashton Moore 1.

KSHSAA releases classifications for this year, next football cycle

The Kansas State High School Activities Association released the classifications for the current year, along with the football classification for the next two years.

The biggest changes came in the new 2-year football classification cycle as St. Thomas Aquinas has moved from Class 5A to 4A and will join other schools like Louisburg, St. James Academy and Bishop Miege for the 2022 and 2023 seasons.

Along with St. Thomas Aquinas, Schlagle High School also made the move down to 4A. Previous 4A football schools, Great Bend and Lansing, jumped back up to 5A.

Kansas State High School Activities Association

Football Classifications and Enrollments-Descending Order 2022 & 2023

Enrollment figures are based on ninth, tenth and eleventh grades only.
Enrollment figures are as of September 20, 2021.

6A

Member Schools: 32
Range: 1832 - 1083

Wichita-East	1832
Wichita-North	1750
Wichita-Southeast	1741
Derby	1616
Garden City	1609
Kansas City-Wyandotte	1570
Dodge City	1516
Olathe North	1513
Manhattan	1465
Olathe Northwest	1460
Olathe South	1435
Topeka-Washburn Rural	1428
Wichita-South	1421
Olathe East	1376
Haysville-Campus	1374
Lawrence-Free State	1366
Gardner Edgerton	1347
Junction City	1266
Shawnee Mission East	1265
Shawnee Mission West	1250
Shawnee Mission Northwest	1244
Topeka	1240
Lawrence	1212
Olathe West	1203
Overland Park-Blue Valley West	1179
Shawnee Mission North	1169
Shawnee Mission South	1165
Overland Park-Blue Valley Northwest	1150
Overland Park-Blue Valley North	1139
Wichita-Northwest	1126
Wichita-Heights	1116
Overland Park-Blue Valley	1083

5A

Member Schools: 32
Range: 1081 - 677

Kansas City-JC Harmon	1081
Wichita-West	1071
Liberal	1011
Emporia	997
Hutchinson	987
Leavenworth	980
Shawnee-Mill Valley	970
Maize	948
Kansas City-Turner	934
Topeka-Seaman	932
Kansas City-Washington	927
Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights	908
Wichita-Bishop Carroll	899
Topeka West	846
Salina-South	808
Maize South	806
Overland Park-Blue Valley Southwest	796
Newton	755
Andover	751
Goddard-Eisenhower	749
Valley Center	746
De Soto	742
Spring Hill	739
Topeka-Highland Park	738
Salina-Central	732
Pittsburg	708
Lansing	701
Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel	698
Hays	692
Great Bend	689
Goddard	677
Kansas City-Sumner Academy	677

4A

Member Schools: 32
Range: 663 - 330

Kansas City-FL Schlagle	663
Overland Park-St. Thomas Aquinas	662
Andover Central	656
Lenexa-St. James Academy	655
Basehor-Linwood	637
Arkansas City	624
Bonner Springs	596
Kansas City-Piper	574
Ottawa	545
McPherson	543
Buhler	525
Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege	505
Winfield	496
Augusta	492
Tonganoxie	474
Chanute	469
Louisburg	457
Towanda-Circle	452
Independence	445
Fort Scott	432
Mulvane	419
Paola	416
Coffeyville-Field Kindley	415
Eudora	402
Altamont-Labette County	397
Wamego	395
Rose Hill	377
El Dorado	371
Atchison	368
Wellington	359
Ulysses	342
Abilene	330

In the football numbers, Schlagle is the biggest 4A school with an enrollment of 663 and Aquinas was right behind them at 662. Andover Central was the third biggest at 656.

Louisburg's football enrollment, which is based on ninth through 11th grades, sits at 457.

In the general classification, there wasn't much movement. Class 6 and 5A schools stayed the same.

The only school that moved into 4A was Rock Creek High School, while Nickerson moved down to 3A.

2021-2022 Classifications and Enrollments

Enrollment figures as of September 21, 2021 based on ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades.

Note: Schools are listed in descending order

⬆School Moved Up in Class
⬇School Moved Down in Class

Printable View Sort By School

6A
Member Schools: 36
Range: 2371-1328

Wichita-East HS	2371
Wichita-North HS	2268
Wichita-Southeast HS	2266
Derby HS	2147
Dodge City HS	2024
Garden City HS	1989
Olathe South HS	1944
Olathe North HS	1943
Olathe Northwest HS	1895
Olathe East HS	1875
Manhattan HS	1874
Kansas City-Wyandotte HS	1853
Topeka-Washburn Rural HS	1850
Lawrence-Free State HS	1822
Wichita-South HS	1813
Wichita-Haysville Campus HS	1772
Gardner Edgerton HS	1735
Shawnee Mission East HS	1669
Shawnee Mission Northwest HS	1641
Overland Park-Blue Valley West HS	1628
Shawnee Mission West HS	1626
Olathe West HS	1613
Lawrence HS	1599
Topeka HS	1598
Overland Park-Blue Valley Northwest HS	1581
Junction City HS	1580
Overland Park-Blue Valley North HS	1534
Shawnee Mission South HS	1524
Overland Park-Blue Valley HS	1484
Shawnee Mission North HS	1484
Wichita-Heights HS	1440
Wichita-Northwest HS	1408
Kansas City-JC Harmon HS	1397
Wichita-West HS	1397
Liberal HS	1362
Hutchinson HS	1328

5A
Member Schools: 36
Range: 1308-729

Leavenworth HS	1308
Shawnee-Mill Valley HS	1298
Emporia HS	1255
Topeka-Seaman HS	1218
Maize HS	1215
Wichita-Bishop Carroll HS	1178
Kansas City-Washington HS	1167
Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights HS	1166
Kansas City-Turner HS	1126
Topeka West HS	1124
Maize South HS	1116
Overland Park-Blue Valley Southwest HS	1062
Salina-South HS	1040
Newton HS	1006
De Soto HS	989
Salina-Central HS	982
Andover HS	970
Goddard-Eisenhower HS	965
Spring Hill HS	963
Valley Center HS	950
Topeka-Highland Park HS	944
Pittsburg HS	943
Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel HS	910
Goddard HS	887
Lansing HS	885
Hays HS	882
Overland Park-St. Thomas Aquinas HS	880
Kansas City-Sumner Academy	877
Great Bend HS	866
Lenexa-St. James Academy	859
Andover Central HS	848
Basehor-Linwood HS	830
Kansas City-FL Schlagle HS	825
Arkansas City HS	796
Bonner Springs HS	779
Kansas City-Piper HS	729

4A
Member Schools: 36
Range: 729-316

McPherson HS	729
Ottawa HS	709
Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS	668
Buhler HS	660
Augusta HS	652
Winfield HS	646
Louisburg HS	607
Tonganoxie HS	601
Chanute HS	592
Towanda-Circle HS	585
Fort Scott HS	576
Paola HS	570
Independence HS	554
Mulvane HS	548
Eudora HS	545
Coffeyville-Field Kindley HS	541
Altamont-Labette County HS	523
Wamego HS	508
El Dorado HS	488
Rose Hill HS	484
Wellington HS	470
Atchison HS	462
Abilene HS	447
Ulysses HS	431
Baldwin HS	409
Parsons HS	398
Andale HS	370
Chapman HS	351
Pratt HS	346
Iola HS	343
Clay Center Community HS	341
Clearwater HS	341
Topeka-Hayden HS	336
Holton HS	328
⬆St. George-Rock Creek HS	317
Concordia HS	316

Louisburg is considered the seventh biggest school in Class 4A with an enrollment of 607, which encompasses ninth through 12th grade.

McPherson is the biggest school at 729 and Ottawa is second at 709. Bishop Miege is third at 668.

Piper, which also has an enrollment of 729, stayed in Class 5A as the smallest school.

For the complete general classification list, click here.

For the complete football classification, click here.

Louisburg falls in short notice contest with Rock Creek



Louisburg seniors Brandon Doles and Aiden Barker (54) team up for a tackle Friday during the Wildcats' 35-28 loss at Rock Creek High School.

SAINT GEORGE – It wasn't your typical Friday night lights for the Louisburg football team.

Louisburg was scheduled to play Baldwin in its annual Frontier League matchup, but just two days prior, Baldwin had to cancel due to a low-number of healthy players.

It left the Wildcats scrambling trying to find a week three opponent. Louisburg was able to find one just in time as Rock Creek had a cancellation the next day.

Louisburg had one day to prepare for the Mustangs and their high-powered offense.

It turned out to be a game full of twists and turns, but the Wildcats came up just short to the Class 3A program in a 35-28 loss at Rock Creek High School.

"It is tough, but it is not an excuse," Louisburg coach Robert

Ebenstein said of the short turn-around time. “Rock Creek had one day to prepare for us as well. It was the same way last year with Smithville. I will say with what we were planning for with Baldwin, Rock Creek is the polar opposite. These guys run quads, trips and empties all game and Baldwin is more tight sets. That is just part of it, but it is a tough turnaround.”

Ebenstein had the option of taking the forfeit against Baldwin for a win instead of finding an opponent. The Louisburg coach was looking for a way to get his team better and Rock Creek was a good fit for the Wildcats to find in a short period of time.

“It was big for us to be able to get a game,” he said. “We have a lot of areas where we need to grow, and taking a forfeit and just getting a win doesn’t make us any better. It was good to play and this will help us out more in the long run than taking a forfeit.”



Quarterback Declan Battle breaks free for one of his four touchdown runs Friday against Rock Creek.

The Rock Creek offense was an explosive one for the Wildcats to try and contain. The Mustangs ran a spread offense and were pass heavy.

The Mustangs were also very aggressive in other areas as they went for an on-side kick to begin the game and recovered it. It eventually led to a 29-yard touchdown run and they led the Wildcats 7-0 going into the second quarter.

It was a defensive contest going into the second quarter when the Wildcats forced a Rock Creek punt deep in its own territory. The punt hit off the back of one of the blockers and the Wildcats sacked the punter on the Rock Creek 2-yard line.

From there, quarterback Declan Battle ran in the 2-yard score

to tie the game.

Rock Creek answered right back on a 55-yard slant from quarterback Dalton Whitworth to Yanci Spiller that resulted in a touchdown.

The Whitworth and Spiller combination was difficult to handle for Louisburg. Whitworth threw for 307 yards and three touchdowns and ran for another. Spiller caught those three touchdowns passes and had 7 catches for 107 yards.

“They threw the ball well,” Ebenstein said. “We have seen a couple a teams here now that throw the ball well and that is something we have struggled with stopping so far. We have to get better and learn how to defend it. The goal is to figure it out by the time playoffs come.”



Louisburg junior Riley Van Eaton leaps over a player after

getting a block from teammate Ashton Moore on Friday.

Still down a score late in the quarter, the Wildcat defense came up with a big stop as Brandon Doles forced a Rock Creek fumble and Kaven Bartlett recovered to give Louisburg good field position.

On a third and long, Battle scrambled for a 19-yard touchdown run to tie the game again.

However, just like the last score, Rock Creek answered quickly. The Mustangs put together a 2-minute drive that resulted in a 5-yard touchdown pass to take a 21-14 lead at halftime.

Louisburg played with a purpose in the third quarter as the Wildcats stole all the momentum.

It started on defense as Jase Hovey intercepted a Whitworth pass to set up another Wildcat scoring drive. Battle took it himself again, this time on a 7-yard score to tie the game.

The Wildcat defense once again stepped forward as Aiden Barker and J.R. Rooney teamed up for a sack that forced another Rock Creek punt.



Senior offensive lineman Reid Justesen signals for a touchdown early in Friday's game at Rock Creek.

Battle hit Riley Van Eaton for a 33-yard pass that set up the Wildcats' fourth score. Battle scored his fourth touchdown of the game on a 23-yard run and the game was tied after a Layne Ryals extra point.

Battle ran for 118 yards on the night and also threw for 80. He also got good blocking from his line in Barker, Nathan Vincent, Scott Thornton, Reid Justesen, Will Hutsell and tight end Isaiah Whitley.

With under eight minutes left in the fourth, Whitworth scrambled around for a 25-yard touchdown pass to Spiller, but after a failed 2-point conversion, the Wildcats still had a 1-point lead.

Penalties and a sack forced a Louisburg punt on its next

drive. Rock Creek then started its own 17, but drove the length of the field and Whitworth eventually scored on a 26-yard quarterback draw to give the Mustangs a one score lead.

The Wildcats got the ball back with under two minutes remaining, but their drive was halted on an interception.

“We challenged them to answer at halftime and they did,” Ebenstein said of his team. “The fourth quarter was a competitive one, but Rock Creek just made the plays at the end to seal it. We had some opportunities, but we just didn’t make them. That is the way football works sometimes.”

Louisburg will try and bounce back this Friday at home when it hosts No. 7 Piper. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

LOU 0 14 14 0 – 28

RC 7 14 0 14 – 35

SCORING SUMMARY

First Quarter

R: Jaydon Winans 29 run (kick good)

Second quarter

L: Declan Battle 2 run (Layne Ryals kick)

R: Yanci Spiller 55 pass Dalton Whitworth (kick good)

L: Battle 19 run (Ryals kick)

R: Spiller 5 pass from Whitworth (kick good)

Third quarter

L: Battle 7 run (Ryals kick)

L: Battle 23 run (Ryals kick)

Fourth quarter

R: Spiller 17 pass from Whitworth (2-point failed)

R: Whitworth 26 run (2-point good)

STATISTICS

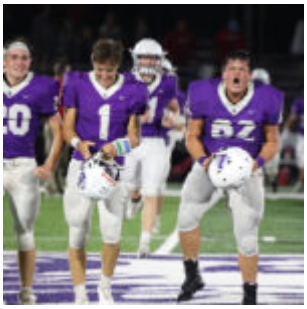
RUSHING – Declan Battle 21-118, Kolby Kattau 8-31, Riley Van Eaton, 5-20

PASSING – Battle 5-13-80

RECEIVING – Van Eaton 2-34, Mason Dobbins 2-32, Kolby Kattau 1-14

TACKLES – Brandon Doles 12, Aiden Barker 9, Kaven Bartlett 8, Jase Hovey 8, Tom Koontz 8, Nathan Vincent 8, Layne Ryals 6, Jackson Howard 4, J.R. Rooney 4, Carson Wade 2, Declan Battle 1, Lucas Swartz 1

Wildcats 'Battle' back to defeat Tonganoxie in overtime



Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle (1) and junior Carson Wade (20) celebrates with teammate J.R. Rooney (62) following the Wildcats' come-from-behind 34-28 overtime win Friday over Tonganoxie.

Things looked bleak on a couple different occasions for Louisburg during Friday's home opener against Tonganoxie.

The Wildcats were down 15 points at halftime and Tonganoxie had a chance to run out the clock for a win late in the fourth quarter in Louisburg territory.

Neither situation looked all that optimistic for the Wildcats.

The Louisburg players, however, had different ideas.

That belief helped the Wildcats to a memorable 34-28 overtime win against the Chieftains – a victory that left players, coaches and fans buzzing.

"Our kids grew up is what happened," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "You could see it in their face, you could see it in their eyes and they believed in themselves and in each other. They put themselves in the right spots and made the plays. It was awesome to see for them – not for me or the other coaches. This is for them."

Sophomore quarterback Declan Battle was a key piece in the Louisburg comeback as he accounted for four Wildcat touchdowns and ran in two 2-point conversions.

Battle totaled 212 yards of total offense and had two key touchdown passes in the fourth quarter to force overtime and ran in both conversions. He also ran in the game-winning touchdown in overtime.



Quarterback Declan Battle runs in for his first of four touchdowns Friday against Tonganoxie.

“You are going to see his name quite a bit,” Ebenstein said of Battle. “He is going to be a dude, for sure. He stepped up to the plate for us. He had one under thrown ball that was picked off, but I could see it in his face when he came off the sidelines that he wasn’t going to do it again. Declan was awesome out there.”

The game was tight early as the Wildcats trailed just 7-6 in the second quarter after a Battle 9-yard touchdown run. However, the Chieftains extended the lead with a pair of touchdowns to take a 21-6 advantage at halftime over Louisburg.

It didn’t look great at the time for the Wildcats. Going back to their last game against Spring Hill, Louisburg had been outscored 52-6 in their first six quarters of football.

Then, whatever it was, something seemed to click.

“We went into halftime and just challenged them,” Ebenstein said. “We challenged them to be the players that they are and be in the right spot to make the plays.”



Jackson Howard fights off a block to make a tackle Friday for Louisburg.

Late in the third, the Wildcats put together a drive that ended on a 2-yard touchdown run from junior Riley Van Eaton. After a missed extra point, Louisburg still trailed 21-12 going into the final quarter.

Louisburg (1-1) was driving early in the fourth when they faced a fourth and six on the Tonganoxie 33. Battle hit Van Eaton for a first down to keep the drive alive and the Wildcats took advantage.

Battle threw a high-arching pass to the end zone and junior Jackson Kush came back to settle under the ball and caught the

22-yard touchdown. Battle ran it in for two points and the Wildcats trailed by just one.

The Wildcat defense stepped up to make another big play as they appeared to stop a Tonganoxie drive when junior Jase Hovey made a big hit on a Chieftain player to break up the pass attempt that would have forced a punt.

Instead, Hovey was called for leading with his helmet and turned into a personal foul penalty to keep the Chieftain drive alive.

“That was just his judgment call,” Ebenstein said of the official. “When I looked at the replay, he had his hands out front and made a hit. Hovey is just a big kid, and when he hits people it is going to make a thud. It was two big kids going hard. That is just how football goes.”



Louisburg linebacker Nathan Vincent (51) celebrates a big stop with his teammates.

Tonganoxie put more doubt in the Wildcats' heads when Chieftain senior Sam Kleidosty broke free for a 33-your touchdown run to go back up eight.

Doubt really started to set in when the Wildcats offense turned the ball over on downs on their own 20-yard line.

The Chieftains could either score or run out the clock – both would have given them a victory.

Instead, the Wildcat defense saved their best performance for the end as they held Tonganoxie short on a fourth and 1. Louisburg got the ball back with more than two minutes on its own 11-yard line.

"Our defense stepped up when we needed them the most," Ebenstein said. "They were amazing for us."

It was more than enough time for Battle.

On the first play of the drive, Battle connected with receiver Mason Dobbins, who leaped over the defender to grab the 31-yard pass.



Junior Mason Dobbins leaps in the air to make a 31-yard catch in the fourth quarter.

That all set up the game-tying score as Battle found a wide-open Caden Caplinger in the end zone for a 29-yard touchdown. Battle converted the 2-point conversion to tie it at 28 with just more than a minute remaining.

Louisburg's defense held Tonganoxie at midfield and senior Aiden Barker ended regulation with a sack to force overtime.

Each team got a chance to score from the 10-yard line in overtime and the Wildcats got some help right from the start.

Tonganoxie was called offsides to start the drive, which moved the ball up to the 5 for Louisburg. The Wildcats capitalized for a 3-yard touchdown run to go ahead for the first time in the game, despite failing on the 2-point conversion.

It was again the defense's turn to step up and they did. Louisburg forced two incompletions in the end zone on the final two plays of the game to pull off the comeback.



Layne Ryals and Jase Hovey (22) stuff a Tonganoxie runner at the line of scrimmage on Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

"I had no doubt that we were going to score," Ebenstein said. "I honestly thought we were going to get the 2-point conversion because we were just kind of rolling at that point. Our defense just played lights out there in overtime."

Louisburg got big performances from several positions as four different players scored touchdowns and there were many big performances on defense.

Carson Wade, Tom Koontz and Layne Ryals each finished with a team-high nine tackles, while Hovey had eight to go along with two pass breakups and an interception.

Barker, who had the sack at end of regulation, also had six tackles and a fumble recovery. Jackson Howard also had eight tackles with linebacker Nathan Vincent.

“We are in a position to where we don’t have a superstar or we don’t have a kid that we are featuring,” Ebenstein said. “We are just playing team football and going out there and making plays. Kush caught a touchdown, Caden caught a touchdown and one guy that doesn’t get seen as much is Kolby Kattau. He didn’t carry the rock a lot, but he set the edge on almost everything.

“Aiden Barker is a monster. He does everything you ask and he does everything right. I wish I had 25 more Aiden Barkers.”



Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein celebrates with his players following Friday’s overtime win.

The Wildcats will try for their second straight win this Friday when they travel to Baldwin. Ebenstein hopes this victory can propel his team moving forward.

“This win is going to be huge for us,” Ebenstein said. “We were down by multiple scores and they came back and put it together to win. This was a huge growing moment.”

LOU 6 0 6 16 6 – 34

TON 7 14 0 7 0 – 28

SCORING SUMMARY

First quarter

T: Andrew Colvert 6 pass from Trevor McGraw (Jackson McWilliams kick)

L: Declan Battle 9 run (kick failed)

Second quarter

T: Colton Brusven 20 run (McWilliams kick)

T: Sam Kleidosty 14 pass from McGraw (McWilliams kick)

Third quarter

L: Riley Van Eaton 2 run (kick failed)

Fourth quarter

L: Jackson Kush 22 pass from Battle (Battle run)

T: Kleidosty 33 run (McWilliams kick)

L: Caden Caplinger 29 pass from Battle (Battle run)

Overtime

L: Battle 3 run (2-point failed)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Declan Battle 22-76; Riley Van Eaton 16-50; Kolby Kattau 2-5

PASSING – Battle 11-18-136

RECEIVING – Mason Dobbins 2-38; Jackson Kush 2-32; Caden Caplinger 1-29; Van Eaton 4-19; Kolby Kattau 1-18

TACKLES – Carson Wade 9, Tom Koontz 9, Layne Ryals 9, Jase Hovey 8, Nathan Vincent 8, Jackson Howard 8, Aiden Barker 6, Kolby Kattau 5, Bryce Gage 5, Lucas Swartz 2, J.R. Rooney 2, Kaven Bartlett 1, Ashton Moore 1, Trace Eslinger 1, Noah Cowell 1.