

# 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 a 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

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## 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.

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## **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 Miega.....	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](#).

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# 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

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# **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-yard 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.

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## **Wildcats shutout in season opening loss to Spring Hill**



***Louisburg junior running back Riley Van Eaton is engulfed by several Spring Hill defenders during the Wildcats' loss Friday at Spring Hill High School.***

SPRING HILL – It wasn't the opener the Louisburg football team was hoping for.

Fletcher Pankey made sure of that.

The Spring Hill quarterback threw for 273 yards and four touchdowns as the Broncos handed the Wildcats a 31-0 setback Friday at Spring Hill High School.

The Wildcats, who were playing with number of underclassmen –

some in their first varsity action – had to go up against a Bronco team that featured several returners from a season ago.

“Every loss is disappointing, but the first one always burns a little more because you have it in mind all summer long when you prep,” Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Our kids played with good effort, but we made too many mistakes and our opponent was a senior-led team and they did not make many mistakes. Good thing is those mistakes are all correctible so we fill fix them.”

It was as defensive matchup to begin the game and neither team could move the ball effectively. But it was Spring Hill’s defense that turned the tide.



***Louisburg junior Layne Ryals (left) and Carson Wade team up to bring down a Spring Hill player Friday.***

The Broncos sacked Wildcat quarterback Declan Battle and forced a fumble. Spring Hill recovered deep in Louisburg territory and found the end zone on a 22-yard pass from Pankey to Kameron Crotchett.

Louisburg mishandled a punt on its next possession, which gave the Broncos good field position. Still, Spring Hill had a third-and-long when Pankey hit Daniel Mitchell on a 35-yard touchdown with 1:07 left in the first half.

“The first half was a tale of two mistakes,” Ebenstein said. “We did not block our 70’s pass protection correctly and it led to a hit on our quarterback, causing a fumble and a fumbled punt. We made the mistakes and they scored and they did not make mistakes.”

The Wildcats appeared to have some momentum in the third quarter as they turned the Broncos over on downs inside the redzone. However, Louisburg was called for pass interference, which gave Spring Hill new life.

Pankey took advantage of the opportunity as he connected with Mitchell on a 14-yard touchdown pass to go up 21-0.



***Louisburg cornerback Kaven Bartlett stretches out to try and bring down Spring Hill's Kameron Crotchett on Friday.***

From there, the Wildcats had to change things up offensively and were never able to get in a rhythm against the Broncos defense.

"Spring Hill's defense was very good," Ebenstein said. "Our plan was good but we did have to shift it when we got down. We also had some drops which ended some drives. Again all things that can be corrected and will be."

Louisburg will try for that first win this Friday when it hosts Tonganoxie in its home opener. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

"Tonganoxie is a very well coached team so it will be a great challenge for Friday," Ebenstein said. "Our guys will be ready to redeem ourselves from last week."

**LOU 0 0 0 0 – 0**

**SH 0 14 10 7 – 31**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

### **Second Quarter**

SH: Kameron Crotchett 22 pass from Fletcher Pankey (Rocco Russo) kick

SH: Daniel Mitchell 35 pass from Pankey (Russo kick)

### **Third quarter**

SH: Mitchell 14 pass from Pankey (Russo kick)

SH: Rocco Russo 36 FG

### **Fourth quarter:**

SH: Zach Knowlton 22 pass from Pankey

## **STATISTICS**

### **LOUISBURG**

RUSHING – Declan Battle 15-32, Kolby Kattau 6-17, Riley Van Eaton 10-16

PASSING – Battle 3-16-32

RECEIVING – Jackson Kush 1-16, Van Eaton 1-13, Isaiah Whitley 1-3.

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# Doles happy to be back on field after season-ending injury



*Louisburg senior Brandon Doles is congratulated by his teammates after recovering a fumble against Fort Scott during a scrimmage last week.*

Brandon Doles remembers the day well.

It was Sept. 18 and the Louisburg football team hosted Baldwin and Doles was hoping for a big junior year with the Wildcats.

That night couldn't have gotten off to a better start as Doles caught a pass and lumbered 80 yards near the goal line to set up a Louisburg score.

Doles was pumped. The fans were going crazy and so were his teammates. Unfortunately, at least for that moment, it was a brutal combination.

Following the catch and run, Doles jumped up to celebrate with his teammates only to suffer a freak accident. In an instant, his hope for a special season was dashed away.

After the celebration, Doles landed wrong and suffered a broken fibula and dislocated ankle, in which all the ligaments were torn.

"When it happened it felt like it was a dream because you never really think these things will happen to you," Doles

said. "You see it on TV of other athletes doing it, but you never think it will happen to you. I just remember not feeling anything when it first happened. But once the adrenaline wore off, it was the worst pain I have ever experienced."

When Doles came down, teammates and coaches instantly knew something wasn't right and head coach Robert Ebenstein got onto the field along with the trainer.



***Brandon Doles goes up to catch a pass during a game earlier last season.***

"Brandon's injury was such a weird, unfortunate and freak situation," Ebenstein said. "To be honest it wasn't even a football injury. Everyone was so amped up and excited to get to him, he was met full force to do his celebratory ritual with a teammate. Too much steam rolling in caught him off guard and just came down funky on it and it as a gnarly

break.”

The injury not only ended his season, but also cost him his wrestling season after becoming a state qualifier as a sophomore.

The disappointment was hard to get over, especially after being saddled to a wheelchair as he recovered from his injuries. He tried to get through it as best he could.

It was a six month recovery process for Doles, that included not doing anything the first two months, which was hard.

“It’s always tough to miss a game, but to miss your whole season is even worse,” Doles said. “Knowing that I would never play football with those seniors again was pretty hard and knowing that I could have medaled at state for wrestling made me really upset. But once I was able to kinda move around I tried to stop thinking about the fact I couldn’t play, I just tried to be there for my team and help support them from the sidelines.”

He then followed up with physical therapy for three straight months, trying to get strength back in his leg for baseball season.

Doles was slated to be a big part of the Wildcat team a year ago, as he was the starting tight end, linebacker and long snapper. It was a difficult blow for Doles and the Louisburg coaches.

It was a tough loss for sure,” Ebenstein said. “Last year our depth was a major issue, so moving forward without him was tough.”

Depth is no longer an issue for the Wildcats this season as they have more than 80 players out for football. Instead of playing both ways, Doles will just play on defense at the linebacker spot.

As for the recovery, he is all healed up and ready to join his teammates under the Friday night lights again when they open up tonight at Spring Hill.

"I'm so excited and ready to be back on the field with my brothers," Doles said "We haven't beat Spring Hill on their own field in awhile and it will feel so good if we can finally beat them.

"Since I've been back I've tweaked my ankle a couple of times at the beginning of baseball. But since spring I haven't had a problem with it. Sometimes it will be sore, but for the most part I'm back to 100 percent."

That is good news for the Wildcats as they prepare for what could be a special season as they try to get that Frontier League championship and a good seed in the playoffs.

"All summer long we put in a lot of work to get to where we are now," Doles said. "We are working hard everyday at practice and learning everything the coaches are putting in so that way we can beat Spring Hill. Only playing one side of the ball will be nice because players will be able to rest when they are not on the field so that way once they get back out there we will all be ready to go 100 percent every snap."

Along with the typical practice work, Ebenstein has also focused on the art of celebrating with his players.

"We now are perfecting celebratory handshakes where our feet stay on the ground," he joked.

That is all right by Doles.

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# Louisburg hopes depth, new faces breed success



*Wildcat junior J.R. Rooney gets fired up after a big hit during the team's scrimmage last Friday against Fort Scott.*

For most of last season, depth was always a concern for Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein.

He had a lot of athletes play on both sides of the ball, then throw in a slew of injuries, and the Wildcats found themselves worn down by the end of the game.

It was a common theme that only seemed to become a bigger problem during Louisburg's 4-5 season.

Needless to say, depth should be the least of the Wildcats' problem this year.

Louisburg has 83 players out in 2021 and Ebenstein decided to take a new approach. Since the Wildcats have depth, many of those athletes will only be playing one side of the ball.

It is something that Ebenstein hopes will pay off for the Wildcats in the long run.

"This is by far the most depth we have ever had," Ebenstein said. "We have a lot of kids who have put in the time and the work, they are varsity ready and have earned a spot. As of now we still plan on mostly having a full platoon for Friday. There will be nine guys on both sides that will be one way starters."

With that, there will be plenty of new faces on the field for Louisburg. The Wildcats have just 10 seniors and will feature a group that is made up of mainly underclassmen.

Sophomores and freshmen will play pivotal roles this season, but Ebenstein is excited to see what he players can do this year.

“These guys have been working hard, all summer long, two-a-days, jamboree week and this week as well,” Ebenstein said. “We have also changed our practice around to put an emphasis into film study and our guys have been putting in the time with film study as well. We are very excited to get going today against Spring Hill.”



***Sophomore Declan Battle is the Wildcat starting quarterback this season.***

Offensively, the Wildcats will feature a different look and will have a new signal caller in the process.

Sophomore Declan Battle will take the reins at quarterback this year as the Wildcats will run different schemes throughout the season.

“Declan is a competitor and a football guy,” Ebenstein said. “He understands the game extremely well for any high school player and he is only a sophomore. Our offense is quite a bit different than last year, but the mentality of tough downhill football will always be our focus.”

Senior Kolby Kattau will lead the running back group, along with junior Riley VanEaton, sophomore Caden Caplinger and freshman Ashton Moore.

Juniors Mason Dobbins and Jackson Kush, along with senior Liam DeVary, will be the team’s wide receivers. Isaiah Whitley, a junior, will be at tight end.

Senior Aiden Barker and junior Nathan Vincent are returning starters on the offensive line, and will be joined by senior Reid Justesen, junior Will Hutsell and sophomore Scott Thornton.

Defensively, the Wildcats will also show some new things and will have strong leadership from their linebacking core.

Senior Brandon Doles returns from a season-ending leg injury last season to lead the way, while fellow senior Bryce Gage, Vincent and Moore will also see a lot of playing time at that spot.



***Sophomore Wyatt Holland wraps up a Fort Scott player last week during the team's jamboree.***

Barker, junior J.R. Rooney, and sophomores Jackson Howard and Wyatt Holland will lead the way up front. While seniors Gavin Whisenhunt, Luis Rios, Terrance Foster, junior Trace Eslinger and freshman Lucas Swartz could all see time as well.

Junior Jase Hovey is a returning starter in the secondary and will be joined seniors Tom Koontz, Kattau, along with juniors Layne Ryals, Carson Wade and Kaven Bartlett. Sophomores Hunter Heinrich and Luke Hill could also see time.

“Coach (Drew) Harding, along with (Alex) Gentges and (Kade) Larson, have done a great job molding the defense into their vision. They have implemented a lot of new schemes, blitzes, and coverages. There are a lot of upperclassmen on the defense and very competitive players as well.

“The defensive line will be a solid group and the linebackers are a strength of our team. The secondary will have some playmakers and some of the smartest football players we have.”

With so many new faces this season, Ebenstein got a good look at his team last Friday when Louisburg hosted Ottawa and Fort Scott for a jamboree.



***Senior Aiden Barker will play big roles on both sides of the ball this year for Louisburg.***

“The jamboree was a good experience and getting to break up the monotony of going against ourselves was a great change of pace,” he said. “It also gave us a live game speed look, and we prepared well for it and for the most part executed as we should have.”

It all counts beginning tonight when the Wildcats travel to Spring Hill for their season opener. Even with all the new faces, they are hoping for a memorable year.

“This group has very high expectations,” Ebenstein said. “Undefeated league champs is always the goal, and hosting week

9 and going week by week from there. This team has a lot of potential, but potential is just that. We have a lot to learn and there will be many guys with their first Friday night action. As long as we catch up to the speed of the game and communicate well we will be fine. From there, effort will take care of the rest.”

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## **OPINION: Wildcat success provides getaway from ‘real world’ problems**



There hasn't been a whole lot of good to talk about in the last year or so.

Our life has changed around us. We are having to deal with a new normal and there are a lot of uncertainties as to what our future holds.

It is an unnerving time for a lot of people and our country seems more divided than ever. Still, to get by in this difficult time, you have to look for positives.

For me, the last school year brought me some of the best moments in my journalistic life. The 2020-21 school was arguably one of the most successful seasons in Louisburg High School history from top to bottom, and I was more than

grateful to be there for it all.



Just look at what was accomplished last year:

- Boys cross country qualified for state for the first time in school history.
- Girls cross country placed at state for the first time in its history as they took third in Class 4A. Maddy Rhamy, Lola Edwards and Reese Johnson also earned medals.
- Boys soccer had its best finish in school history with a 3rd place state finish.
- Boys basketball advanced to the state championship game for the first time and took second.
- Girls basketball advanced to the state tournament for

the first time in 47 years and recorded its best finish in third.

- Wrestlers Alec Younggren and Cade Holtzen took second and third, respectively, at the state tournament.
- Boys golf qualified for state as a team.



- Girls soccer made an improbable run to advance to its fourth straight state final four and the Wildcats took fourth.
- Delaney Wright won three state track titles in the long jump, 200 dash and 400 dash and broke all three school records in the process.
- Maybe perhaps the best accomplishment of all, the Louisburg boys track and field team won the Class 4A

state championship as they edged out Andale for the title.

Just a year removed from losing their spring season due to COVID-19, the Wildcats came back stronger than ever and it showed. It was an exciting time to be a Louisburg sports fan.

However, with so much positivity from last season, it is time to turn the page and focus on what the 21-22 season has in store.



First day of fall practice begins this Monday and the football, volleyball, cross country and boys soccer team all have a chance to do some special things this season. I am fortunate I will be able to be there once again to cover it all.

As I talked about earlier, there is a lot of negativity going

on in the world right now, but I am more than thankful to have a job where I can get away from all that and cover all the special moments.

Last season was a much-needed get away for me and it was an unbelievable journey to see all the Wildcat history that was made.

This year has another chance to be a special one. There is no way to predict what will happen, but I do know there is a chance for even more history and records to fall this upcoming year.

Football numbers are up and the Wildcats are poised for a big season, while the cross country, volleyball and boys soccer team all return several key pieces to make a run in the postseason – and that is just what the fall will hold.

The seasons can't get here soon enough and I am ready to cover it all once again. Hope to see you all out there supporting the Wildcats and maybe you can forget all those stresses in life – even if it is just for a few moments.

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## **Hupp enjoys experience at Kansas Shrine Bowl**



*Louisburg grad Andy Hupp (36) runs onto the field with his*

***defensive teammates during the Kansas Shrine Bowl on June 26 at Hutchinson Community College.***

When the Louisburg football season came to an end last November, Andy Hupp thought his football playing days were done.

Hupp was ready to put the sport he loved behind him and focus on his future. However, football wasn't done with him just yet.

Earlier this year, Hupp was selected to participate in the 2021 Kansas Shrine Bowl and represent the East team on the defensive side of the ball.

So for one last time, Hupp put on the pads late last month and played about half of the game in the East's 14-0 loss at Hutchinson Community College.

Despite the defeat, the Shrine Bowl was an experience Hupp won't soon forget.

"It was a blessing to be able to strap up the pads one final time," Hupp said. "Although it was really fun creating a bond with players that I've always played against and been 'rivals' with (Branden Martin from Tonganoxie and Carter Stanchfield from Paola) I really missed playing this sport with my boys back home.

"It is really sad that I will never play football again, but I left the game on one of the most prestigious notes possible in my opinion. So I am happy with the way my career ended."



Hupp, who played on the defensive line, was a part of what was a defensive battle between the two teams.

The West had just a 7-0 lead late in the game before sealing the win late on a turnover and a score.

The Louisburg grad recorded two tackles in the contest as he played close to half of the snaps.

“It was a different feeling playing in this game,” Hupp said. “It was a college regulated game with media breaks and 12 minute quarters so it was really fun with all of the different factors, especially when you add in the skill level of everyone on the field. It made it feel like a real college football game.

“I made a couple tackles, and a forced incomplection. There was one play where the quarterback was scrambling and I hit him pretty good and my nose started bleeding a lot so I had to go get that fixed.”

Hupp reported to the Shrine Bowl practice a week before the game and the teams had two-a-day practices, scrimmages and film study.

However, it was the opportunity to meet the patients at the Shriners Hospital for Kids that was the highlight of Hupp’s week.

“The experience was definitely one of a kind,” he said. “Meeting some of the Shriners Hospital kids was by far the best part. Their stories are amazing and I’ve never seen bigger smiles.

“All in all, the Shrine Bowl experience was awesome and meeting those kids puts a lot into perspective. I’m glad I had the opportunity to play for them.”