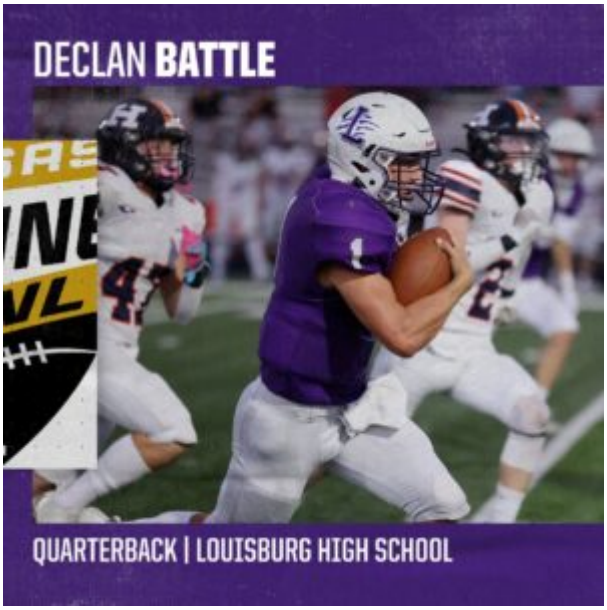
Battle selected to participate in Kansas Shrine Bowl



Louisburg senior Declan Battle was selected to play on the East squad for the 51st Annual Kansas Shrine Bowl later this summer.

Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle was already considered one of the top players in Class 4A this past season after receiving first team all-league and all-state honors.

However, there was more to come.

Battle was selected to participate in the 51st Annual Kansas Shrine Bowl later this summer. The teams were announced during a selection show on New Year's Day.

"It means a ton," Battle said of the honor. "Being selected as a top 44 player in the whole East side of Kansas is a huge thing. I am honored to be a part of it. This is something as a freshman I dreamed of being in. Without my teammates, coaches and community pushing me to be my best I would not be where I am at today, and for that I would like to thank them. It's a

huge honor.”

Battle received first-team all-state accolades last month from different media outlets and his Shrine Bowl selection is another honor added to a long list of accomplishments.

In 10 games for the Wildcats, Battle completed 105 passes for 1,364 yards and had 16 touchdowns to just two interceptions. He also did a lot of damage on the ground with 1,009 yards rushing and 16 more touchdowns.

As a defensive back, Battle finished with 36 tackles and also had an interception for a touchdown.

Louisburg is no stranger to the Shrine Bowl as several Wildcats have been selected participate in the past. That included last season as Jase Hovey and Nathan Vincent were both selected to play in the game.

The selections are the result of a combination of statewide media votes and Shrine Bowl coaching staff selections from a list of 457 nominees. The game itself will be played on Saturday, June 29 at Welch Stadium on the campus of Emporia State University.

In addition to playing in the annual East vs. West all-star football game, Kansas Shrine Bowl participants get the opportunity to meet and interact with the Patient Ambassadors from Shriners Children’s during the Hospital Experience Day.

During the Hospital Experience Day, players come to understand that these children have put in the same kind of hard work, dedication and sacrifices they have; only their work has resulted in allowing them to walk, run, play, and live a full life.

Since 1974, the Kansas Shrine Bowl along with the support from players’ local communities, has sent over $3.8 million to Shriners Hospitals for Children.

The Shrine Bowl of Kansas, Inc is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity that produces annual events and related activities with net proceeds benefiting Shriners Children's. Kansas Shrine All-Star Events also include the Kansas Masonic All-State Marching Band Camp, the Kansas Shrine Bowl All-Star Cheer Camp, the KWCA Kansas Shrine Duals and many other game week events.

Shriner's Children's, previously Shriners Hospitals for Children, is a health care system of 22 hospitals dedicated to improving the lives of children by providing pediatric specialty care, innovative research, and outstanding teaching programs for medical professionals. Children up to the age of 18 are eligible for care and receive all services in a family-centered environment, regardless of the patients' ability to pay.

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2023



It was a successful, and eventful, 2023 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program.

This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and a few programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the top stories from 2023, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the writeup is the link to the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account – whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site.

This year was a blast to cover and I am looking forward to seeing what 2024 will bring. Thank you to everyone for their support and can't wait for it all to begin again.



10. Brings Plenty earns first state

cross country medal

WAMEGO – Jerynce Brings Plenty had being eyeing this race since the beginning of the season.

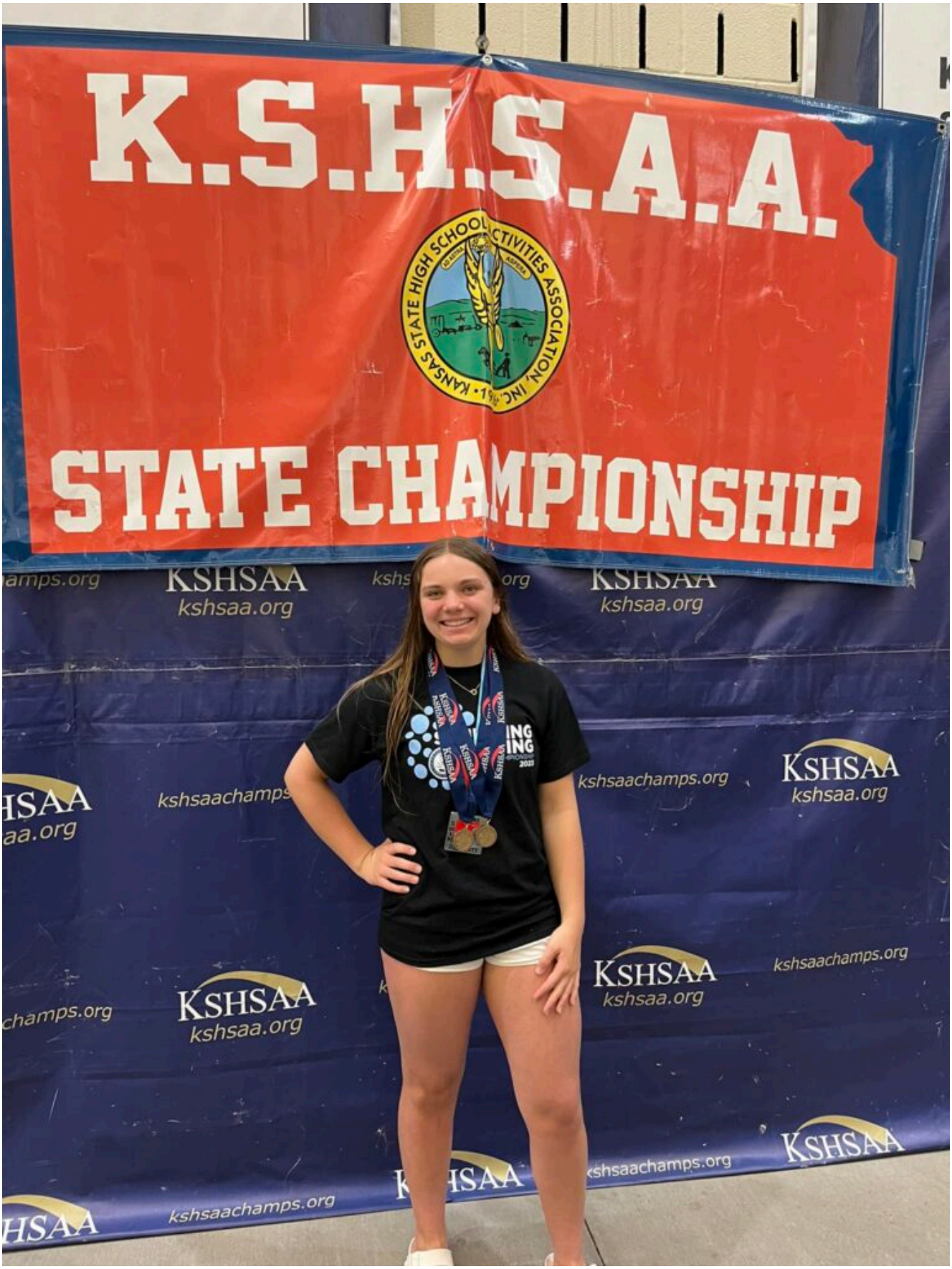
After missing out on the opportunity to run at the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships in 2022 due to an injury, Brings Plenty was itching at the chance to run against the state's best.

He got that opportunity at the Wamego Country Club and he took full advantage.

Brings Plenty earned his first state cross country medal as he took 12th overall in a time of 16 minutes and 57 seconds. It has been a long time coming for the Louisburg junior.

"Getting 12th place and a state medal meant everything to me," Brings Plenty said. "All season my main focus was to place as high as I could at state, especially since I had only placed 51st as a freshman and didn't race my sophomore year."

The 2023 season was a successful one for Brings Plenty as he earned a medal in every race he finished. He also moved up the school's all-time leaderboard and currently holds the second fastest time.


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9. Brueggen wins two state swim medals; Brown earns first boys state medal

Sabra Brueggen and Colin Brown put together a pair of historic seasons for their respective swim teams in 2023.

Brueggen doubled her medal count back in May at the state meet at the Capitol Federal Natatorium in Topeka. The Louisburg sophomore earned state medals in both the 100-yard backstroke and 50 freestyle.

After earning the one medal as a freshman a year ago, Brueggen was happy to find the medal stand in both races this season.

However, it has been a long road for Brueggen to get back to the state meet. After suffering a knee injury last summer, she had to work hard to get back in time for this go-round in a recovery that lasted nine months.

“Going into high school swim this season, I only had one personal goal in mind, making it back to finals at state,” Brueggen said. “Little did I know that I was going to make it back to the ‘A’ final in both my events, allowing me to medal. This truly meant the world to me because this past year has been one of the toughest ones yet. Overcoming this nine month long recovery, and accomplishing this at state, was an indescribable feeling.”



As for Brown, the Wildcat freshman earned the school's first state medal in boys swimming back in February at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center in Lenexa.

Brown recorded a time of 56.46 seconds in the finals of the 100-yard butterfly to take eighth overall. He swam a season-best time of 55.85 in the preliminaries to garner a spot in the finals.

"Colin's swim in the medal finals was so fun to watch," coach Mary Argeropoulos said. "Hardware from state is not easy to earn and he did a marvelous job all season working toward that final."

In all, Louisburg sent four swimmers to the state meet in Brown, Brayton Brueggen, Colton Prettyman and Andrew Jamison and the Wildcats turned in several times that earned spots in the consolation finals. As team, the Wildcats finished 15th overall with 44 points.



8. Cheer takes fourth at state

TOPEKA – Louisburg cheer has been no stranger to the big stage when it comes to the state competition.

The Wildcats have become a mainstay in the Class 4A Game Day Spirit Showcase in the last several years that has included a state championship and a pair of state runner-up finishes.

Louisburg found itself in position for another state plaque in November at the Stormont-Vail Events Center in Topeka. The Wildcats qualified for the finals with an impressive performance, but came up just short of another state plaque as they took fourth overall in Class 4A.

“I am so proud,” Louisburg coach Breanna Kostroske said. “This team had to welcome not one, but two new coaches and has

worked so hard since May on their competition material and it truly showed on the floor Saturday. Being a new coach you are automatically stressed that you haven’t given enough to all aspects of a game day routine, but we put our faith in the team and they showed up and truly represented themselves in a huge way.”

Members of the Louisburg cheer team are: Elizabeth George, Brooklyn Harmon, Addison Drake, Maddie O’Keefe, Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Caroline Dugger, Anna Brizendine, Reece Jones, Addie Vargo, Laney Stohs, Taryn Osborn, Kayleigh Ramsey, Will Leach, Brooklyn Roney, Harper Boyle, Kimmie Powls, Reece Younggren and Reese Anderson. The Wildcats are coached by Breanna Kostroske and Heather Brummel.



7. Pfannenstiel takes AD position, Wildcat basketball hires new coach Ben Doll

The 2023-24 school year for Louisburg High School activities had little different look to it – especially at the top.

Ty Pfannenstiel was hired as the school's new activities director and took over for Michael Pickman, who will focus on his assistant principal duties and curriculum.

Pfannenstiel, who has been the boys basketball coach for the last six years, resigned his post to take on the activities director position. He also stepped down as an assistant football coach.

"This is very exciting for me," Pfannenstiel said. "It's definitely going to be a change. I have been a teacher and a coach for 18 years. I still get to be a teacher half-time, and now I get to step into a new role as an administrator. It is going to be all sports and activities and I am looking forward to the new direction."

Louisburg then hired Ben Doll to replace Pfannenstiel as the new Wildcat boys basketball coach. Doll has patrolled the sidelines as an assistant for two state championship teams and has coached in numerous state tournaments over his 24 year career.



This is Doll’s first head coaching position after spending time as an assistant at St. Thomas Aquinas, Johnson County Community College, Lansing and Blue Valley North.

“I am really excited to get going,” Doll said. “It has been a long time coming. I have a lot of great experiences and I am ready to apply those things I have learned into this job. I am ready to put my own stamp on some stuff as well.”



6. Wrestling qualifies six for state, Eslinger medals

SALINA – Just like a year ago, Elijah Eslinger found himself one win away from a spot in the state championship match.

Eslinger, who has been ranked in Class 4A at different times throughout the season, has had a long road as a Wildcat heavyweight. One that included a rough freshman year, to progressively getting better.

With a spot in the semifinals at the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships already wrapped up, he had already secured his second state medal in Salina. Although he didn't make that championship match, Eslinger still left Salina with some hardware.

"To make the semifinals was exciting, especially since it was

the closest match I had," Eslinger said. "It was probably close to the hardest match that I had over the weekend. I feel like I could have done better looking at my matches in hindsight."

The Wildcats nearly had two more wresters earn spots on the medal stand. Junior J'Lee Collins (126 pounds) and sophomore Ashton Moore (175) both made their way to the blood round and needed a win to secure a state medal.

The Wildcats also experienced some heartbreak as senior Kaven Bartlett fell short of his goal of earning another state medal. At 138 pounds, Bartlett finished the state tournament with a 1-2 record.

Senior Trace Eslinger (215) and sophomore Jay McCaskill (157) also represented the Wildcats at the state tournament, but finished with an 0-2 record.



5. Lohse wins three state medals, Lady Cats sixth at state

WICHITA – Emma Lohse blazed the track for the Louisburg girls track and field team all season, and the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships was no different.

Lohse picked up three medals and helped the 4×100-meter relay to another school record at Wichita State's Cessna Stadium. In all, the Lady Cats medaled in five events and finished sixth in the team standings with 29 points.

"Coming back from Wichita with three state medals was something I had to work for and was happy about the outcome," Lohse said. "Leaving Cessna Stadium one last time, I was very proud of the way I competed and proud of what I came home

with.”

Lohse was just inches away from winning a state championship in the 100-meter dash. At the finish line, the Louisburg senior was step-for-step with Rose Hill’s Kate Dare.

As the two leaned for the finish line, Dare edged Lohse for first as Lohse ran a time of 12.46 seconds. Dare ran a 12.44.

Later in the 200-meter dash, Lohse earned another state medal as she took seventh in 26.77 seconds.



Louisburg's (seated from left) Kendall Crossley, Suzanna Dansel, (standing from left) Mackenzie Rooney and Emma Lohse

pose with their third place state medals in the 4×100 relay. The Lady Cats broke their own school record for the fourth straight time in the prelims.

Sandwiched in between those two races, Lohse helped the 4×100-meter relay of Mackenzie Rooney, Suzanna Dansel and Kendall Crossley to a medal of their own.

The Lady Cat relay finished third overall with a time of 49.70 seconds. Andale won in 49.24 and McPherson was second at 49.67.

However, in the preliminaries on Friday, the team broke their own school record for the fourth consecutive time in 49.26 seconds and had the fastest time going into the finals.

Another Lady Cat to find the medal stand was Emma Prettyman. The Louisburg senior put together a strong showing in the discus.

Prettyman earned her first state medal as she finished sixth in the event with a throw of 115 feet, 9 inches.





4. Wildcat pole vaulters dominate 4A state meet

WICHITA – Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Caden Caplinger and Cooper Wingfield had been considered as some of the top pole vaulters in Class 4A for most of the season.

All three had finished at, or toward the top of each of their meets this year, and all of them had high hopes going into state meet at Wichita State.

Carpenter-Ross and Caplinger reached the highest summit Class 4A had to offer as both were crowned state champions following their respective events.

Caplinger became a two-time state champion first as he cleared 15 feet to win the 4A boys pole vault. Wingfield finished as the state runner-up.

“It means a lot and I am just blessed to have the opportunity to be here and win the title, especially with Cooper right on my tail,” Caplinger said.

Carpenter-Ross thrived under the pressure in the girls competition as she, not only looked for her second consecutive state medal, but her first state championship.

The Louisburg junior captured her first state title after she cleared 11 feet, which tied a personal best. This coming off a season where she medaled fifth at state a year ago.

“I think it is fantastic,” Carpenter-Ross said. “Going to 11 feet, I was tied with the one girl and I was hoping that I would get it on my first try. Then when I did, it was just an amazing feeling.

“It was just awesome for me, plus to see my family’s faces up in the stands was really cool too. Being a state champion is awesome and I plan to do it again.”



3. Wildcat football wins back-to-back Frontier League titles

SPRING HILL – It had been 16 years since the Louisburg football team last repeated as back-to-back Frontier League champions.

That drought ended on an October night in Spring Hill.

In a battle of undefeated league teams, Louisburg proved its was the best. The Wildcats scored 21 unanswered points, and shutout the Broncos in the first half, as they cruised to a 35-21 victory.

Louisburg earned back-to-back league crowns for the first time since the 2006 and 2007 campaigns. The Wildcats also finished the regular season with an 8-0 record.

“It is pretty exciting,” Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. “We talked to the guys before the game about how long it is has been since we have won back-to-back league titles and it has only been done four times in our school’s history. So to chalk another one up there feels pretty good.”

The Wildcats advanced to the regional round of the state playoffs in early November, but lost a heartbreaker to Basehor-Linwood, 22-20, and ended a nine game winning streak.

“This season was a lot of fun,” Harding said. “It is a great group of kids and they worked incredibly hard. They were loose and made it fun every single day. I can’t say enough about how good of kids they are and how hard they work. We hoped to still be moving on, but this loss doesn’t take away from what these kids did all year.”



2. Wildcat volleyball takes fourth at state for second straight year

HUTCHINSON – For the second time in as many years, Louisburg is leaving the state volleyball tournament with some hardware.

The Wildcats, for the second straight season, finished fourth Saturday at the Class 4A Kansas State Volleyball Championships in Hutchinson. It marked the 20th appearance for the Wildcats in the tournament.

Getting that hardware and making it to Saturday was certainly a battle for the Wildcats, who had to fight through adversity during pool play on Friday. Louisburg had to deal with injuries and had its fate rest in another team's hands.

Despite all that, Louisburg left with a fourth place medal following a tough 23-25, 25-8 and 25-16 loss to Andale in the third-place match Saturday at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

"We are very proud of this team for making it back to the state tournament and finishing in the final four again," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "We, of course, will always strive for higher finishes until we reach that ultimate goal of state champions, but we are proud of where we finished the season and were happy with the success of this team."

Members of the Louisburg volleyball team are (from left) Adelyn Moore, Caileigh Kilgore, McKenna Lohse, Delaney Nelsen, Aspen Coulter, Evyn Richardson, Ashlyn Berck, Katie Elpers, Izzy Moreland, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword, Madie Williams and head coach Leanna Willer.



1. Wildcat boys track finishes as state runner-up; Dobbins wins state title in high jump as team medals in 13 events

WICHITA – The Louisburg boys track and field team had the resume of a state champion.

The Wildcats racked up 87 points during the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships at Wichita State.

Louisburg medaled in all 13 events it competed and the Wildcats finished the meet with two individual state champions. The ending was supposed to feature the Wildcats holding up a state championship plaque.

“If you would have told me at the beginning of the year we

would score 87 points at state and not win a championship, I would have just ignored you and said ‘Whatever,’” Louisburg coach Andy Wright said. “No way that would happen.”

As it turned out, the Wildcats found themselves on the outside looking in for a team state title. Andale finished first with 87.5 points. Louisburg had 87.

It was an emotional letdown for the Wildcats as they were so close to that team goal.

“To beat Andale, we had to score 88 and that is just a testament to how good they are,” Wright said. “They have really good athletes, especially in the throws. At the same time, I couldn’t be more proud of my guys and how they competed. It was just so much fun to watch them lay it all out there. They really did have a great season.”

Mason Dobbins reached new heights at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championship.

Ok, well maybe not literally.

Dobbins who broke a school record in the high jump earlier this year, didn’t reach that height at the state meet – but he didn’t need to. The Louisburg senior cleared 6 feet, 6 inches to win the Class 4A high jump title.

It was the first of four state medals that Dobbins would win on the day as he helped lead the Wildcats to the Class 4A state runner-up plaque.



“It meant everything to be a state champion and to be able to medal in all of my events this year since I didn’t last year,” Dobbins said. “Our team trains so hard, and to be able to be runner up by .5 points, is incredible.”

Dobbins nearly earned his second state title in the 110-meter hurdles as he found himself in a battle with Rose Hill’s Teagan Cobb. The two were stride-for-stride going into he final hurdle, but Cobb nipped Dobbins at the finish line.

Later on, he joined Caden Caplinger, Colyer Wingfield and Ethan Ptacek in the 4×100-meter relay and the team medaled third in 43.38 seconds. Ptacek had to run for Ashton Moore, who was injured during the preliminaries.

Then toward the end of the meet, Dobbins, who was sitting seventh in the 200-meter dash after the preliminaries, battled

to keep his team in the state championship race and medaled third in 23.07.

Louisburg senior Nathan Vincent got his team a lot of points in the throwing events as he medaled in the javelin, discus and shot put – with the latter being his best event of the weekend.



Vincent, who just started doing shot put this year, put together his best performance of the season. He recorded a personal best throw of 51-8 in the finals to take third overall. He also went on to take fifth in the discus and sixth in the javelin.

Sophomore Jerynce Brings Plenty also came away with three state medals in the distance events, but none was more precious to him than the 3,200-meter run.

Brings Plenty broke the school record in the event as he medaled third in 9 minutes and 49.41 seconds. He surpassed the old mark of 9:50.60 that was set by Jason Rose in 2007.

He continued his medal streak for the Wildcats as he joined Hunter Heinrich, Blaise Vohs and Colton Blue to medal seventh in the 4×800-meter relay.

Later in the day, Brings Plenty competed in the 1,600 run and took sixth in 4:34.42.

Louisburg senior Nathan Apple left his final state meet with a pair of medals in both hurdle events. Apple finished fourth in the 110-meter hurdles in 15.29 seconds on Saturday.

Apple also went on to take fourth in the 300 hurdles in 40.55 seconds as he ended his Wildcat track career on a positive note.

The Wildcats ended the state meet with the 4×400-meter relay as the team of Heinrich, Vohs, Colyer Wingfield and Ptacek needed a third place finish or better to win the state title. Unfortunately, the Wildcats came up just short as they took fourth in 3:23.98.

Louisburg set a new personal record by three seconds and was .25 seconds away from tying the school record. The Wildcats also scored points in all three relay events.

Grateful and humble, Moore reflects on his journey at

Kansas State



Kansas State senior, and Louisburg alum, Austin Moore runs onto the Bill Snyder Family Stadium Field on Saturday during Senior Night ceremonies.

MANHATTAN – As Austin Moore stood in the purple-lit tunnel looking out onto Bill Snyder Family Memorial Stadium, all the memories rushing back.

One as a walk-on just trying to make the team, then earning a scholarship and then eventually moving all the way up to a Big 12 Champion and a team captain.

The five years he has spent with the Kansas State football program has been some of the best times of his life. It was, how Moore put it, where his "dreams came true."

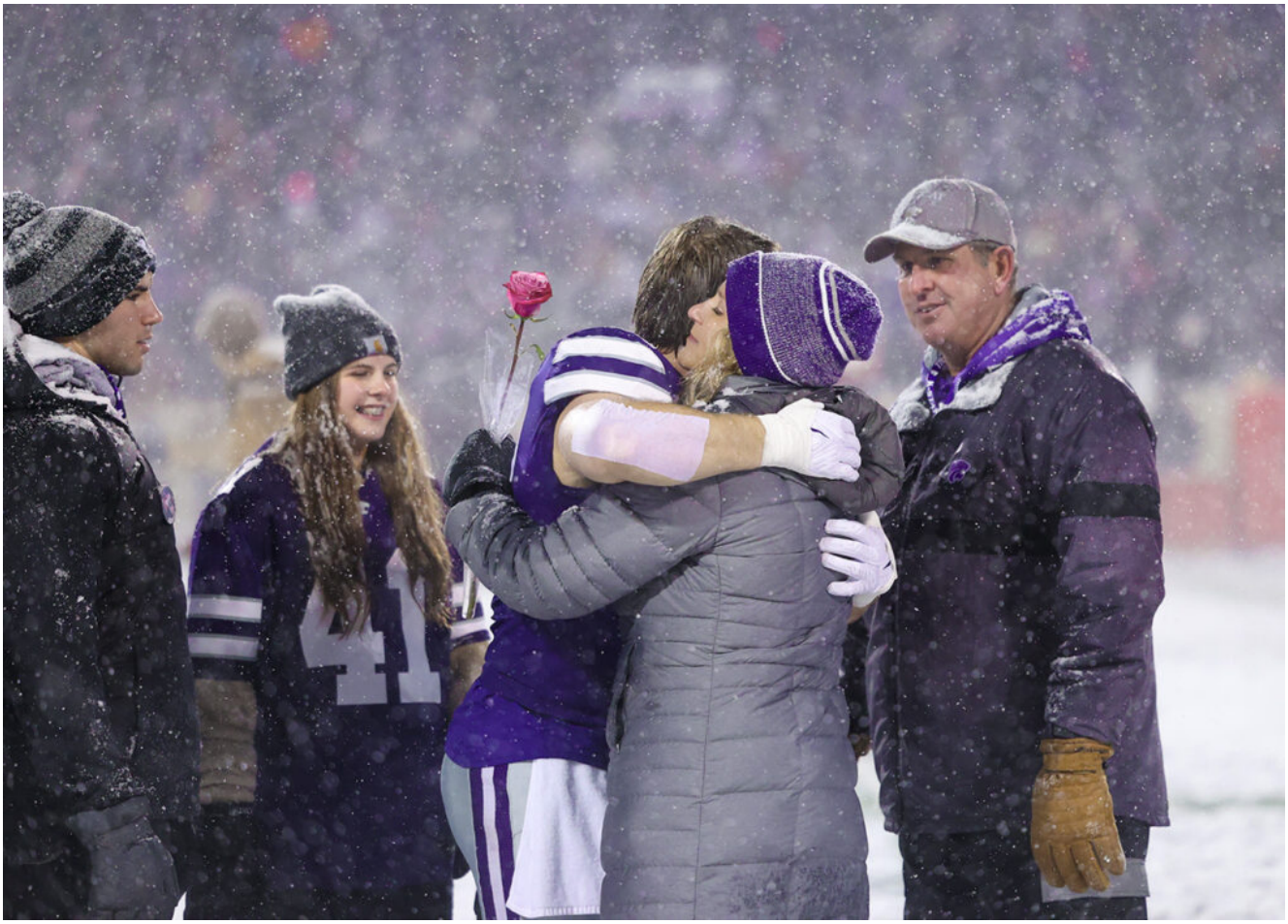
"I was just thinking about my journey here and how grateful I am for everyone," Moore said. "How grateful I am for my teammates, coaches, fans and I am just grateful for a lot of things."

At the top of that list is his biggest supporters and fans – his family.

That is who Moore was staring down in the blizzard-like

conditions on a rare snowy November night in Manhattan for Senior Night. Down about 50 yards away, were his parents Tommy and Alison, along with his siblings Alyse, Ashton and Adelyn.

So when the public address announcer called his name, Moore found K-State head coach Chris Klieman, gave him a hug and went jogging toward his family.



Austin gives mother a hug on Senior Night while his father Tommy, and siblings, Ashton and Adelyn look on Saturday in Manhattan.

It is what Senior Nights are made for – a chance to thank those people have been so supportive in his journey. Now, that he could be playing in possibly his final home game, it was a lot to digest.

“It is hard to describe,” Moore said. “It has been everything I have dreamed off since I was a young kid. My parents and all my family believed in me and it is what I hoped for and envisioned when I decided to walk-on here. I am just so

grateful to everyone here and back in Louisburg who have supported me. It has been really fun.”

What started out as a fun, memorable day turned somber for Moore and his Wildcat teammates as they tried to process the 42-35 loss to Iowa State in their regular season finale.

It wasn’t the way Moore wanted to go out for the final time in front of the Wildcat faithful.



Austin Moore runs in to make a tackle Saturday against Iowa State.

As difficult as the one loss was, Moore’s journey was something he will remember for the rest of life.

It all started in 2019 when the Louisburg all-state player committed to Kansas State as a walk-on and joined Klieman in his first year with the program.

Moore eventually impressed his coaches enough to earn a spot

on a scholarship and eventually garnered the nickname – 'The Machine.' It started because he didn't show a lot of emotion and always answered questions fast.

The nickname grew and Moore's business-like work ethic was contagious and respected by his teammates. He became a starting linebacker his junior year and helped his team to a Big 12 Championship.

As a senior, he was named a team captain and leader of the Wildcat defense – a long way from where he started. He was recently named to the All-Big 12 second team after he finished his senior campaign with a team-high 12 tackles for loss and was second with 59 tackles.



Austin Moore celebrates his fumble recovery in the first quarter of Saturday's snowy game against Iowa State.

"I think before I get here I was probably a little naive to

what it was going to be like, Moore said. “There were times here for sure where I wondered to myself if I was going to make it. But I always had older guys here show me the way and people have always believed in me. I am just really thankful for that.”

People like his family, former teammates and the whole town of Louisburg rooting for Moore to succeed – even the most die-hard Kansas Jayhawk fans in Louisburg wanted the best for Moore.

It is those fans in Louisburg that have kept Moore motivated the last five years, even through the most difficult times.

“It is really special,” he said. “I have people all the time texting me and things like that. I just hope that I can be a good role model to some of those kids back in Louisburg. I hope that I made some people proud back home.”



Austin Moore barks out a call from his linebacker spot

Saturday against Iowa State.

As for what the future holds, Moore still has one more game left, which is a bowl game next month. He currently has one year of eligibility remaining, but is undecided if he will be back in the purple and white next season.

“Yeah I have talked with the coaches, but I am still not 100 percent sure of what I am going to do,” Moore said. “I still have a lot of thinking to do and I am going to talk to my family. No matter what I decide, I am so grateful for everything here at K-State.”

Grateful for a program who gave him a chance to achieve his dream and for all those who helped him along the way.

“I’ve loved every minute of it,” Moore said.

Battle, Moore named as Simone Awards finalist



Louisburg’s Declan Battle (left) and Ashton Moore were named

as finalists for two different Simone Awards on Sunday. Battle is up for the Frank Fontana Award and Moore made the final four for the Bobby Bell Award.

A pair of Louisburg football players were recognized among the best in the Kansas City area Sunday evening when the finalists for the 41st Annual Simone Awards were released.

The Simone Awards, which gives out five different honors to showcase the best players in the area, announced two Wildcats as finalists for two different awards.

Senior Declan Battle was announced as a finalist for the Frank Fontana Award, while junior Ashton Moore was named to the final four for the Bobby Bell Award.

The Frank Fontana Award is given annually to the best all-around small school player in Class 1-4 on the Missouri and Kansas sides of the Metro. Battle, who led the Wildcat offense as a first team All-Frontier League player at quarterback, had a big season for Louisburg.

In 10 games for the Wildcats, Battle completed 105 passes for 1,364 yards and had 16 touchdowns to just two interceptions. He also did a lot of damage on the ground with 1,009 yards rushing and 16 more touchdowns.

As a defensive back, Battle finished with 36 tackles and also had an interception for a touchdown.

St. Pius X sophomore quarterback Hudson Bailey, Kearney senior running back Cameron Emmons and Warrensburg junior quarterback Kobe Westphal are the other three finalists.

The Bobby Bell award is given annually to the best Class 1-4 offensive lineman/defensive lineman or linebacker.

Moore was one of the leaders of the Wildcat defense this past season. As a first-team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball, Moore posted a team-high 125 tackles,

including eight for a loss. Moore had four forced fumbles and two sacks.

As a running back, Moore carried the ball 151 times for 1,110 yards and had 15 touchdowns. He also finished with 292 yards receiving and three more scores.

Pleasant Hill senior linebacker Brayden Bush, Grandview senior lineman Derek Joiner and St. Thomas Aquinas senior defensive tackle Kian Payne are the other three finalists.

The Bobby Bell Award winner will be announced tonight on the 6 p.m. sports cast on Channel 41 News, while the Frank Fontana Award recipient will be announced on the 6 p.m. sportscast on Wednesday.

Nine Wildcats earn spots on All-Frontier League football team



Louisburg's Declan Battle, Ashton Moore, Conlee Hovey and Brayden Yoder each earned first team all-league honors on both sides of the ball.

The 2023 football season was another memorable one for Louisburg thanks to a 9-1 season and its second straight Frontier League championship.

After putting together an undefeated league campaign, the Wildcats were rewarded for their efforts when the All-Frontier League team was released earlier this week.

Louisburg earned four first-team selections as Declan Battle, Ashton Moore, Conlee Hovey and Brayden Yoder were named at the top of the respective positions on both sides of the ball.

Along with the four first team selections, seniors Wyatt Holland and Caden Caplinger were named to the second team, while seniors Brady Hickey, Brody McGreer and Jaymes Melton were selected as honorable mention.

In total, Louisburg had nine players represented on the all-league squad.

"As always the Frontier League was tough week in and week out," Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. "The league was filled will high quality football teams, and even the teams that have been down recently made good strides this year, so that made every week a challenge. I thought our team was represented well on the all-league team. It is a huge honor to be named to a team by making an impression on opposing coaches."

Battle led the Wildcat offense as he earned first team all-league quarterback honors. He finished with more than 2,300 total yards and had 32 touchdowns.

The Louisburg senior was also a first-team selection as a defensive back. Battle finished with 36 tackles and also had

an interception for a touchdown.

In the backfield, Moore carried the load for the Wildcats as he carried the ball 151 times for 1,110 yards and had 15 touchdowns. He also finished with 292 yards receiving and three more scores to earn first team honors at running back.

Moore was also one of the leaders of the Wildcat defense. He earned first team honors at linebacker after he posted a team-high 125 tackles, including eight for a loss. Moore had four forced fumbles and two sacks.

Hovey earned first team honors on both sides of the ball at tight end and defensive end. The Louisburg junior finished with 42 tackles on the year to go along with two sacks and a forced fumble.

Offensively, Hovey had 20 catches for 250 yards and two touchdowns. He also helped the Wildcat offensive line as well.

Yoder was another first-team selection for his work on the offensive and defensive lines. At defensive tackle, the Louisburg junior finished with 61 stops, including six tackles for a loss.

He was also a big piece of the Wildcat offensive line as he helped pave the way for more than 4,000 yards of total offense.

“To be named all-league on both sides of the ball is a huge honor,” Harding said. “All of those guys had tremendous seasons for us. Declan was really what made us go offensively and was the leader of that unit. He also was very solid on the defensive side of the ball and got the secondary lined up. Ashton was the leader of the defensive unit and had a very productive year from his linebacker spot. He also had a great year at running back and was very difficult to tackle for opponents.

“Conlee was a huge part of our offense as a tight end. He was big for us in the running game as a blocker and then was also a weapon for us in the passing game. I think he played his best defensive football towards the end of the season, so that is exciting to see what he can do next year. Brayden was just rock solid all year. He never came off the field all year and he just played with great effort and energy at all times. He was huge for us offensively and this was his first year playing defensive tackle and for him to be named all league in his first year was very impressive.”



Caplinger was named second team on both sides of the ball at wide receiver and defensive back. He led the Wildcats with 33 catches, 510 yards receiving and four touchdowns.

On defense, he finished with 41 tackles, 1.5 sacks, six pass breakups and an interception.

As for Holland, he was another leader of the Wildcat defense and earned second team honors at linebacker. Holland was second on the team with 90 tackles, five tackles for a loss and an interception.

“Wyatt and Caden are both for sure first team caliber

players," Harding said. "Caden had a knack for making big time plays in key situations for us throughout the years. His ability to go up and make contested catches for us was huge and he also had a big year for us defensively.

"Wyatt was our second leading tackler on the team and was able to accomplish that playing with a club on his hand pretty much the whole year. He always played with great energy and effort and made a lot of plays for us that he shouldn't have been able to just by being relentless."

McGreer earned two spots the all-league team as an honorable mention returner and defensive back. He finished the season with 31 tackles, two for a loss and led the team with 12 pass breakups and three interceptions.

Hickey was named as an honorable mention multipurpose player as he was a vital part of the Louisburg defense. He finished with 70 tackles, three for a loss, two interceptions and two fumble recoveries.

Melton was the team's starting center and earned honorable mention honors on the offensive line. He led the unit that helped amass more than 4,000 yards of total offense.

"It was nice to see those guys be named to all-league teams as well," Harding said. "Brady, Brody, and Jaymes were all key to our success this year. Brady was able to play all over the place for our defense and was productive at all spots. Our defense definitely would not of been what it was without Brady being able to play in multiple spots successfully.

"Brody had a good year for us at cornerback and had a huge interception for us against Spring Hill. He also was big for us on special teams units and it was nice for him to be recognized as a punt returner. Jaymes really became the leader of our offensive line from his center spot. We had a pretty good year offensively and that all starts up front. I'm glad to see Jaymes be recognized for his efforts."

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL

OFFENSE

FIRST TEAM

QUARTERBACK – Declan Battle, Louisburg, senior

RUNNING BACK – Ashton Moore, junior, Louisburg; Colton McKanna, Spring Hill, senior; Colton Brusven, Tonganoxie, senior

OFFENSIVE LINE – Thomas Cromer, Eudora, senior; Brayden Yoder, Louisburg, junior; Eli Richmond, Paola, senior; Carter Meek, Spring Hill, senior; TJ Leeper, junior, Tonganoxie

TIGHT END – Conlee Hovey, Louisburg, junior

WIDE RECEIVER – Adrion Seals, Eudora, senior; Isaiah Holthaus, Tonganoxie, senior; Todd Brown, Tonganoixe, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – Braylen Hoobler, Eudora, senior

SECOND TEAM

QUARTERBACK – Trevor McGraw, Tonganoxie, senior

RUNNING BACK – Treyton Marquez, Bonner Springs, senior; Dante Silvey, Ottawa, junior; Clayton Younger, Paola, senior

OFFENSIVE LINE – Brett Davidson, Baldwin, junior; Cage Crabill, Eudora, sophomore; Tommy Evans, Ottawa, senior; Wade Enman, Paola, senior; Cole Rodden, Spring Hill, senior

TIGHT END – Cooper D’Albini, Spring Hill, senior

WIDE RECEIVER – Caden Caplinger, Louisburg, senior; Aiden McCullough, Ottawa, sophomore; Jace Kerley, Paola, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – JD Troutman, Paola, junior; Tyler Pankey,

Tonganoxie, senior

HONORABLE MENTION

QUARTERBACK – Kole Manley, Eudora, senior

WIDE RECEIVER – Ryder Nigh, Baldwin, junior; Nate Sims, Ottawa, sophomore; Cole McGrath, Ottawa, junior

MULTIPURPOSE – Nate Sims, Ottawa, sophomore; Jackson Torrez, Spring Hill, junior

DEFENSE

FIRST TEAM

DEFENSIVE TACKLE – Brayden Yoder, Louisburg, junior; Wade Inman, Paola, senior; TJ Leeper, Tonganoxie, junior

DEFENSIVE END – Conlee Hovey, Louisburg, junior; Tommy Evans, Ottawa, senior

LINEBACKER – Braylen Hoobler, Eudora, senior; Ashton Moore, Louisburg, junior; Noah Anderson, Spring Hill, senior; Colton Brusven, Tonganoxie, senior

DEFENSIVE BACK – Adrion Seals, Eudora, senior; Declan Battle, Louisburg, senior; Holden Lough, Spring Hill, senior; Trevor McGraw, Tonganoxie, senior

MULTIPURPOSE – Keanu Tiafu, Spring Hill, senior

KICKER – Jackson McWilliams, Tonganoxie, senior

PUNTER – Carson Royal, Spring Hill, junior

RETURNER – JD Troutman, Paola, junior

SECOND TEAM

DEFENSIVE TACKLE – Leland Bradshaw, Eudora, sophomore; Seth

Ferguson, Ottawa, junior; Kasey O’Neal, Spring Hill, senior

DEFENSIVE END – Jake Van Horn, Baldwin, junior; Eli Richmond, Paola, senior

LINEBACKER – Errol Siemon, Eudora, junior; Wyatt Holland, Louisburg, senior; Parker Guge, Ottawa, senior; Beau Gardner, Spring Hill, junior

DEFENSIVE BACK – Cole McGrath, Ottawa, junior; Christian Jarrett, Eudora, sophomore; Caden Caplinger, Louisburg, senior

MULTIPURPOSE – Matt Magette, Eudora, senior

KICKER – Josue Navarro, Ottawa, senior

PUNTER – Jackson McWilliams, Tonganoxie, senior

RETURNER – Nate Sims, Ottawa, sophomore

HONORABLE MENTION

DEFENSIVE TACKLE – Tommy Messersmith, Tonganoxie, senior

DEFENSIVE END – Brett Davidson, Baldwin, junior; Nathan Gandy, Bonner Springs, senior; Cooper Stanchfield, Paola, senior

LINEBACKER – Jack Harvey, Baldwin, senior; Dylan Williams, Baldwin, senior; Kayne Smith, Bonner Springs, sophomore; Liam Marler, Ottawa, sophomore; Clayton Younger, Paola, senior

DEFENSIVE BACK – Brody McGreer, Louisburg, senior; Nate Sims, Ottawa, sophomore; JJ Crawford, Paola, junior; Jasper Logan, Paola, sophomore; Zekiah Glover, Tonganoxie, senior

MULTIPURPOSE – Brady Hickey, Louisburg, senior; Zach Winter, Ottawa, senior

KICKER – Ryan Jackson, Spring Hill, junior

RETURNER – Treyton Marquez, Bonner Springs, senior; Brody McGreer, Louisburg, senior

Hall of fame induction means a lot to Griffin, 2010 state football team



Several members of the 2010 state football team returned last month as they were inducted into the school's hall of fame.

The 2010-11 school year was a memorable one for Louisburg High School when it came to athletics.

The Wildcats won a pair of state titles that year – football and boys track and field – and it featured some of the better athletes the school had seen in some time.

Two of those pieces from that year were officially put into the Louisburg High School Athletic Hall of Fame last month.

Garrett Griffin, a 2012 graduate, was inducted along with the 2010 state football team. It was a special moment for everyone involved.

"It was great honor," Griffin said. "The special part for me

was the 2010 team went in on the same night. I loved being a part of that team and it was great to see all those guys honored as well. It was really nice to be back in Louisburg and to be able to catch up with guys. I am very thankful for my upbringing in Louisburg and it was more about the support group that I had growing up. My family, friends and coaches all helped me achieve everything I accomplished. I really can't thank all of them enough."

Griffin was a three-sport athlete for Louisburg High School and earned 12 varsity letters during his illustrious Wildcat career. Griffin holds several LHS football records, was a state champion in track and was a four-time letter winner in basketball. He was also a part of two state championship teams.

In football, Griffin was a 4-year letter winner and accumulated four team records during that span. He is the school's all-time career rushing leader with 4,667 yards, all-time receiving leader at 1,006 yards, all-time receptions leader with 51 and first in all-time tackles with 273.

Griffin earned All-Frontier League honors all four years and awarded all-state honors as a linebacker his junior season after helping lead the Wildcat football team to their first state title in 2010. In 2011, he was named among the Top 11 players in the state as a senior and was a Kansas Shrine Bowl selection



Garrett Griffin, a 2012 graduate, was inducted into the school's hall of fame last month.

In track and field, Griffin was a 4-time state qualifier in the javelin and 110-meter high hurdles. He was a two-time state champion in the javelin and a two-time state placer in the hurdles. He currently holds the school record in both events. As a junior, Griffin helped the Wildcats to their first state team title in 2011.

In basketball, Griffin was a 4-year letter winner and was an All-Frontier League selection his senior season.

"Track was always a great time and that is more of an individual than a team sport, but everyone was always there supporting each other," Griffin said. "Winning state in track and football in the same year was awesome. Cool thing about track was you get compete with some guys that don't play football. Greg Darrington was my javelin coach and I owe a lot to him. He was like another dad to me during track season."

He was poised to have even more success in track as a senior. Griffin won three regional titles in 2012, but a ruptured appendix sidelined him for the state meet. It left him disappointed as was his father and coach, Gary Griffin.

“My senior year of track was not a negative memory for me. I remember waking up when I was in the recovery room at the hospital and heard my dad ask the doctor if I could still throw in the javelin and if it would make it worse. The doctor said I could, but that I wouldn’t like it too much.” Griffin joked. “I was peaking at the right time that year. Had my best day at regionals and I was lucky enough to throw a little in college.”

Following high school, Griffin signed with the Air Force Academy football program where he was a four-time letter winner as a tight end for the Falcons. During his time, he was also a member of the Air Force track and field program for two years and was a two-time Mountain West Conference placer in the javelin.

After graduating from the Academy, Griffin was selected as an undrafted free agent by the New Orleans Saints. He spent six seasons with the Saints and one with the Detroit Lions. As a member of the Saints, Griffin played in a handful of contests, which included an appearance in the NFC Championship game in 2018 where he caught a touchdown from quarterback Drew Brees.

Griffin spent last season with the Lions on the practice squad, but decided to retire from the NFL after six seasons. It was time to focus on his family.

“I got a few calls before the season, but I am ready to be done,” Griffin said. “It is bittersweet. I have loved football my whole life, but the last couple of years just wore on me. I am ready for some job security and little bit less stress. It was a great time in my life, but I have a family and it is time to move on and spend time with them. Playing in the NFL

gave me awesome experiences and my dream came true. I will always be grateful for that."

The 2010 football team made school history as those Wildcats became the first to win a state championship in football. Louisburg defeated Holton, 24-16, in the Class 4A championship game in Salina to finish the season with a 14-0 record under head coach Gary Griffin.

Louisburg breezed through the regular season and district playoffs with wins over Eudora (33-6), Ottawa (35-0), St. James Academy (49-7), Silver Lake (21-3), De Soto (28-7), Baldwin (42-26), Spring Hill (35-6), Osawatomie (62-6) and Paola (21-3). Louisburg won every game by 18 points or more.

The Wildcats dominated their way through the Class 4A state playoffs with victories over Anderson County (42-20), Chanute (56-35) and De Soto (21-0). Louisburg squared off with rival Paola in the sub-state championship and the Wildcats downed the Panthers 28-7 to advance to the state game against Holton.

"It was very cool," coach Griffin said. "I was surprised to see as many of those kids come back as they did. Alex (Gentges) was the one who tried to get the word out on social media and everything. I think we got close to 30 of them there and it was great to see them again.

"It brought back a lot of memories. It is amazing to me to see how much they have all changed in the last 13 years or so. I am still in contact with a lot of them, especially the ones Garrett is friends with. Several still live around here, but it was neat to see them all again."

Louisburg found itself down 10-0 for the first time all season early in the state championship game, but the Wildcats scored 24 unanswered points to win the title.

"I remember everything about that game," coach Griffin said. "In 2007 when we went to state, I didn't think the better team

won. We could have played better against Andale. They had won it the year before and they kind of hit us in the mouth, got a lead, before we started to play better in the second half. Then when Holton got the lead on us, I just thought here we go again.

“Then late in the first half we put a drive together and scored. Our kids at halftime knew we were going to win because we figured out how to stop their offense. That was the third time I coached in a championship game and the other two we snatched defeat out of the jaws of victory. I didn’t want it to happen again.”

It was a talented squad that earned 22 spots on the All-Frontier League team, including eight first team selections. The Wildcats also had several all-state selections and were headlined by quarterback Kody Cook, running back/linebacker Garrett Griffin and linemen Tyler Ewy and Ross Dvorak, who each earned first-team honors.

Ewy was named as one of the Top 11 players in the state of Kansas by three different organizations and was the recipient of the Bobby Bell Award, which goes to the best small class defensive lineman in the Kansas City area. He was a fixture on the Wildcat defensive line as he led the team with 139 tackles, including 25 for a loss and 10 sacks.

Cook guided the offense all season as the team’s quarterback as he tallied more than 1,700 yards of total offense to go along with 19 touchdowns.

His teammate in the backfield was Griffin as he ran over opponents all season. Griffin led Louisburg with 1,594 yards rushing and 412 yards receiving to go along with a combined 27 touchdowns.

Along with Ewy, Dvorak was one of the leaders on the offensive and defensive lines and he was also third on the team with 89 tackles, nine for a loss and four sacks. He was a first-team

all-state selection by the Kansas Football Coaches Association (KFCA). Linebacker Chad Turney was a first team all-league selection and was second on the team with 126 stops.

Gary Griffin was named Coach of the Year by the KFCA.

“I know they had really lofty goals. Every year your goal is to win a state championship, but you could tell this group was really serious about it,” coach Griffin said. “The year before we got beat by Miege and then they popped up to 5A. Once that happened, I knew that we had as good of a chance as anyone.

“We were good in 2009 and we only lost to Gardner and then Miege in the playoffs. But the following year, I think we only had Ross, Tyler and Garrett returning who played a lot of varsity time. The rest of those guys were JV. Kody was hurt his junior year, but we knew he was going to be good. We were building around four kids and everyone else just filled their roles perfectly. As the year went on, we started to build momentum and realized we were pretty good.”

Members of the state championship team are Nate Goodwin, Nate O’Brien, Chris Chase, David Embers, Bradey Drew, Kody Cook, Hayden Guetterman, Jacob Powell, Ben Powers, Derek Mathis, Dylan York, Wyatt Sander, Nate Daugherty, Jordan Powell, Christian Richards, Christian Huffman, Nick Chapman, Will Garza, Alex Gentges, AJ Hildreth, Brett Hebert, Ryan Tinder, D.J. Meyer, Daniel O’Connor, Garrett Griffin, Clark Gregory, Luke Hupp, Curtis Lemke, Greyson Honsinger, Dakota Stone, Colton Seely, Alex Bell, Konnor Cook, Jason Danciak, Matt Nolte, Taylor Caskey, Matt Jenkins, Kyle McLellan, Chad Turney, Tyler Ewy, Colin Bird, Drew Carder, T.J. McKiearnan, Cole Kessler, Alex Cook, Ross Dvorak, Wayne Carlson, Ben Adams, Jacob Berglund, Mason Whaley, Doug Weers, Colton Rommel, David Stuteville, Dain Glenn, Kurtis Morgan, Austin Caskey and Kade Larson.

The Wildcats were led by head coach Gary Griffin and assistant

coaches Wayne Whiting, Larry Aylor, Jeff Lohse, Kyle Littrell, Billy Neff and Greg Darrington.

Team trainers were Ali Dover, Brook Frazier and Mike Cardwell. Head athletic trainer was Dr. Damon Dennis.

Week 10 Athlete of the Week: Wyatt Holland



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week 10 of the fall sports season, sponsored by Landmark National Bank of Louisburg.

WYATT HOLLAND, SENIOR, FOOTBALL

Louisburg senior Wyatt Holland played a big role on the Wildcat football team this season, especially on the defensive side. That continued last Friday against Basehor-Linwood in the Class 4A regional championship game. Holland finished with 10 tackles in the Wildcats’ 22-20 loss to the Bobcats.

As one of Louisburg’s starting linebackers, Holland was forced to play with a cast on his arm for much of the season. However, that didn’t stop from finishing the season with 90 tackles, which was second on the team. He also added five tackles for a loss to go along with an interception.

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: Declan Battle

Week 2: Megan Quinn

Week 3: Maddy Rhamy

Week 4: Emmett White

Week 5: Ashton Moore

Week 6: Madie Williams

Week 7: Noah Cotter

Week 8: Hailey Sword

Week 9: Jerynce Brings Plenty

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Comeback falls short as Wildcats suffer playoff loss to Basehor-Linwood



Louisburg seniors Caden Caplinger (34) and Hunter Heinrich bring down a Basehor-Linwood player short of the endzone Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

Louisburg had been in this situation a few times over the last two seasons.

With their backs against the wall, and the game on the line, the Wildcats always seemed to find a way en route to two back-to-back Frontier League titles.

On Friday, the Wildcats were there once again, but this time the stakes were a little bigger – a Class 4A regional championship was on the line.

Unfortunately, the Wildcats came just a few yards short of pulling off another miraculous comeback. Basehor-Linwood handed Louisburg is first loss of the season, 22-20, and ended the Wildcats' season and nine-game winning streak.

The Wildcats, down two points, had to drive 81 yards in the final 61 seconds with no timeouts to try and pull off the comeback. They nearly did.

"It is for sure a heartbreaking loss," Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. "On the bright side, I am incredibly proud of them for not giving up. We didn't have a whole lot that was going our way, and to get the ball back with a minute left we had a chance. For them to put a 2-minute drive together with no timeouts and get us right on the doorstep, really shows what kind of kids we have and the resiliency they have. Still, this is a pretty tough one to swallow."

Louisburg's duo of Declan Battle and Caden Caplinger provided the Wildcats they hope they were looking for late.



Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle fights for some extra yards Friday in the Class 4A regional championship against Basehor-Linwood.

The Wildcat seniors, who have pulled out several game-winning plays the last three years, nearly had another as Battle hit Caplinger on a 57-yard pass play that took it down to the Basehor 24-yard line.

Battle found junior Reid McCaskill on an 11-yard pass play. Battle then ran for 5 yards on first down and then spiked it to stop the clock.

The Louisburg quarterback then hit Caplinger at the 5-yard line, and with time running out, the Wildcats had one last chance on fourth down. Unfortunately the game-winning pass fell incomplete and the Wildcats' season came to a close.

"You have to be at a breakneck pace and you don't have any timeouts," Harding said of the last drive. "You have to execute and play on the fly pretty well. That is something

that we practice, but it is hard to simulate what you will experience on game day. They did a good job with it. We were five yards short, and maybe just a few seconds more or one timeout left, there are a 100 different things that could put yourself in a slightly different situation. It makes it tough”

The Wildcats found themselves down early as Basehor took a 7-0 lead into the second quarter, but the Wildcats managed to tie it up on an 11-yard touchdown pass from Battle to Conlee Hovey.

Louisburg’s defense came though with a big stand as it turned the Bobcats over on downs at the 2-yard line and prevented a Basehor score. The momentum was short lived as the Bobcats recorded a safety to take the lead back, and then on the ensuing drive scored another touchdown to go up 16-7.



Conlee Hovey makes a diving catch in the endzone for a touchdown right before halftime Friday in the Class 4A regional title game.

The Wildcats put together one last drive in the first half. With 14 seconds remaining before halftime, Battle found a diving Hovey in the back of the endzone for an 18-yard touchdown and trimmed the Basehor lead to two.

To start the second half, Basehor drove down the field, but had a fourth down on the Wildcat 24-yard line and Louisburg had a chance to turn the Bobcats over on downs again. However, Basehor quarterback Brady Vandonge found Kaleb Scott on a 24-yard touchdown pass, and after a missed extra point, the Wildcats trailed by just eight.

It stayed that way till the fourth quarter when the Wildcats manufactured a drive that ended on an 9-yard touchdown run by Ashton Moore. Moore then was just inches away from converting the 2-point conversion and tying the game, but was ruled just short of the goal line.

Moore and Battle provided many of those running plays in that drive. On the game, Moore finished with a game-high 163 yards rushing and Battle had 67 yards on the ground and 153 through the air.



Louisburg running back Ashton Moore rushed for 163 yards Friday against Basehor-Linwood.

Moore also was all over the field for Louisburg from the linebacker spot as he recorded a team-high 18 tackles.

“That was a 6-7 minute drive that ate up a lot of clock and it was a grinder,” Harding said of the last touchdown. “Those guys, especially Ashton and Declan, were taking a beating all night. They were playing defense and making tackles. Those two guys continued to fight and incredibly proud of what they accomplished this year. Excited to see what Ashton can do as a senior and excited to see what Declan can do at the next level.”

The Wildcats had a tough time moving the ball against a big and athletic Basehor defensive front and it was a struggle at times offensively to get into a rhythm.

“That is not something we have experienced a whole lot this year,” Harding said. “They (Basehor) were incredibly physical

and they were big up front. They moved well and they had a fast defense. They gave us a heck of challenge."

Also on defense, Hovey, along with his two touchdowns, was second on the team with 12 tackles and senior Wyatt Holland was in double figures with 10.



Louisburg senior Brady Hickey looks to make a tackle on a Basehor-Linwood player Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

The Wildcats also forced a turnover as Moore forced a fumble and Brady Hickey got the recovery. Louisburg senior Brody McGreer also led the secondary with four pass breakups.

"I thought the defense played well overall," Harding said. "Basehor is a really high-powered offense, and in reality, we limited them to 20 points. They got big stops when we needed them and kept them out of the endzone on a couple big drives. They definitely played well."

Although Louisburg's season has come to a close, the Wildcats

still have plenty of positive memories to look back on, including winning a second straight Frontier League title.

“This season was a lot of fun,” Harding said. “It is a great group of kids and they worked incredibly hard. They were loose and made it fun every single day. I can’t say enough about how good of kids they are and how hard they work. We hoped to still be moving on, but this loss doesn’t take away from what these kids did all year.”

LOU 0 14 0 6 – 20
BL 7 9 6 0 – 22

SCORING SUMMARY

First Quarter

B: Sam Boetcher 4 run (kick good)

Second Quarter

L: Conlee Hovey 11 pass from Declan Battle (Alex Saad kick)

B: Safety

B: Brady Vandonge 1 run (kick good)

L: Hovey 18 pass from Battle (Saad kick)

Third Quarter

B: Kaleb Scott 24 pass from Vandonge (kick failed)

Fourth Quarter

L: Ashton Moore 9 run (run failed)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ashton Moore 24-163; Declan Battle 22-67

PASSING – Declan Battle 15-30-153

RECEIVING – Caden Caplinger 4-67; Conlee Hovey 4-49; Reid McCaskill 1-11; Brock Vohs 2-11; Hunter Heinrich 1-9; Ashton Moore 3-6

TACKLES – Ashton Moore 18, Conlee Hovey 12, Wyatt Holland 10, Brady Hickey 7, Brody McGreer 5, Brayden Yoder 5, Brock Vohs 5, Declan Battle 3, Hunter Heinrich 3, Caden Caplinger 3, Russell Wiseman 1, Logan Henry 1, Lucas Swartz 1, Jack Anderson 1

Wildcats advance in state playoffs with shutout of Labette County



Louisburg running back Ashton Moore breaks free for a long gain Friday against Labette County at Wildcat Stadium.

The Louisburg football team couldn’t have asked for a better

start to its playoff journey.

The Wildcats made plays all over the field Friday as they hosted Labette County in the first round of the Class 4A state playoffs. Louisburg scored all its points in the first half in its 47-0 victory over the Grizzlies.

“I thought we played pretty well overall,” Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. “It is exciting to advance in the playoffs. We talked a lot this week about how it’s win or go home at this point, so to have our season extend further feels good.”

Louisburg (9-0) dominated the contest from the opening whistle as the Wildcats made big plays in all three phases.

The Wildcats got things going as they scored on their first drive that ended on a 6-yard touchdown run by junior running back Ashton Moore.

It was the defense’s turn after that. After Labette County completed a long pass to the Wildcat 5-yard line, senior Brody McGreer recorded an interception in the endzone to turn away the Grizzlies.

The Wildcats took advantage as senior quarterback Declan Battle hit long passes to Conlee Hovey and Caden Caplinger on a drive that ended on a 4-yard touchdown run by Battle.

Then on the ensuing kickoff, Alex Saad squib kicked it, the ball hit off a Labette player and the Wildcats were able to recover. That resulted in a 26-yard touchdown run by Moore and the Wildcats led 20-0 after one quarter.

Labette County found itself close to the redzone again, but the Wildcat defense stool tall as Lucas Swartz recorded a sack that forced a fourth-and-long and the Grizzlies eventually turned the ball over on downs.

Moore scored his third touchdown of the night early in the

second quarter on a 4-yard run. It was a set up by a 44-yard run by Battle that put the ball inside 10.



Caden Caplinger sprints his way for a 75-yard interception return for a touchdown.

Next, it was Caplinger's turn as he found the endzone on a pair of big plays.

The first one came on offense when Battle pitched the ball in front of him to Caplinger, who was in motion, and he sprinted 57 yards for the touchdown.

Caplinger also made it happen on defense as he picked off a Labette County pass and scored on a 75-yard interception return for a touchdown.

Right before halftime, Battle found Brock Vohs for a 25-yard touchdown pass and the Wildcats led 47-0 and sealed the win in

the first half.

Offensively, the Wildcats used a balanced attack. Battle and Moore combined for 148 yards rushing, while Battle threw for 198 yards. Caplinger also led the Wildcats with 98 yards receiving.

“It’s great to be balanced and that is always the goal,” Harding said. “We were able to throw and run the ball effectively, so hopefully we can keep that up moving forward.”

Defensively, the Wildcats earned the shutout and frustrated the Labette County offense for most of the night. Senior Wyatt Holland led the way with a team-high nine tackles.

Caplinger, McGreer and Logan Henry each had interceptions on the night, while Swartz and Hovey both tallied a sack.

“I thought the defense played well,” Harding said. “They were able to advance to football into the redzone once and got a key interception to keep them off the board. We scored on defense too, which I think is the first time since playing Paola in the second week of the season.”

It will get a little more challenging this Friday as the No. 2 seed Wildcats host No. 7 seed Basehor-Linwood (6-3). The Bobcats defeated Paola, 35-14, last week and Harding knows his team will have to be ready.

“Basehor is a big challenge,” Harding said. “They are a well-coached, complete team. They spread you out and do a really good job of moving the football and creating bigs plays offensively. Defensively, they play fast and physical so we will have to play well in order to advance and play again. It will be an exciting playoff football game.”

LOU 20 27 0 0 – 47

LC 0 0 0 0 – 0

SCORING SUMMARY

First Quarter

L: Ashton Moore 6 run (kick failed)

L: Declan Battle 4 run (Alex Saad kick)

L: Moore 26 run (Saad kick)

Second Quarter

L: Moore 4 run (kick failed)

L: Caden Caplinger 57 pass from Battle (Saad kick)

L: Caplinger 75 interception return (Saad kick)

L: Brock Vohs 25 pass from Battle (Saad kick)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Declan Battle 5-75; Ashton Moore 7-73; Darby Van Eaton 9-40; Wyatt Holland 1-20; Rickey Giles 3-12

PASSING – Declan Battle 9-11-198; Alex Saad 3-4-12

RECEIVING – Caden Caplinger 3-98; Conlee Hovey 1-39; Brock Vohs 2-34; Ashton Moore 2-22; Gage Feldkamp 1-9; Reid McCaskill 1-5; Declan Battle 1-2; Rickey Giles 1-1.

TACKLES – Wyatt Holland 9, Conlee Hovey 4, Ashton Moore 4, Brayden Yoder 4, Brody McGreer 3, Lucas Swartz 3, Jackson Howard 3, Brock Vohs 3, Logan Henry 2, Brady Hickey 2, Caden Caplinger 2, Declan Battle 1, Hunter Heinrich 1, Myles Vohs 1, Lane Cunningham 1, Drake Crooks 1, Xander Lucas, 1

INTERCEPTIONS – Caden Caplinger 1, Brody McGreer 1, Logan Henry 1

FUMBLE RECOVERY – Alex Saad 1

SACKS – Lucas Swartz 1, Conlee Hovey 1

LEAGUE CHAMPS: Wildcats capture second straight Frontier title



Louisburg head coach Drew Harding is doused with a bucket of cold water thanks to seniors Brady Hickey (16) and Wyatt Holland on Friday following the Wildcats' 35-21 win over Spring Hill. The Wildcats won their second straight Frontier League title.

SPRING HILL – It had been 16 years since the Louisburg football team last repeated as back-to-back Frontier League champions.

That drought ended Friday in Spring Hill.

In a battle of undefeated league teams, Louisburg proved its was the best. The Wildcats scored 21 unanswered points, and

shutout the Broncos in the first half, as they cruised to a 35-21 victory.

Louisburg earned back-to-back league crowns for the first time since the 2006 and 2007 campaigns. The Wildcats also finished the regular season with an 8-0 record.

“It is pretty exciting,” Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. “We talked to the guys before the game about how long it is has been since we have won back-to-back league titles and it has only been done four times in our school’s history. So to chalk another one up there feels pretty good.”

The emotions were evident following the victory as seniors Brady Hickey and Wyatt Holland doused Harding with the water bucket and the celebration ensued.

“It means a ton to this team, knowing that back in June when we first started weights our goal was to be undefeated league champs,” Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle said. “Man time flew, it’s already here and we got it done. It feels great.”

Battle helped guide the Wildcat offense to a fast start that included 21 unanswered points in the second quarter and Louisburg was able to take a 21-0 halftime lead thanks to some big plays on both sides of the ball.

On defense, junior Lucas Swartz recorded a sack on Spring Hill’s opening drive that forced a Bronco punt. Then later in the first quarter, linebacker Wyatt Holland intercepted a Bronco pass to stop another drive and gave the Wildcats good field position.



Senior Wyatt Holland intercepts a Spring Hill pass Friday in the first half.

Holland, who suffered a hand injury earlier this season, has been forced to wear a large wrap throughout the season and was still able to haul in the interception.

“Wyatt has the club for sure,” Harding said. “He always has great energy and to be able to pick that off with the club was awesome. He advanced it 20-30 yards as well. It was a big play for us and a big stop for our defense.”

The Wildcats turned that turnover into points as Battle scored one of his four touchdowns on the night on a 1-yard run to give Louisburg the lead. Junior Alex Saad converted the extra point and was a perfect 5-for-5 on the night.

After a 3-and-out by the Louisburg defense, the Wildcat offense buiit a double-digit lead when Battle scored on a 15-

yard run.

Louisburg got the ball back once again, but faced a third and long late in the second quarter. That's when Battle connected with junior Myles Vohs on a 61-yard touchdown that saw him outrun a Spring Hill defender to the endzone.



Junior Myles Vohs celebrates his touchdown late in the first half Friday at Spring Hill.

That lifted an already confident Wildcat sideline to another level as they took a 21-0 lead.

"Myles plays with his heart on his sleeve that is for sure," Harding said. "It was great to see him make a play there. We had ran that play previously and we noticed Myles was open. So when we ran it again, we told Declan that. He stood in there and took the hit as he threw it and Myles had a great catch and had enough speed to get in the endzone."

Senior Brody McGreer intercepted a Spring Hill pass with seconds left in the first half to keep the shutout intact.

Spring Hill leaned on its running back – Colton McKanna in the second half – and the Broncos got on the scoreboard on the opening drive of the third quarter on a McKanna 19-yard touchdown.

McKanna was a big focus of the Wildcat defense coming in and they were able to slow him down enough to leave Spring Hill with a win.

“That was our goal coming was to have our eyes on No. 5 (McKanna),” Harding said. “We wanted to make them beat us some other way. He is a really good running back and they have a big offensive line, so we had to get as many hats to the football as we could. I thought we did a pretty good job defensively.”



Declan Battle finds the endzone Friday for one of his two rushing touchdowns against Spring Hill.

Louisburg was able to answer right back on its opening drive of the second half as Battle found Ashton Moore on a 6-yard touchdown pass to keep the 3-score lead.

Moore and Battle salted the game away for the Wildcats on the ground with chunk plays against the Bronco defense. Moore finished with 113 yards rushing and Battle had 82.

The offensive line of Jackson Howard, Johnny Hendrickson, Jaymes Melton, Brayden Yoder, Ben O'Bryan, along with tight ends Brock Vohs and Conlee Hovey, provided several holes to run through.

"I think it is tough for defenses to contain everybody because we have so many guys that can make plays," Moore said. "Whether it is receivers, tight ends, running backs, linemen

or the quarterback, they are all going to do their job and they have to worry about everyone. Everyone doing their jobs is what sets us up for success.”

The Wildcats were able to find success through the air, as well. Battle threw for 254 yards and his favorite target was Caden Caplinger.

The Louisburg senior had six catches for 87 yards and brought down several contested balls. Moore also had 61 yards receiving on the night.

“I think the offense did a great job,” Battle said. “Starting up front with the O-Line, every play starts with them and they open up opportunities for us to make plays. Caden did a great job going and getting the ball when he needed to. Ashton always runs hard, and I know when we put the ball in his hands good things will happen.”



Senior Caden Caplinger knocks away a pass Friday at Spring Hill.

Defensively, the Wildcats made big plays throughout the night and it started at the linebacker spot with Moore and Holland. Moore finished with a team-high 10 tackles and Holland added nine, including six solo stops.

Senior Brady Hickey also had nine tackles and junior Brayden Yoder had eight. Battle and Caplinger registered seven tackles each.

“There were a few times at the beginning of the game where we weren’t lined up where we should be,” Moore said. “Our coaches talked to us about that at halftime. So for us to have those mistakes, and still shut them out in the first half, it felt great. We just needed to keep doing our jobs and we did.”

Now the Wildcats will prepare for what is a deep postseason

run. Louisburg is the No. 2 seed in the Class 4A state playoffs and will host No. 15 Labette County (1-7) on Friday at Wildcat Stadium.

“It is one week at a time and that is what we preach to the guys,” Harding said. “We have to do whatever we can to survive and continue to play football because from this point forward we aren’t guaranteed anything. We are just going to take it week by week and advance as far as we can.”

LOU 0 21 7 7 – 35

SH 0 0 7 14 – 21

SCORING SUMMARY

Second Quarter

L: Declan Battle 1 run (Alex Saad kick)

L: Battle 15 run (Saad kick)

L: Myles Vohs 61 pass from Battle (Saad kick)

Third Quarter

S: Colton McKenna 19 run (kick good)

L: Ashton Moore 6 pass from Battle (Saad kick)

Fourth Quarter

S: Tyson Beashore 1 run (kick good)

L: Moore 1 run (Saad kick)

S: Ryan Jackson 22 pass from Beashore (kick good)

STATISTICS

RUSHING – Ashton Moore 26-113; Declan Battle 18-82

PASSING – Declan Battle 14-23-254

RECEIVING – Caden Caplinger 6-87; Ashton Moore 3-69; Myles Vohs 1-61; Reid McCaskill 1-20; Blake Amren 1-8; Conlee Hovey 1-5; Brock Vohs 1-4

TACKLES – Ashton Moore 10, Wyatt Holland 9, Brady Hickey 9, Brayden Yoder 8, Declan Battle 7, Caden Caplinger 7, Hunter Heinrich 5, Lucas Swartz 4, Jack Anderson 3, Conlee Hovey 3, Brock Vohs 1, Brody McGreer 1

INTERCEPTIONS – Wyatt Holland 1, Brody McGreer 1

SACKS – Lucas Swartz 1