

# Thank you, Louisburg!



*Getting to cover so many great kids was an honor for me, including these guys as they were generous enough to let me in their group picture.*

Eleven years ago, I was a nervous wreck.

I had just been laid off from my newspaper job, one where I had spent seven years covering Louisburg. Like so many others in this profession, I suddenly found myself staring at an uncertain future as newspapers continued to disappear. Jobs were scarce. Stability was gone. And I had a family to support.

I knew I was probably going to have to take a job I didn't want – something far from journalism – just to make ends meet.

Then an idea hit me.

With news media shifting more and more online, I wondered: *Would Louisburg support something like this?* Would the community care enough about local sports to follow an independent site dedicated solely to their athletes?

As it turned out, the answer was an overwhelming yes.

Because of the relationships I had built during my first seven years here, there was an appetite from local businesses to support the idea – and many of them never wavered. Eleven years later, a lot of those same businesses were still standing beside Louisburg Sports Zone, believing it was an important piece of the community.

They were right – and I couldn't agree more.

This past decade-plus has been some of the best years of my life. Through Louisburg Sports Zone, I formed incredible relationships with coaches, athletes, administrators, parents and community members. Even as a graduate of rival Paola, the Louisburg community adopted me as one of their own.

For those of you around my age or older, this might resonate.

I often felt like *Norm* from *Cheers*.

Every time I walked into a gym, stadium or field, I'd hear, "Hey Andy!" or "Thanks for coming!" or "We appreciate you." So many people knew my name – even people I didn't know – simply because they appreciated what I did.

Instead of an icy cold glass in my hand, I carried a camera. My barstool wasn't at a counter – it was on the sideline, capturing moments as they happened. And there were plenty of them.

State championships. State tournament appearances. Individual champions and medalists. Record-breaking performances.

I was lucky enough to see it all.

But my favorite part was always watching kids grow – seeing freshmen mature into seniors and leave as confident, capable young adults. That transformation never got old.

My very first event as Louisburg Sports Zone was a home basketball game. I was only a couple months removed from being laid off and still unsure if this idea would work or if anyone would even care.

Those worries disappeared quickly.

As I walked into the gym, Natalie Moore, Kirstin Lowry and Kallie O'Keefe stopped their warmups to smile and wave. Coach Shawn Lowry walked clear across the court to shake my hand and welcome me back.

More than a decade later, I still get those same smiles from athletes and handshakes from coaches and parents alike. Those connections are what made this decision so difficult.



***Was fortunate to interview so many student athletes these last 11 years.***

Six months ago, I was offered a position with KSHSAA Covered and the Kansas High School Activities Association. Honestly, I

never thought I'd have another writing job outside of Louisburg Sports Zone. I fully intended to keep doing this until the appetite for it simply wasn't there anymore.

But the opportunity was too good to pass up – and it was the right move for my family.

I knew the connections wouldn't be the same. Starting over is hard, especially when you know what you're leaving behind. My favorite part of this job was feeling the appreciation from the community and knowing I was giving people something positive to read.

I wasn't perfect. I made mistakes along the way. But this community allowed me to grow – as a writer, photographer and a person. I always tried to do the best I could and to cover every sport as fairly and equally as possible.

The last five or six years put me in an interesting position, as my own kids were playing varsity sports. How do you balance being a supportive dad and a journalist at the same time? I hope I did it right.

One of the biggest perks of this job was getting to write about my kids – their first varsity goal, first basket, first shutout or a big volleyball performance. I know how lucky I was to experience that.

None of this would have been possible without my family – especially my wife, Jennifer. I wasn't home much in the evenings, especially with young kids, and that wasn't easy. She never stopped supporting me.



***It was awesome to have my family with me as I was surprised with Louisburg Citizen of the Year a few years ago.***

To my kids – Jordan, Ally and Carter – thank you for understanding the crazy hours and for supporting me even when

I couldn't be at everything like other parents. I love you more than you know.

I also want to thank all of my advertisers, past and present. Louisburg Sports Zone doesn't exist without you. Craig Holtzen and Edward Jones, Dixon Contracting Services, White's Automotive, Prime Accounting Services, Amborn Stone, Wildcat Vet Clinic, Dr. Andy Hill, Destination Fun Travel, Vance Brothers, Go Brolly, First National Bank, First Option Bank, Landmark Bank, Dr. Laura's Orthodontics, IronHorse Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, Louisburg Family Dental, Vohs Pharmacy, Elliott Insurance, Magnum Equipment, Louisburg Athletic Club, Louisburg Library, Tri-County Pest, Midwest Collision – and so many others along the way.

I also wanted to give a big shoutout to a Louisburg graduate – Kenneth Sweeney. He has been my “web guy” this whole time. He helped design the site and has also been there to help me troubleshoot what problems have come up since then. I couldn't have done it without him.

Thank you to every coach I've worked with. Getting to know you and promote your programs has truly been an honor. I appreciate you enduring my countless emails that I send out every week. You have helped make Louisburg Sports Zone what it is as well. I will miss you all.

And finally, the student-athletes – you are the reason this worked. Thank you for letting me into your lives and giving me so many incredible stories to tell. And consider this a long-overdue apology to anyone I ever did “dirty” with an unfortunate action photo.

So here I am, 11 years later, feeling some of those same nerves as I move into something new. The last six months with KSHSAA Covered have been great, and I've been welcomed with open arms.

Still, walking away from something I built was not easy.

I only hope that Louisburg Sports Zone has been as much of a blessing to you as it has been to me. These have been some of the best times of my life – and I will treasure them always.

Thank you, Louisburg.

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## Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2025



It was a successful, and eventful, year 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 made their way to state competition.

Below are the top stories from 2025, 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.

Although 2025 will be the last for Louisburg Sports Zone, I am looking forward to seeing, from a distance, what Louisburg athletics can accomplish in the future. Thank you all for the support in these last 11 years. I will never forget it.



***Louisburg senior Sam Frederick carded an 87 during the May 19 regional tournament and earned a top 10 finish and a state***

*bid, along with teammate Derek Frederick.*

## **10. Wildcat golf qualifies two for state**

A year ago, the Louisburg golf team suffered heartbreak when the Wildcats were completely shut out of the state tournament.

Not this year, however.

The Wildcats sent two golfers to the state tournament this past May as senior Sam Frederick and junior Derek Frederick both represented Louisburg after earning a spot following the May 19 regional tournament at the Independence Country Club.

Both players competed in their first state tournament, which was held May 27 at the Sand Creek Station Course in Newton.

Sam Frederick earned a regional medal with a top 10 performance as he led the Wildcat team. The Louisburg senior finished 10th with an 87 on a tough Independence Country Club course. Independence had the top three individual finishers, led by champion Ethan Small, who had a 75.

Derek Frederick was the final individual to qualify for the state tournament as he carded a 91 and took 17th overall.

## **9. Coaching changes as Brown, Crossley, Schonning take over volleyball, wrestling, girls soccer programs**

There were some coaching changes in 2025 as three teams found new leaders to take charge of their respective programs.

Rich Brown (volleyball), Shawn Crossley (wrestling) and Dawson Schonning (girls soccer) were all hired new Louisburg head coaches.

Brown, who took over from Leanna Willer, helped the Wildcats to the sub-state championship game this past season.

Crossley takes over from long-time coach Bobby Bovaird, who resigned following the season earlier this year. Crossley, who is an LHS alum and former Wildcat wrestler, was an assistant coach the last several years.

As for Schonning, he takes over from former coach Jordan Roquemore who helped lead the Wildcats to a fourth-place state finish a year ago. Schonning, who is new to the district this year, was an assistant coach on the boys team this past fall.



***Louisburg senior Sabra Brueggen swims the 200 individual medley on May 24 during the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships in Topeka.***

## 8. Brueggen earns pair of state swim medals

TOPEKA – As Sabra Brueggen stepped onto the state swim podium for the final time, a flood of memories came rushing back.

Memories of when it all started, the friends she made and all her successes along the way. Brueggen has been one of the top swimmers in Class 5-1A the last four years and she proved it once again on May 24 during the Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships in Topeka.

The Louisburg senior ended her high school career with two state medals and a lifetime full of memories.

“Ending my high school career was a very sentimental moment for me,” Brueggen said. “It was the last time I would be racing some of the girls I have been swimming against since age six. Being able to share the podium with them one last time made it even more meaningful, making me very proud of how I performed at my final state meet.”

Brueggen had strong swims throughout 2-day meet that began on May 23 at the Capitol Federal Natatorium. In the prelims, she qualified for the finals in fifth in both the 200-yard individual medley and 100 backstroke.

In the finals, Brueggen found her way to the medal stand as she finished sixth in the 200 individual medley in 2 minutes and 14.42 seconds.

The 100 backstroke proved to be much of the same for Brueggen there as she also medaled sixth in a time of 58.81 seconds. It completed a string of four straight years of earning a state medal.



*The Louisburg girls cross country team of (from left) Talen McMurray, Annie Hornberger, Karissa Williamson, Maddox McGhee, Hailey Shelton, Reese Smith and Felicity Allen won the program's first regional title.*

## **7. Wildcat girls make history with first regional cross country title**

NEODESHA – For the first time in program history, the Louisburg girls cross country team left a regional meet as champions.

On a rainy, muddy Saturday at Riverside Park in Neodesha, the Wildcats powered through the slick conditions to win the Class 4A regional championship with 39 points – seven ahead of runner-up Paola. The victory also secured a state berth for the entire Louisburg squad.

"It was awesome and emotional to see the girls leave Neodesha as regional champs," Louisburg coach John Reece said. "It has been a long time in the making as we have had multiple teams qualify for state but have never won a regional title. The rankings had us winning the meet, but those are just rankings. The girls showed up to compete and that is exactly what they did."

It was a youthful lineup that led the Wildcats to history, featuring two freshmen, four sophomores and one junior – and the youngest runners set the tone. Freshman Karissa Williamson finished fourth overall in 22:40.26, just ahead of fellow freshman Maddox McGhee, who took fifth in 22:40.46. Sophomore Hailey Shelton placed sixth in 22:57, giving Louisburg three runners in the top 10.

Sophomore Reese Smith finished ninth in 23:50, junior Talen McMurray placed 16th in 24:16, and sophomores Felicity Allen and Annie Hornberger rounded out the lineup in 23rd and 27th, respectively.

The team went on to run at state along with Truman Ellison, Titus Ellison and Spencer Mattison, who qualified for state on the boys side.



**Louisburg senior Ashton Moore wrestles in the 215-pound state championship in Salina. Moore finished second overall.**

6. Moore state runner-up in wrestling, Wildcats qualify 7 for state

SALINA – In the final match of his wrestling career, Ashton Moore found himself competing for a state championship.

It was exactly the place he envisioned himself being, even before the season started. The result, however, was a different story.

Moore's dreams of a state title were dashed Saturday at the Class 4A state wrestling tournament in Salina. Smoky Valley's Parker Gardner ended his run with a 13-5 major decision at 215 pounds.

As disappointing as the loss was for Moore, looking back on his long wrestling career helped ease the pain – as did the second place state medal.

“It was tough taking that loss,” Moore said. “I was pretty down about it, but then I had a moment that put things more into perspective for me. After our practice on Friday, Coach (Bobby) Bovaird took us up to the top of the arena to talk about the tournament. Sitting there I remembered being in that same spot as a sixth grader watching the championship round there. At that age I thought those guys were amazing and the toughest people I’d ever seen.

“So after my loss I thought back to that moment being a sixth grader and I was able to realize how far I’ve come. To see myself at that level now made me very proud I was able to make it to that stage.”

The Wildcat program also had six other wrestlers compete at the state tournament, including two on the girls side.

Seniors Brayden Yoder (215), Canaan Clayton (120), Mika McKittrick (132) and sophomore Levi Cotter (106) each finished the tournament with an 0-2 mark.

On the girls side, Leola Eslinger and Brooklyn DeWeese became the first Wildcat girls to ever qualify for state.



*The Louisburg Jazzy Cats pose with their third place state plaque.*

## 5. Jazzy Cats take third at state dance

The Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats made their mark in program history on Nov. 21, earning a third-place finish in Class 4A at the State Game Day Spirit Showcase at the Stormont-Vail Events Center in Topeka.

In their first-ever trip to state competition, the Jazzy Cats not only reached the finals but left with some hardware.

Coach Sarah Alexander said the entire experience was meaningful, not only because of the results, but because it was all uncharted territory for the program.

“This was the first time the Jazzy Cats had ever attended state, so the entire experience was brand new for all of us,” Alexander said. “To come home with a state plaque was absolutely incredible. The girls were thrilled just to have the opportunity to compete, and bringing home a plaque made all of their hard work feel truly rewarding. It was such a special moment for the team and a huge milestone for our program.”

Louisburg scored 81.41 in the finals, just enough to edge Holton (81.23) by the slimmest of margins for the final spot on the podium. Ottawa won the state championship with a score of 90.13, while Bishop Miege secured second at 85.77.



*The Louisburg cheer team finished as the state runner-up at the 4A state competition on Nov. 22 in Topeka. It is the sixth top 3 finish for the Wildcats in the last seven years.*

## **4. Louisburg cheer earns Class 4A state runner-up**

TOPEKA – The Louisburg High School cheer team added another trophy to its growing collection on Nov. 22, earning the Class 4A state runner-up title at the Game Day Cheer Championships at Stormont-Vail Events Center.

The Wildcats posted an 87.73 in the finals to take second place behind defending state champion Paola, which won with a 94.27. Holton finished third at 85.

For Louisburg, the return to the podium was nothing new. The Wildcats have now finished in the top three six times in the last seven seasons, cementing themselves as one of the state's

most consistent programs.

Louisburg entered the finals in fourth place, boosted by a Fight Song and Crowd Leading routine that ranked second among all teams. The Wildcats had roughly 20 minutes to review score sheets and adjust before stepping back onto the mat—pressure they handled with poise.

“It was truly a special day for all of us,” head coach Breanna Kostroske said. “From the moment we arrived, the athletes were focused, calm, and determined. They’ve poured so much into this season, so seeing them step onto the mat with confidence and joy made the entire experience incredibly meaningful.”



***Louisburg senior Cooper Wingfield won the Class 4A state pole vault title on May 30 at Wichita State University.***

### **3. Wingfield wins state pole vault title; Meyer, Vohs earn three state medals to lead Wildcat track**

For the last four years, Louisburg has dominated the pole vault on the boys side in Class 4A and had its fair share of success on the girls side.

Caden Caplinger and Maddy Carpenter-Ross earned back-to-back state titles during that span and now it was Cooper Wingfield's opportunity.

Wingfield won gold in the pole vault in 2024 and was the favorite to win again this season – and he did it with ease. The Louisburg senior cleared 15 feet, 6 inches to win his second consecutive state championship during the Class 4A meet on May 30 at Wichita State University.

“It means a lot to win it back to back, not only for myself, but also to continue what Caden and Maddy had done before me,” Wingfield said. “This year made it four in a row that Louisburg had a state champion in the boys pole vault. It also made me the third back to back pole vault state champion for Louisburg in the last four years. I really wanted to continue that legacy and cement the dynasty we had and I am proud that I did.”

It had been a special year already for Wingfield as he broke his own school record earlier in the year with a clearance of 15-7.75 at the Kansas Relays.

Just like a year ago, his teammate Jacob Brown joined Wingfield on the state podium. Brown earned a fifth place medal after he cleared 14 feet as the Louisburg senior ended his Wildcat career as one of the best in the state.

Aidan Meyer and Myles Vohs each recorded three state medals as

they helped the Wildcats to a ninth-place finish with 32 points.

Meyer cemented his place in the Wildcat track history books in one of those events. The Louisburg senior broke a 14-year-old school record in the 400-meter dash as he earned a fourth place finish in 48.83 seconds.

As for Vohs, he opened the state meet with a fifth-place finish in the long jump. Meyer, Vohs, along with Gavin Lohse and Caleb Feldkamp, finished sixth overall in the 4×100 relay in 43.76 seconds.

Vohs, Meyer, along with Colton Blue and Emmett White, put together an all-senior 4×400-meter relay that took sixth in 3:27.

Another Louisburg senior, Jerynce Brings Plenty, ended his Wildcat track career with a state medal as well. Brings Plenty finished seventh in the 1,600-meter run in 4:39.78.

On the girls' side, the Louisburg 4×100-meter relay, Kendall Crossley (100-meter dash) and McKenna Lohse (shot put) all found their way to the state podium.

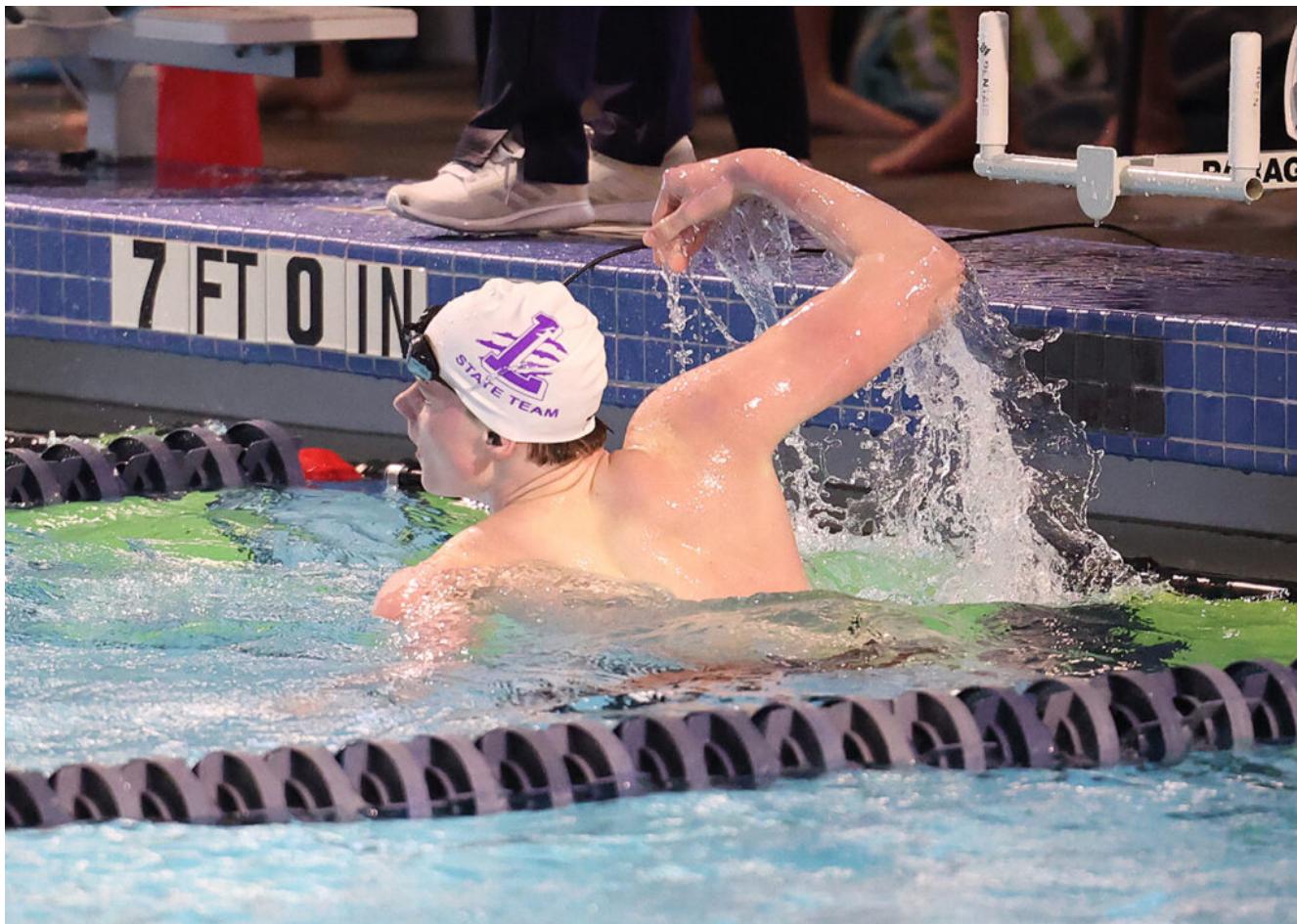
Louisburg's 4×100-meter relay team of senior Mackenzie Rooney, along with juniors Kendall Crossley, Addi Mallett and Suzanna Dansel finished fourth at state. The Wildcat group broke the school record during the regional meet and posted another fast time of 49.14 seconds during the prelims, which gave them the second fastest time heading into the finals.

That wouldn't be the only time Crossley found her way to the medal stand.

The Louisburg junior qualified for the finals of the 100-meter dash earlier in the day, and then in the finals, medaled eighth overall in 12.82 seconds.

In the shot put, Lohse put herself in good position in the

prelims. She recorded a throw of 37 feet, 1.25 inches in her first three attempts and was sitting in second place going into the finals, before taking fifth overall.



*Louisburg junior Colin Brown celebrates after winning his prelim of the 100-yard butterfly at the Class 5-1A state championships in Lenexa.*

## **2. Brown first Wildcat to win 2 state swim titles; Wildcats medal in 6 events**

LENEXA – Colin Brown was all about making school history Saturday at the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships.

Brown became the first Louisburg swimmer in school history to win a state title and did so by winning the 100-yard butterfly. Some athletes would have been content with just the

one, but not Brown.

The Louisburg junior took to the water again in the 100 backstroke and won his second state title in a matter of minutes. It was also his fourth state medal of the day, which included a pair of relays.

"It was a surreal experience and an incredible honor," Brown said. "It was really cool to see all of the hard work and countless hours pay off. It also gave me a sense of pride knowing that I was representing the school while doing so."

That was the some of the success the Louisburg swim team had at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center. The Wildcats medaled in six events and finished seventh in the team standings with just four swimmers.

Louisburg junior Andrew Jamison also tallied four medals as made his way to the state podium in the 200 individual medley, 100 breaststroke and two relays. Senior Colton Prettyman and sophomore Noah Sharp joined the other Wildcats as state medalists in the relays.



*The Louisburg girls soccer team took fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament on May 31 in Wichita. Members of the team are (front row, from left) Brinley Ewy, Lila Edwards, Rylee Moore, Baileigh Johnson, Jaden Bentz, Ally Brown, Riley May, Rowan Yows, Merritt McIntire, Faith Sewell; (back row) assistant coach Lily McDaniel, Courtney Johnson, Ellia Gibbons, Sydney York, Caroline Apple, Cora Roche, Kahlan Harris, Juanina Schmidt, Briella Diehl, Mena Fercho, Faith Sewell and head coach Jordan Roquemore.*

## **1. Wildcat soccer takes fourth at state for best finish since 2021**

It may have been wet, muddy and just miserable weather for a day in late May, but for the Louisburg girls soccer team, all that didn't matter.

For the Wildcats, it was a beautiful day. Nothing was going to dampen their spirits.

Louisburg faced off against Eudora in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal game on May 25 as it played for a spot in the state final four.

For the first time since 2021, the Wildcats got it. Louisburg shutout Eudora, 2-0, to earn its first state quarterfinal win in four years.

“It is an amazing achievement to make it to the state final four and I couldn’t be more proud of this team,” senior captain Jaden Bentz said. “This really shows the amount of hard work we’ve all put in throughout the season and it’s nice knowing it has paid off. I couldn’t ask for a better group of girls to play with. When the final whistle blew we all were filled with excitement and ran to each other, and that shows the tight sisterly bond our team has.”

Louisburg head coach Jordan Roquemore was an assistant the last time the Wildcats were in the state semifinals and he could tell his team wanted this one more than any game this season.

“I have never seen the team so jazzed about anything all season as when the game was over,” Roquemore said. “We are all really excited for the opportunity to compete in the Final Four this year.”

Louisburg squared off with Rose Hill in the third-place game of the Class 4-1A Kansas State Soccer Championships on May 31 at Wichita’s Stryker Complex. It didn’t take long for the Wildcats to get on the board.

The Wildcats struck first in the game’s opening minutes, but Rose Hill tied it in the first half and scored late in the second to hand Louisburg a 2-1 loss.

Louisburg was coming off a 2-0 loss in the state semifinals on May 28 as it hosted its first state semifinal game against Topeka-Hayden.

"Honestly, I was really proud of how we played this game," Louisburg coach Jordan Roquemore said. "Rose Hill is an exceptional squad and we not only kept them at bay defensively, we were very successful in creating attack opportunities. We were nearly even with them for shots on goal and I thought it was a very well-matched game for us."

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## **Yows excited for new chapter with Benedictine soccer**



***Louisburg graduate Rowan Yows is looking forward to her next step after signing with the Benedictine College soccer program.***

Soccer has been a big part of Rowan Yows' life since she could

remember.

And ever since she stepped onto the turf for the Louisburg girls soccer team, Yows has made a big impact for the Wildcats. As a 4-year varsity letterwinner, she cemented herself as one of the top players in the program's short history.

Now, she hopes to translate that success to the collegiate level. Yows signed her letter of intent to join the Benedictine College soccer program earlier this year and will join her brother, Braden, who plays for the men's team.

"I grew up playing soccer and college has always been the end goal," Rowan said. "Watching my brother go through the process really helped cement me in my decision that I want to play in college. Seeing my dream come true on signing day was so fulfilling. It was like seeing all the work I put in finally come to fruition."

Yows had different options on where she could go to play soccer, but Benedictine made that an easy decision for her.

"Everything about the school and the soccer program stuck out to me," she said. "From the moment I first stepped on campus, I knew it was the place for me."



**Louisburg's Rowan Yows signed her letter of intent to join the Benedictine College soccer program. Seated next to Rowan and her parents Greg and Heather Yows. Standing is her brother Braden, her grandmother Helen Stone and sister Presley.**

The 2025 Louisburg graduate had a memorable season for the Wildcats in the spring as Yows helped Louisburg to a fourth place finish at the Class 4-1A state tournament and a No. 1 seed in the state playoffs.

Personally, Yows had a big year as she tallied 29 goals and 10 assists to go along with first team All-Frontier League and all-state honors. She was also named the Frontier League Player of the Year.

"This season was major for me," Yows said. "I mean I was successful in my other seasons, but I always had some underlying injury. This year coming in healthy and staying healthy was game changing. I was able to step up in a big way, in both gameplay and leadership."

Yows is now ready to translate that success on the high school pitch to the college level and believes Benedictine is the perfect spot for her to do that. Whether it is in the midfield, or a different position, the Ravens believe Yows is someone who will be able to help a Benedictine team that lost just two matches in the Heart of America regular season last year.

"Rowan is a special player," Benedictine coach Hunter Nail said. "She has the ability to play 6-7 positions at a very high level. We can't wait to start working with her this fall"

As for what the future holds, Yows can't wait to get on campus to get acclimated to her new life as she knows the transition from high school to college can be difficult.

"College soccer is going to be a big adjustment and it's going to challenge me," Yows said. "I'm excited though because I love the team I'm joining and I know they'll help me grow into a successful college player."

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## **Johnson ready for next step with College of Saint Mary soccer**



***Louisburg grad Baileigh Johnson is excited to continue her soccer career with College of Saint Mary.***

Baileigh Johnson never thought too far ahead when it came to soccer.

She loves the sport and was always focused on taking that next step in the tall, long staircase of life. However, as her high school career was nearing an end, Johnson realized there were still more steps to take.

The 2025 Louisburg graduate decided she wanted to play on the college level and began looking for a home. Johnson eventually got the offer she was looking for.

Johnson signed her letter of intent with the College of Saint Mary, an NAIA program in Omaha, Neb., and she is looking forward to the opportunity at playing at the next level.

“As a kid I always thought I would play soccer for as long as I could, so initially I guess that’s where my goal started,”

Johnson said. "However, throughout my four years in high school I had mixed emotions about continuing into college. By the end of my junior season, I was set on ending my soccer career after high school, but at the beginning of senior year I realized I wasn't ready to give it up. Seeing this dream come to reality is such an achievement that little me is extremely proud of."

Johnson felt she would be comfortable at her new home, and for good reason. She will have the opportunity to play with her older sister, Reese, who signed on with the program for her final season.

The two were only able to play together one year in high school and the reunion opportunity played a big part in Johnson's decision.

"Being able to play with Reese again brings me so much joy and excitement and I know we will have so much fun," Baileigh said. "Knowing there was a chance of her also committing to Saint Mary made it even more preferable. Like every sibling relationship, she gets on my nerves a lot, but the way she pushes me to be a better player will always be something I appreciate so much."



*Louisburg grad Baileigh Johnson signed her letter of intent to with Saint Mary College earlier this year. Seated next to Baileigh are her parents Matt and Tiffany Johnson. Standing is Saint Mary coach Jamison Parkhill and her sisters Cortney and Taylor.*

The Johnson family was also familiar with Saint Mary head coach Jamison Parkhill, who not only coached Reese for two years at Iowa Western, but is a Louisburg graduate himself.

"What brought me to even apply to Saint Mary was the fact that Coach Parkhill was the head coach there," Johnson said. "He was familiar with my family so I thought it would be the easiest way to get noticed by a college. It was the first college visit I ever took, and at the end of the day, I subconsciously knew that it was the place I wanted to go without even reaching out to more colleges.

"The campus was pretty and the perfect size, along with the soccer team being very welcoming and it had felt like I wasn't a stranger. Saint Mary has everything I need for the future,

so the decision to commit there was easy."

Johnson had a big senior season as the Wildcat forward posted 10 goals on the season to go along with six assists to earn first team All-Frontier League honors and was named to the Class 4A all-state second team. As a team, Johnson was a captain on a Wildcat squad that also finished fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament.

It is that type of success that Johnson hopes will transition to the college level as she settles in with her new team.

"My expectations for myself are to just continue to put in hard work every day, stay coachable, and become a better player," Johnson said. "I'm very excited to be a part of a college team that will open me up to such a different level of the game and to be able to meet new people. It's an environment filled with people who choose to be there, so I'm excited to be pushed to my fullest potential and see how far we can get as a team and for me as a player."

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## **Brown named 2025 Louisburg Sports Zone Female Athlete of the Year**



**ALLY  
BROWN**

**LOUISBURG  
SPORTS  
ZONE**

**Female Athlete of the Year  
2024-25**



**Louisburg senior Ally Brown was voted as the 2025 Louisburg Sports Zone Female Athlete of the Year by the Louisburg High School coaches.**

As her basketball season was nearing an end, Ally Brown thought her Louisburg playing career was as well.

Brown, a senior, was a starter on the volleyball and basketball teams and was preparing for her life after sports. However, something happened that changed all of that.

At the time, Louisburg soccer coach Jordan Roquemore asked Brown if she would consider trying out for the soccer team – more specifically – goalie. It left her a little taken aback.

“I laughed at first and told him I’d think about it, fully intending on saying no,” Brown said. “Then the other soccer seniors kept talking to me about it and my parents said I should take the chance and do it. So I did and it was the best decision I’ve ever made.”

That decision turned into a fourth-place state medal as she helped the Louisburg program to a state final four appearance. It was a memorable ending for Brown in her Wildcat career. She was the lone senior athlete to play three sports, which led

her to earn the 2025 Louisburg Sports Zone Female Athlete of the Year award.

The award was given based on a vote by Louisburg High School coaches as Brown was recognized for her achievements on the volleyball and basketball courts, along with her time with the soccer program.

“Being honored with Female Athlete of the Year means so much to me,” Brown said. “I truly see it as an honor because there are so many amazing female athletes around me. It fills me with a sense of pride knowing that four years of hard work got me to this moment. The support of my family and friends through my athletic journey allowed me to succeed so this award is not only for me, but all of the people who helped me along the way.”

On the volleyball court, Brown was a first-year varsity player this year and was one of the top defensive players – not only on the team, but in the Frontier League.

As a team captain, Brown was an honorable mention all-league defensive specialist and was second on the team with 228 digs and was also second in aces with 47. She also led the team in serve attempts and points scored while serving.

“Ally was largely the heart and soul of the volleyball team as a really strong leader, and I have no doubt that she helped lead her teammates in other sports the same way,” former Louisburg volleyball coach Leanna Willer said. “She is the girl who always shows up for her teammates. She is reliable, dedicated, and she truly understands the balance of encouraging/motivating her teammates and holding them accountable. She works her butt off and made some incredible plays in each season. Her dig numbers were right up there close to a lot of the Liberos while only being on the court half the time, and that speaks volumes about what she was able to do for our team.

"She is the voice of reason that we all turn to in times of trouble, and she is also the one who hypes up every single one of her teammates. Ally took on her roles in each sport this year with pride and made the most of every opportunity. Each of our three teams were undoubtedly better because she was a part of them."



*Louisburg senior Ally Brown was joined by former Louisburg volleyball coach Leanna Willer as she received the athlete of*

### ***the year award.***

As a member of the basketball team, Brown did a little bit of everything. She was a starter for the Wildcats and averaged four points a game. She also led the team in assists (35) and steals (24).

“Ally is a very hard worker, she always has a positive attitude, and she is a great role model to the younger players,” Louisburg basketball coach Adrienne Lane said. “This season I felt that Ally stepped up her game. She had a streak in the middle of the season where it seemed like she didn’t miss a shot. I know whatever Ally chooses to do in life she will be great at.”

Then came the soccer program, where she started in goal for the Wildcats. In her first year playing high school soccer, Brown thrived as she helped Louisburg to a No. 1 seed in the state playoffs and a fourth-place state finish.

As the team’s starting goalie, she made a big impact in the back of the Wildcat defense. She finished with 12 clean sheets and had 91 saves on the year. For that effort, she was named to the All-Frontier League second team.

“For a first time goalkeeper, that save rating is exceptional,” Roquemore said. “She faced far fewer shots than the average keeper because of our team defense, but when she does get them, she does a great job.

“Ally has always been a humble leader, a voice of reason, a positive influence, and has a determined work ethic. She balances a good sense of humor with a focused and sincere way of approaching athletics. She’s hard on herself but never gives up and is constantly willing to take feedback and apply it. I can’t imagine this season without her.”

Although it was a successful experience for her, it was about more than just wins and losses for Brown.

"Yes I got a fourth place state medal out of it, but I got so much more than that," Brown said. "I gained girls who will be sisters for life and a sense of girlhood that is unmatched. I will never forget my one year in the LHS girls soccer program and will be forever grateful that I chose to take a chance."

In her four years at Louisburg High School, Brown was a 3-sport athlete in two of them. Playing multiple sports in high school is something she believes was an important and rewarding experience for her.

"Playing sports in Louisburg is such an exciting experience," Brown said. "The feeling of the Louisburg community rallying behind you while you're on the court or field is indescribable. You are playing next to the same girls that you grew up with. Even you are doing the horrible weights and conditioning, it's ok because the girl next to you is making you laugh. Playing competitive high school sports isn't easy, but at Louisburg when you have people rallying around you every step of the way, succeeding is that much easier."

Previous winners:

2018: Isabelle Holtzen

2019: Carson Buffington

2020: Reilly Ratliff-Becher

2021: Alyse Moore

2022: Delaney Wright

2023: Adyson Ross

2024: Hailey Sword

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# Wildcats rewarded with six spots on all-state soccer team



*Louisburg's Rowan Yows, Baileigh Johnson, Faith Sewell, Kahlan Harris, Jaden Bentz and Lila Edwards were all all-state selections.*

The Louisburg girls soccer team had a season to remember after its fourth place finish at the state tournament and postseason honors continue to roll in for several Wildcat players.

Six Wildcat players were named to the Class 4-1A all-state team by the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association earlier this month.

Louisburg senior Rowan Yows was a first-team selection, while senior Baileigh Johnson, junior Faith Sewell and freshman Kahlan Harris were named to the second team. Senior Jaden Bentz and junior Lila Edwards earned a spot on the honorable mention team.

Yows, who was also named the Frontier League Player of the Year, had a big season for the Wildcats as she was the team's top scoring threat.

She finished the season with 29 goals and 10 assists and was also named the Midfielder of the Year by the Frontier League.

Johnson also had a big year offensively for the Wildcats. The senior forward posted 10 goals on the season to go along with six assists to earn second team honors.

Harris was another big offensive threat for Louisburg as she earned second team honors. In her first year in the program, Harris was second on the team with 13 goals to go along with 10 assists from the forward spot.

The Louisburg defense was also recognized on the all-state team with Sewell's second team selection, along with Bentz and Edwards. Sewell helped take away the middle of the field as the team's centerback, while Bentz and Edwards took away the outside.

All three played big roles on a Wildcat defense that gave up just 14 goals during their 16-5 season.

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**Wildcat girls soccer awarded  
7 spots on All-Frontier  
League team**

# ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOCCER

Wildcats earn seven spots on all-league team



ROWAN YOWS  
FIRST TEAM

BAILEIGH JOHNSON  
FIRST TEAM

JADEN BENTZ  
SECOND TEAM

ALLY BROWN  
SECOND TEAM

FAITH SEWELL  
SECOND TEAM

KAHLAN HARRIS  
SECOND TEAM

MENA FERCHO  
HON. MENTION



**Louisburg's Rowan Yows, Baileigh Johnson, Jaden Bentz, Ally Brown, Faith Sewell, Kahlan Harris and Mena Fercho were named to the All-Frontier League team.**

The Louisburg girls soccer team put together its best season in four years as the Wildcats rolled to No. 1 seed in the Class 4-1A playoffs, finished second in league play and ended the 2025 season in fourth at the state tournament.

Several Wildcat players caught the eye of the Frontier League coaches throughout the year and were recently rewarded for their efforts.

Louisburg earned seven spots on the All-Frontier League team that was recently released, including a pair of first team selections in seniors Rowan Yows and Baileigh Johnson.

"Overall, I think we represented really well for the Frontier League," Louisburg coach Jordan Roquemore said. "We had even selections overall which was more volume than any other team."

"Whether unfortunate or not, we showed better offensively than defensively in the league. I believe this is because our offense was on full display in many of our Frontier League games while our defense was not highlighted as much."

Not only was Yows a first-team selection, but she was also named the Frontier League Player of the Year by the coaches and for good reason.

Yows finished the season with 29 goals and 10 assists and was also named the Midfielder of the Year.

"Rowan had a phenomenal season," Roquemore said. "She was the most dangerous player on the field in nearly every game we played. She is fast, shifty, had incredible footwork and finishes really well. We would not have made it to the Final Four without her and I was so proud to see her play to her full potential this season."

Johnson was another force offensively for the Wildcats. The senior forward posted 10 goals on the season to go along with six assists to earn first team honors.

"Baileigh has the strongest leg on our team, making her a scoring threat from just about anywhere in the our attacking third," Roquemore said. "Baileigh contributed for us taking corner kicks and having more crosses than anyone else on the team."

Freshman Kahlan Harris was another big offensive threat for Louisburg as she earned second team honors. In her first year in the program, Harris was second on the team with 13 goals to go along with 10 assists from the forward spot.

"Kahlan had an excellent first season in high school," Roquemore said. "She tied for the most assists on the team. Kahlan is an amazing athlete and one of the hardest workers on our team. She caused problems for other teams often in our attacking third."

A strong Wildcat defense was also highlighted as senior Jaden Bentz and junior Faith Sewell earned second team honors, as did goalkeeper Ally Brown.

Bentz and Sewell led a big strength of the team as the Wildcat defense gave up just 14 goals during their 16-5 season.

“Faith was a crucial piece of our team this year,” Roquemore said. “She was the anchor of our defense and a key player for us all season. She also was huge for us on free kicks and a dynamic part of our possession game as we built attacks from the back. Faith went from a really good player last season to a great player this season and a on-field leader.

“Jaden is the best 1v1 defender in our league and it’s not even a question. Jaden has shut down some of the best offensive players in 4A this season. She is a ninja with her speed and precision and was absolutely dominant in her position as a wingback this year.”

As for Brown, it was her first year ever in goal as she made a big impact in the back of the Wildcat defense. She finished with 12 clean sheets and had 91 saves on the year.

“Ally had a stand-out season,” Roquemore said. “Although the total shots against her lower than average because of our outstanding team defense, Ally was there when we needed her and she continued to improve all season long. Ally is an excellent athlete with great judgement and her presence was a stabilizing force for us in the back this season.”

Junior midfielder Mena Fercho earned honorable mention honors for Louisburg and was an important part of the Wildcat midfield.

“Mena was great this season in our midfield,” Roquemore said. “She quarterbacked plays for us and is also a major reason for our strong possession numbers.”

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOCCER**

### **FIRST TEAM**

Rowan Yows, Louisburg – Player of the Year

Elizabeth Williams, Spring Hill

Natalie Loving, Tonganoxie

Jaden Brooks, Eudora

Taylor Hines, Spring Hill

Rose Bilyeu, Bonner Springs

Chloe Neufeld, Baldwin

Baileigh Johnson, Louisburg

Jane Hughes, Spring Hill

Miley Maxwell, Tonganoxie

GOALIE: Merideth Billings, Bonner Springs

## **SECOND TEAM**

Lizzie Fisher, Eudora

Naomi Mathis, Bonner Springs

Alexa Turner, Ottawa

Peyton Chappelle, Eudora

Jaden Bentz, Louisburg

Kahlan Harris, Louisburg

Faith Sewell, Louisburg

Hailey Bergmann, Spring Hill

Lauren McCart, Baldwin

Kambrea Kerr, Eudora

GOALIE: Ally Brown, Louisburg

**HONORABLE MENTION**

Macie Murray, Tonganoxie

Kylie Bourne, Eudora

Lindsey Montenegro-Raygoza, Ottawa

Brooklyn Taylor, Baldwin

Madisyn Sprinkle, Ottawa

Bailey Drake, Paola

Kayla Thornton, Tonganoxie

Baylie Igleheart, Tonganoxie

Sophia Felton, Bonner Springs

Lilli Sanders, Tonganoxie

Marin Drummond, Baldwin

Aubrey Melius, Spring Hill

Emmy Callahan, Baldwin

Emma Cain, Ottawa

Brynn Drummond, Baldwin

Mena Fercho, Louisburg

Mara Guzman, Paola

Cami Collum, Baldwin

Emma Griffin, Ottawa

GOALIE: Audrey Searl, Baldwin; Jaylynn Sparks, Spring Hill

# 2025 Louisburg Sports Zone Female Athlete of the Year finalists



The graphic features a purple background with a faint circular logo on the right. At the top, the text "2025 FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR" is centered. Below this, three female athletes are shown in separate frames: Ally Brown (left, in a white shirt with number 15), Sabra Brueggen (middle, in a dark jacket), and Addy Stohs (right, in a purple and white striped dress). Each frame includes the athlete's name on a black banner: "ALLY BROWN", "SABRA BRUEGGEN", and "ADDY STOHS". Below each frame is a small caption: "Senior - Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer" for Ally, "Senior - Basketball, Swim" for Sabra, and "Senior - Basketball, Softball" for Addy. At the bottom left, the "LOUISBURG SPORTS ZONE" logo is displayed with three small icons above the text.

**FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS**

**Louisburg seniors Ally Brown, Sabra Brueggen and Addy Stohs were named as finalists for the Louisburg Sport Zone Female Athlete of the Year.**

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

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to be subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. Then I sent the nominations back to the coaches and they voted for their top 3 male and female athletes. The recipient will be announced in

the coming days.

*(Editor's Note: Normally, the coaches send me their votes and I tabulate the winner. However, due to a conflict of interest, I handed those duties to LHS AD Ty Pfannenstiel this year and he graciously gathered all the votes from the coaches and I was not a part of the process.)*

Below are the three finalists for the Female Athlete of the Year award in alphabetical order by last name.



## **Ally Brown – Senior – Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer**

Ally was a 3-time letterwinner this past season in volleyball, basketball and soccer. In volleyball, Brown earned honorable mention all-league honors for her work as a defensive specialist as she helped the Wildcats to the sub-state

championship game. She finished with 228 digs, which was second on the team and was also second in aces with 47. She led Louisburg in serve attempts and points scored while she was serving.

On the basketball court, Brown was a starter for the Wildcat basketball team and averaged four points a game. She also led the team in assists (35) and steals (24).

Brown joined the Wildcat soccer team for the first time in the spring and made the most of her opportunity. She started in goal and finished with 12 shutouts on the season as she helped the Wildcats to a fourth-place finish at the Class 4-1A state tournament and finished with a 16-5 record. Brown was also named second team All-Frontier League goalie as she had more than 80 saves on the year and had an 87 percent save percentage.



# **Sabra Brueggen – Senior – Basketball, Swim**

Sabra was a letterwinner for the Louisburg basketball and swim team this year. On the basketball court, Brueggen was a starter for the Lady Cats as she was third on the team with 85 rebounds on the year and averaged five points a contest.

Brueggen really made her mark in the pool as she earned two medals at the Class 5-1A state swim meet this spring. She medaled sixth in both the 200-yard individual medley and 100 backstroke. Throughout the season, Brueggen earned state qualifying times in all of the individual events and she also qualified in three relays.

She swam in two of those relays at the state meet as she helped the 200 freestyle relay to victory in the consolation finals and finished ninth overall. Brueggen also swam the 400 free relay as they took 13<sup>th</sup>. Overall, Brueggen earned at least one state medal in each of her four years with the program.



## **Addy Stohs – Senior – Basketball, Softball**

Addy was a letterwinner for the Louisburg basketball and softball teams. It was in softball where Stohs made her biggest mark. The Louisburg senior was named to the All-Frontier League first team after strong season as the team's first baseman.

Stohs had a big year at the plate for Louisburg as she had a .435 average, which included 27 hits, four doubles and a home run, to go along with 13 RBIs. Stohs also had a .950 fielding percentage and only had 3 errors on the year.

On the basketball court, Stohs was a forward for the Wildcats as she had 23 rebounds on the year to go along with 10 blocked shots.

# Wildcat soccer takes fourth at state for best finish since 2021



*The Louisburg girls soccer team took fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament on May 31 in Wichita. Members of the team are (front row, from left) Brinley Ewy, Lila Edwards, Rylee Moore, Baileigh Johnson, Jaden Bentz, Ally Brown, Riley May, Rowan Yows, Merritt McIntire, Layla Sewell; (back row) assistant coach Lily McDaniel, Courtney Johnson, Ellia Gibbons, Sydney York, Caroline Apple, Cora Roche, Kahlan Harris, Janina Schmidt, Briella Diehl, Mena Fercho, Faith Sewell and head coach Jordan Roquemore.*

WICHITA – The Louisburg girls soccer team put together its best season in four years and had an opportunity to put an

exclamation point on it.

Louisburg squared off with Rose Hill in the third-place game of the Class 4-1A Kansas State Soccer Championships on May 31 at Wichita's Stryker Complex. It didn't take long for the Wildcats to get on the board.

The Wildcats struck first in the game's opening minutes, but Rose Hill tied it in the first half and scored late in the second to hand Louisburg a 2-1 loss.

Louisburg was coming off a 2-0 loss in the state semifinals on May 28 as it hosted its first state semifinal game against Topeka-Hayden.

"Honestly, I was really proud of how we played this game," Louisburg coach Jordan Roquemore said. "Rose Hill is an exceptional squad and we not only kept them at bay defensively, we were very successful in creating attack opportunities. We were nearly even with them for shots on goal and I thought it was a very well-matched game for us."

The Wildcats (16-5) wasted no time getting on the board as senior Rowan Yows scored in the 5th minute on an assist from freshman Kahlan Harris to put the Wildcats up 1-0.



***Rowan Yows celebrates with her teammates following an early goal in the third place match of the Class 4-1A state tournament on May 31 in Wichita.***

“Scoring that goal pretty early into the game really fired us up, giving us the confidence that we deserved to be there playing in that game,” Yows said. “Kahlan and I have been scoring goals like that all season, simple give and go’s that got us right in front of the goal. Even though we didn’t come out with a win, our effort was very visible in that game and I don’t think the score reflects that.”

Rose Hill tied the game in the 10th minute as the Rockets’ Kyia Kelly scored the equalizer on an unassisted goal. The match remained tied at 1-1 until late in the second half.

That was until the 69th minute, when the Rockets took advantage of a free kick opportunity just outside the box. Rose Hill’s Paige Winter sent the ball in from the corner, which hit off the shoulder of Nevaeh Kelly and found the back of the net for the go-ahead score.

"Getting a quick lead was a great confidence boost for the team," Roquemore said. "It affirmed what we already believed: that we can score on this team and compete with them. Rose Hill capitalized on a couple of our mistakes later in the game and we were unable to finish some of our opportunities, but the game could have gone either way. It was a tight matchup."

The Wildcats did have a couple opportunities on goal late, including one in the final minute. Junior Faith Sewell sent a free kick into the box, the Rose Hill keeper dropped the ball, which left for an open net.

Harris had the ball at her foot, but the shot went just over the crossbar and Rose Hill held on for the win.



***Louisburg senior defender Jaden Bentz heads the ball away on May 31 in Wichita.***

Louisburg's defense limited a powerful Rose Hill attack to just eight shots. Caroline Apple, Lila Edwards, Jaden Bentz, Rylee Moore and Sewell were all active on the back line, while

goalie Ally Brown had six saves on the day.

"Rose Hill has a really dynamic offense," Roquemore said. "They are fast and move the ball really well. We focused on team defense with some special attention paid to a couple players. Jaden did an excellent job holding down one and played the same outstanding 1v1 defense that she has been doing all season.

"Our midfielders, primarily Rowan, Mena (Fercho) and Riley (May), did a great job with possessing much of the game in the midfield and shutting down many of their runs. We let them slip through the net once for the first goal and failed to stop and clear the ball from a corner kick for their second."

Despite the loss, it was a special year for the Wildcat program. Louisburg ended the year with just three losses in the regular season, earned the No. 1 seed in the playoffs, and had the best program finish since 2021.



***Louisburg junior Mena Fercho battles a Rose Hill player for a 50-50 ball during the third place match in Wichita.***

“This was kind of a comeback season,” Yows said. “We’ve had some really good talent throughout my years here but we never got far in postseason. I think this year we all meshed quick and we all just got each other. It was really something special.

“We were all confident in each other that we could go far as a team. I also think our results this season showed our level of skill throughout the whole roster. When we went into season everyone always thinks about post season, but I think we also did a good job going week by week and taking each game head on.”

It also meant the end for five Wildcats seniors as Yows, Bentz, May, Brown and Baileigh Johnson all played their final game for the Wildcats.

“Getting to state was a big goal for us seniors this season since we’ve fallen a little shy in the past,” Yows said. “While finishing fourth wasn’t our goal, it still shows how much effort the team put in this season and it’s still an impressive result. For me, it’s a perfect way to close out my time here. I got to find success with some of my closest friends.”

It also marked the end for Roquemore in his short tenure as the Wildcat head coach as he has stepped down after one season to move with his family for a different opportunity.

“Earning a spot in the Final Four, having an incredible record this season, and an outstanding goal differential were all really great accomplishments for this team,” Roquemore said. “However, the one I am most proud of and the one I want to see continue is our team culture. This group of girls had a special bond and incredible chemistry on and off the field. There was growth, humor, positivity, a competitive spirit, and

a lot of joy playing this beautiful game. I would take all of that a hundred times over winning a state championship."

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## FINAL FOUR BOUND: Wildcats shutout Eudora in state quarters



*Members of the Louisburg girls soccer team celebrate with their fans following their 2-0 victory over Eudora on May 26 in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals in Louisburg.*

It may have been wet, muddy and just miserable weather for a day in late May, but for the Louisburg girls soccer team, all that didn't matter.

For the Wildcats, it was a beautiful day. Nothing was going to dampen their spirits.

Louisburg faced off against Eudora in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal game on May 25 as it played for a spot in the state final four.

For the first time since 2021, the Wildcats got it. Louisburg shutout Eudora, 2-0, to earn its first state quarterfinal win in four years.

“It is an amazing achievement to make it to the state final four and I couldn’t be more proud of this team,” senior captain Jaden Bentz said. “This really shows the amount of hard work we’ve all put in throughout the season and it’s nice knowing it has paid off. I couldn’t ask for a better group of girls to play with. When the final whistle blew we all were filled with excitement and ran to each other, and that shows the tight sisterly bond our team has.”

Louisburg head coach Jordan Roquemore was an assistant the last time the Wildcats were in the state semifinals and he could tell his team wanted this one more than any game this season.

“I have never seen the team so jazzed about anything all season as when the game was over,” Roquemore said. “We are all really excited for the opportunity to compete in the Final Four this year.”



***Louisburg senior Baileigh Johnson pushes the ball up the field against Eudora during the state quarterfinals.***

The wet weather provided less-than-ideal playing conditions and it caused problems for both teams. Louisburg, however, struck first with a goal right before halftime.

Senior Rowan Yows sent a cross into the box, which found the foot of sophomore Merritt McIntire, and McIntire scored her second playoff goal in the game's 38th minute.

"I was incredibly excited for her as it's a big deal to score in a state quarterfinal," Yows said. "Those crosses had been open all game and I think she knew that and knew what I was gonna do. Our underclassmen are really skilled and it shows."

That goal gave the Wildcats the momentum going into halftime and put the pressure on the Cardinals. With the rain coming down harder, the Wildcats made it more difficult early in the second half.



***Louisburg junior Mena Fercho clears the ball during the Wildcats' May 26 game against Eudora.***

Yows dribbled down the right side, past the defense, and found the corner of the net to put Louisburg up 2-0 just three minutes into the second half.

From there, the Louisburg defense took care of the rest.

The back line of Bentz, Lila Edwards, Caroline Apple, Faith Sewell, Rylee Moore and Sydney York limited Eudora's shots on goal.

Whatever got past them, senior goalie Ally Brown took care of the rest as she recorded her 12th shutout of the season.

"We knew that Eudora was not going to be an easy game," Roquemore said. "They work hard and play very physical. We discussed team defense and I was pleased overall with how we limited their chances. We still allowed a few opportunities to them, but Ally was there when we needed with a couple of key

saves."

It is a defense that has been a strength for the Wildcats all season and has kept them in many of their games.



***Louisburg junior Faith Sewell shields a Eudora player from the ball.***

"Our defense is solid this year," Bentz said. "A lot of different players have really stepped up and contributed to the back line. The defense was really strong against a tough Eudora team. It was a very physical and fast game, but the defense reads each other very well and we have great trust in each other allowing us to recover really fast and to not panic."

The challenges will only get tougher from here on out. Louisburg (16-3) will host Topeka-Hayden (12-7) in the Class 4-1A state semifinals at 6 p.m. on May 28. Win or lose, the Wildcats will travel to Wichita on May 31 for either the state championship or third-place game.

Hayden knocked off the No. 1 seed in the West, Wichita-Trinity, in a 2-0 contest in its state quarterfinal game. It will be one of the tougher opponents the Wildcats have seen this season.

“It’s a great opportunity to get to host the semifinal game this year,” Roquemore said. “Our work during the season afforded us this position and we aim to take advantage of having home field for the game. Topeka Hayden is a really good team and it is going to be a tough matchup. We’re looking forward to the competition.”

For seniors Yows, Bentz, Brown, Baileigh Johnson and Riley May, it will be their final contest on their home field and they hope they can end it on a good note.

“Going to a semifinal any year is exciting, but being a 1 seed and hosting makes it 10-times better,” Yows said. “Having our community support us really puts the pressure on the other team and gives us a leg up. Being promised two more games is also a great feeling, especially at the end of my high school career. I want to play as many games as possible with this team.”