

# Conley earns national award from United Soccer Coaches



***Louisburg boys and girls soccer coach Kyle Conley was awarded the The High School Coach of Significance Award by the United Soccer Coaches earlier this week.***

Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley added another award to his mantle on Monday.

The United Soccer Coaches awarded Conley with The High School Coach of Significance Award. Conley was one of 33 recipients of the award throughout the country and was the honoree from the state of Kansas.

“Receiving that award is very humbling,” Conley said. “Being awarded an honor like that is much more than one person. It is the coaches I get to, or have worked with. It is a fantastic support group. I have fantastic parents that are all in, all the time. The community is always there for our programs regardless if they have kids that play soccer or not, and my wife (Kelli Conley) is super supportive and always there to help out regardless of the task.

“Most importantly, none of this could be achieved without fantastic student-athletes, both past and present, that I get to work with. They give me everything they have each and every night. I am just trying to be a servant leader and teach my players to be the same on and off the field. Louisburg is our town and we want to always represent it in the best way possible.”

The High School Coach of Significance Award, which is in its fifth year, recognizes members who are coaching for character and using the soccer field to teach life lessons at the high school level.

It is an opportunity for each state, in conjunction with United Soccer Coaches, to recognize coaches who are making an impact within their schools and communities well beyond their records of wins and losses.

The fifth annual class represents a total of 33 states. The goal, according to the United Soccer Coaches, is to annually recognize a recipient from all 50 states.

Each of the High School Coach of Significance Award nominees are reviewed by the selection committee comprised of national, regional, and state representation.

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



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

Our life has changed around us. We are having to deal with a

new normal and there are a lot of uncertainties as to what our future holds.

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

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



Just look at what was accomplished last year:

- Boys cross country qualified for state for the first time in school history.

- Girls cross country placed at state for the first time in its history as they took third in Class 4A. Maddy Rhamy, Lola Edwards and Reese Johnson also earned medals.
- Boys soccer had its best finish in school history with a 3rd place state finish.
- Boys basketball advanced to the state championship game for the first time and took second.
- Girls basketball advanced to the state tournament for the first time in 47 years and recorded its best finish in third.
- Wrestlers Alec Younggren and Cade Holtzen took second and third, respectively, at the state tournament.
- Boys golf qualified for state as a team.





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

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

However, with so much positivity from last season, it is time

to turn the page and focus on what the 21-22 season has in store.



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

As I talked about earlier, there is a lot of negativity going on in the world right now, but I am more than thankful to have a job where I can get away from all that and cover all the special moments.

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

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

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

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

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## Wildcats earn four spots on all-state soccer team



***Senior Olivia Barber (left) and junior Reese Johnson were named to the Class 4-1A all-state first team by the Kansas High School Soccer Coaches Association.***

With any kind of success comes recognition, and the Louisburg girls soccer team has gotten more in the last week.

Louisburg, which finished fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament, earned four spots on the Kansas High School Soccer

Coaches Association All-State Team.

Senior Olivia Barber and junior Reese Johnson were named to the Class 4-1A all-state first team, while freshmen Hailey Sword and Lola Edwards earned second team honors.

"The four girls we had recognized for all-state were very valuable to our success," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Once again, when any individual accomplishes any individual award, it is usually because their teammates help put them in a position to succeed."

Johnson was one of the team's main facilitators on offense as she was second on the team with nine assists and also had seven goals.

Barber also had a big final season for the Wildcats as she finished the year with 11 goals and 11 assists.

"Reese and Olivia did a fantastic job for our team's attack," Conley said. "They created a massive amount of opportunities for our team and played at such a high level. Olivia had such great vision and did a fantastic job of finding her teammates. Reese was such an unbelievable threat attacking the right side. She was so good all season long."





***Freshmen Lola Edwards (left) and Hailey Sword were named to the all-state second team.***

Edwards was also another valuable piece to the Wildcat offense as she was second on the team with 15 goals to go along with six assists.

Sword was a big part of the Wildcat defense as she took away the other team's best players from her defensive midfield spot. She also had three goals on the year.

"Hailey and Lola did a great job for us as well," Conley said. "As freshmen, they stepped up big time and took on the challenge of replacing some really tough players. Not only did they step up, but they excelled. Hailey took away the middle of the field and Lola played with a massive amount of energy up top for our team. Both these young ladies have a lot of great things ahead of them in their careers."

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# 2021 Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Year nominees



For the past five years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements and to highlight the athletes.

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

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to be subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female athletes and then I will tabulate the results and determine the winner. The winner will be announced later this month.

Below are the nominees for this year’s award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!

## **ATHLETES OF THE YEAR NOMINEES**

### **FEMALE**



## **Reese Johnson – Junior – Cross Country, Soccer**

Junior Reese Johnson made history in a couple different sports for Louisburg this past season.

In the fall, Johnson played a big role on the girls cross country team. The Lady Cats finished third in Class 4A, as that was the first time a team had placed at state in girls cross country. Johnson also medaled 15th individually and was one of three Lady Cats to earn state medals that day.

In the spring, Johnson was one of the leaders on the girls soccer team that advanced to the Class 4-1A state final four this past season. Johnson earned second team All-Frontier League honors after she finished the season with seven goals and nine assists as the Wildcats finished fourth at state.





## **Alyse Moore – Senior – Volleyball, Basketball, Track**

Alyse Moore ended her senior season as one of the most accomplished athletes in Louisburg High School history. Moore is the first female athlete in school history to compete at the state level in four different sports, including both softball and track in the same season in 2019.

In the spring, Moore earned her second straight track state medal in the javelin as she finished fourth in the Class 4A meet. Earlier in the year, Moore broke a 20-year-old school record with a throw of 149 feet.

Moore was also a starter on the girls basketball team and helped the Lady Cats to their best finish in school history. Moore and the Lady Cats advanced to state for the first time in 47 years and took third overall. Individually, Moore eclipsed the 500-career rebound mark and was an honorable



mention all-league player. She led the team in rebounds with 8.6 boards a game and also averaged 7.3 points and 1.7 steals.

On the volleyball court, Moore started as an outside hitter for the Lady Cats and was second on the team with 174 kills and 195 digs.



## **Delaney Wright – Junior – Basketball, Track**

Delaney Wright ended the 2020-21 school year with a bang as she became the school's first athlete to win three state championships in track in one season.

At the Class 4A state meet in Wichita last month, Wright won state titles in the long jump, 400-meter dash and 200-meter dash. She broke her own 200 and 400 school records to reach those accomplishments. On the season, Wright set new school

records in each of those events.

Wright was also a key player on the girls basketball team and helped the Lady Cats to their best finish in school history. Wright and the Lady Cats advanced to state for the first time in 47 years and took third overall at the Class 4A state tournament. Wright was one of the team's best defensive players as she averaged two deflections and a steal per game. She was also assigned to the team's best player.

## MALE



## Weston Guetterman – Senior – Football, Basketball

Weston Guetterman played big roles for both the Wildcat football and basketball teams this past season.

On the gridiron, Guetterman was the starting quarterback for



Louisburg, which finished 4-3 and tied for third in the Frontier League standings. Guetterman earned honorable mention All-League honors on defense for his play in the secondary. He finished the year with 32 tackles, two interceptions, three tackles for a loss and seven batted balls. He also finished with 548 yards rushing and six touchdowns.

Guetterman was one of the team leaders on the boys basketball team that advanced to its first state championship in school history and took second at the Class 4A state tournament. He was a second-team All-Frontier League selection from the point guard spot and averaged 12.5 points, 4.3 rebounds, 3.7 assists and 2.2 steals a game. He was also an all-state selection by the Topeka Capital-Journal, Wichita Eagle and Sports in Kansas.



## **Cade Holtzen – Senior – Cross Country, Wrestling, Track**

Cade Holtzen was a three-sport athlete this past season for Louisburg and became the first male athlete (that is known) to participate in state competitions in all three sports, in the same season.

Holtzen helped the Wildcat cross country team to qualify for state for the first time in school history as they finished third at regionals. At state, Holtzen took 56th overall in 18 minutes and 46 seconds.

On the wrestling mat, Holtzen had a year to remember as he finished his career with a 155-19 record and a third-place state finish at 132 pounds. He was a four-time state qualifier for the Wildcats and a three-time state placer. Holtzen served as the team captain this past season and currently holds eight program records, including most season victories and most career wins. He was also chosen to participate in the 2021 Metro Classic.

In the spring, Holtzen earned his second state medal of the year as he helped the 4×800-meter relay team to a third place finish. He also helped the Wildcats to their second team Class 4A state track championship in school history.





## **Kolby Kattau – Junior – Football, Baseball**

Kolby Kattau was a two-sport athlete this past season and had a good year for both the football and baseball program.

In the spring, Kattau helped the Wildcats to their first regional championship game since 2009 as he played both first base and pitcher. Kattau finished the year with a .444 average and racked up 32 hits for the Wildcats to go along with a .560 on-base percentage. He finished with five doubles, two triples, 16 RBIs, scored 26 runs and stole nine bases. He was a first team All-Frontier League selection and was an honorable mention all-state selection by the KBCA.

On the football field, Kattau played on both sides of the ball for a team that finished with a 4-3 record and tied for third in the Frontier League. He finished with two touchdowns from

the running back spot and had 41 tackles at linebacker.



## **Alec Younggren – Senior – Football, Wrestling**

Alec Younggren was a two-sport athlete for Louisburg as he shined on the football field and on the wrestling mat.

Younggren, who missed part of the football season with an injury, still played well-enough on the offensive and defensive lines to earn All-Frontier League honors on both sides of the ball. Younggren was named as a first-team offensive lineman and an honorable mention lineman on defense.

He was a key fixture on the Wildcat offensive line that amassed more than 2,400 yards of total offense and 20 touchdowns. He also had 23 tackles on defense. Younggren was also an all-state honorable mention selection.



The Louisburg senior had an historic season in wrestling as he advanced to the 220-pound Class 4A championship match, where he finished runner-up. He finished the year with a 37-1 record and had Louisburg's highest state finish since 2012.



## **Braden Yows – Junior – Soccer**

Louisburg junior Braden Yows was vital part of the Wildcats' best finish in school history this past season. Yows helped the Wildcats to a third place finish in the Class 4-1A state tournament.

Yows was a first-team All-Frontier League and all-state selection from his midfield spot. He broke a program record with 21 assists and also finished with seven goals on the year.

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# Wildcats earn seven spots on All-Frontier League Soccer Team



The Louisburg girls soccer team just finished a memorable season that led the Wildcats to their fourth straight Class 4-1A final four.

Due to all that success, the Wildcats were recognized by the league coaches and earned seven spots on the All-Frontier League team that was recently released.

Although seven players were honored, it didn't sit well with the program as the Wildcats were shutout of the first team and five players were named honorable mention.

"Honestly I felt compared to teams we beat we did not receive the representation I felt the girls deserved," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Usually, I don't tell the girls all-league stuff until our banquet and like it being a surprise, but I felt we had some kids who should have been first team players and some second team players. We used that as our motivation for the rest of the year to keep proving those people who don't believe in us wrong."

Junior midfielder Reese Johnson was second team selection, along with freshman midfielder Hailey Sword.



Senior midfielder Olivia Barber and senior defender Madi Quinn were named honorable mention, as was sophomore midfielder Adyson Ross. Freshmen forwards Lexi Hampton and Lola Edwards, the team's leading scorers, were also named to the honorable mention team.



***Louisburg junior Reese Johnson was a second-team all-league selection.***

Johnson was one of the team's main facilitators on offense as she was second on the team with nine assists and also had seven goals.

As for Sword, she was assigned to the opposition's best player

on many occasions from her defensive-mid spot. She also had three goals on the season.

“Hailey and Reese played really well,” Conley said. “They played vital roles for us and our team. They both stepped up and played really well for us and helped us a lot in key moments of the game. I was really proud of them and how hard they played each and every night.”



***Freshman Hailey Sword was a second-team All-Frontier League selection.***

The team’s top three scorers – Hampton, Edwards and Barber – were named to the honorable mention team despite have double digit goals on the year.

Hampton finished the season with 16 goals to lead the way for Louisburg, while Edwards had 15 goals and six assists. Barber reached double figures in both goals scored and assisted with

11.

Ross was a big factor for the Wildcats from her midfield spot and also finished the year with two goals and two assists.

Quinn was one of the team captains along with Barber and Ruth Minster. Quinn was also one of the team's leaders on defense from the center back position.

"The honorable mention girls deserved better in my opinion," Conley said. "Just based on their position and stats alone, but it wasn't meant to be. These girls came ready to play and made some fantastic plays this year. This group absolutely stepped up as we had to replace 12 seniors and 4 other players for the 2021 season.

"This group never made excuses and just battled. They worked so hard and truly earned this recognition, regardless if I felt they deserved better. These girls had a fantastic season and I am very proud of all of them."

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER**

### **First Team**

Ashtin Barnes, Tonganoxie; Lauren Russell, Baldwin; Riley Smith, Baldwin; Sierra Montez, Piper; Ryann Clark, Piper; Lexi Dillon, Spring Hill; Mallory Putnam, Spring Hill; Brooke Powell, Spring Hill; Mackenzie Hood, Spring Hill; Jayla Erpelding, Eudora

GOALIE: Allie Harrington, Spring Hill

### **Second Team**

Kate Erpelding, Eudora; Alex Pasqua, Eudora; Mallory Vickers, Eudora; Hailey Sword, Louisburg; Reese Johnson, Louisburg; Cambria Crowe, Baldwin; Ryla Richardson, Piper; Reagan Downes, Spring Hill; Payton Vogelbacher, Spring Hill; Emelynn Cruce, Spring Hill



GOALIE: Leah Williams, Eudora

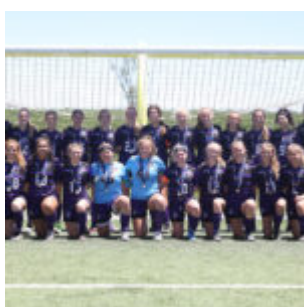
### **Honorable Mention**

Charity Seaton, Bonner Springs; Jenna Knight, Bonner Springs; Lola Edwards, Louisburg; Adyson Ross, Louisburg; Lexi Hampton, Louisburg; Olivia Barber, Louisburg; Madi Quinn, Louisburg; Katherine Wombwell, Tonganoxie; Heather Wombwell, Tonganoxie; Abby Patterson, Baldwin; Emma Hawley, Piper; Alexis Simpson, Piper; Alexis Miles, Piper; Samantha Trumbo, Piper; Emma Banks, Spring Hill; Veronica Farris, Spring Hill; Taylor Reynolds, Ottawa; Olivia Morton, Ottawa; Paige Hirecheta, Ottawa; Johnannah Jahn, Ottawa

GOALIE: Sara Lake, Piper; Molly Atchley, Ottawa

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## **Wildcats finish fourth at Class 4-1A state tournament**



*Members of the Louisburg girls soccer team are (front row, from left) Lexi Hampton, Missy Meigs, Liz Guzman, Kennady Wilkerson, Sierra Hahn, Macy Lemke, Olivia Barber, Emma Christy, Madi Quinn, Kassidi Lomax, Tehya Harvey; (back row) manager Weston Frank, head coach Kyle Conley, Nova Ptacek, Catie Lemke, Lola Edwards, Bronwynn Williams, Bree Gassman, Adyson Ross, Ruth Minster, Hailey Sword, Reese Johnson, Brianne Kuhlman, Sammy McDaniel, assistant coach Jordan*



## ***Roquemore and manager Reece Jones.***

WICHITA – The Louisburg girls soccer team may have left the Class 4-1A Kansas State Girls Soccer Championships with a pair of losses, but the Wildcats took a lot of pride in what they accomplished.

For the fourth straight season, Louisburg advanced to the state final four and the Wildcats finished fourth in the state – a far cry where many people thought they would end up. The Wildcats lost a pair of 2-1 matches to Mulvane and then to McPherson in the third-place match at the Stryker Sports Complex in Wichita.

Louisburg, which lost 12 seniors from a season that didn't happen due to COVID, returned just three varsity players. Despite all that, the ended up being one of the top teams in the state.

“Playing in another state tournament was everything I could have dreamed of,” Louisburg senior Olivia Barber said. “We may not have won either game, but just making it there is a great accomplishment because we were still one of the top four teams in the state.”

On Friday in the state semifinals, the Wildcats were just minutes away from playing in the state championship. Against Mulvane, freshman Lexi Hampton scored to give Louisburg a 1-0 lead early in the second half.



***Louisburg senior Madi Quinn heads the ball out during Saturday's third-place game in Wichita.***

It didn't stay that way for long.

Mulvane answered with a goal 10 minutes later to tie it, and then late in the second half, scored the go-ahead goal.

Louisburg had chances close to goal to tie it, but the Wildcats couldn't find the back of the net and were sent to the third-place match to play McPherson.

"Mulvane has two really good players and I thought we did a good job of taking away their opportunities," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "They just got a good backside ball that we weren't prepared for, then the other one was just a bad bounce and they were able to run through it and get one.

"We had a couple chances inside the six to at the very least

tie it, and maybe win the game, but we just couldn't get it to go. You know I thought we were the better team overall, but for one reason or another it just didn't work out for us."



***Louisburg freshman Lexi Hampton battles a McPherson player for the ball Saturday in Wichita.***

The Wildcats faced a McPherson team that had just come off a double-overtime loss to Bishop Miege in their semifinal game, and once again, the Wildcats struck first.

After a penalty just outside the box, Barber took the direct kick early in the match and the shot sailed over the goalie's outstretched arms to give Louisburg the 1-0 lead.



"I'd scored goals before, but I'd never felt the way I did when I scored against McPherson," Barber said. "Making that goal definitely made all of us play harder because it proved to all of us that we were in it."

"Going into the game against McPherson we were exhausted. We left it all on the field the night before and were a bit nervous because we knew how tough they were. I was so proud of us for staying in the game against McPherson and not giving up."



***Olivia Barber sends a shot over a wall of McPherson players and into the back of the net Saturday for the Wildcats' lone goal.***

McPherson started to take control of the possession midway through the first half, but junior goalie Sierra Hahn kept them scoreless with several diving saves. The Bullpups eventually broke through to tie the match right before



halftime.

Then with 15 minutes left in the second half, McPherson scored the game-winning goal to hand the Wildcats their second straight 2-1 loss.

"We all were so admired and proud of each other going to the third place game as we knew we easily could've not been in the tournament at all," senior captain Madi Quinn said. "Out of all the teams I have played with, I have never been so motivated to work hard for the girl next to me.

"I am so excited to see what these girls accomplish in the coming years in the program. I have been so honored to be a part of this program as I have gained another family."



***Louisburg goalie Sierra Hahn slides on her knees for a save against McPherson.***

Louisburg, which finished its season with a 12-8-1 record, will have several returning players back from this team. However, the fight and never quit attitude is what Conley appreciated the most.

“They just came out and battled all year long and they never quit no matter what the score was,” Conley said. “As a coach, I know that these girls gave me everything they had and they took us pretty far. They didn’t quit entire season and that is what got them to this point. I am so proud of these group of girls.”

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## Improbable run leads Louisburg girls to state final four



***The Louisburg girls soccer team was all smiles following its 3-0 victory Tuesday over Heritage Christian in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals.***

OVERLAND PARK – The Louisburg girls soccer team is defying the odds – which is saying something considering its history.

The Wildcats, which have won five regional titles in their five seasons of existence to go along with two state runner-up finishes, have possibly done something more extraordinary.



On Tuesday in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals at Heritage Christian, Louisburg left with a 3-0 victory and a spot in its fourth state final four. The way the Wildcats got there was the unexpected part.

Louisburg had to say goodbye to 12 seniors from a team that lost their season due to COVID in 2020 and were expected to vie for a state championship. In 2021, the Wildcats replaced many of those seniors with freshmen and sophomores and it was considered to be a rebuilding season.

Instead, Louisburg has a chance to win its first state championship in school history Friday and Saturday in Wichita as the Wildcats (12-6-1) will face Mulvane (15-4) at 5 p.m. Friday in the state semifinals.

"It is incredible," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "The last time we played in 2019, we lost six seniors. Then in 2020, COVID took our season and we lost 16 kids (12 seniors). This was literally like a rebuild and these kids have done nothing but step up and live up to these expectations. They are beat up to no end and they are still out there battling. We are kind of a MASH unit right now, but we live to see another day."



***Freshman Lola Edwards makes a move toward the goal Tuesday in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals.***

The Wildcats do have a few players from their last state runner-up team, including senior Olivia Barber who has advanced to the state final four in all three of her seasons. She realizes this season was a little different than most.

“Not many people can say that they’ve gone to state every year so it really makes this year even more special,” Barber said. “To be completely honest back in March I wasn’t really sure what this season was going to look like, but we’ve defied so many odds and grew so much as a team.

“I really wasn’t sure if we would make it to where we are now, but I am so proud of us for facing so much adversity and getting to this point. Our first couple weeks of practice we were looking a bit rough, but once we figured it out we didn’t look back.”

It didn't take long for the Wildcats to get on the board against Heritage Christian.

About 15 minutes into the match, Barber crossed ball into the box. The Heritage goalie dove, missed it and senior Emma Christy was there to tip it in to score the game's first goal.

It was a 1-0 game at halftime, but with 25 minutes left in the match, sophomore Adyson Ross knocked a shot from close to 25 yards away to double the Wildcats' lead.

"We wanted to attack the flanks cause their goalie plays high near post," Conley said. "If we hit it hard to the back side, we worked on just running through and hitting it and Emma did just that. We missed a couple early, but Emma got there and buried it.

"On Adyson's goal, she just hit it hard. She has a powerful left foot, and we just told the girls to hit it hard and low, and it would create problems for them and we did just that."





***Louisburg junior Reese Johnson makes a pass Tuesday against Heritage Christian.***

Barber sealed the win for the Wildcats with a goal of her own late in the match and the celebrations ensued.

Junior Reese Johnson, who had three shots on goal of her own, was also a part of that state runner-up team in 2019 and is looking forward to going back.

“It really means a lot to me to be able to go to state again,” Johnson said. “I’m very proud of us and although Louisburg soccer always seems to find their way into state, nothing is ever guaranteed, so being able to go means the world.”

Louisburg was strong on the back side as well as the Wildcat defense limited the Chargers’ opportunities. Captains Madison Quinn and Ruth Minster cleared a lot of balls away, while goalie Sierra Hahn earned the clean sheet, including a diving

save in the second half.



***The Louisburg girls soccer team celebrates its fourth straight trip to the Class 4-1A state final four following their win Tuesday at Heritage Christian.***

"I thought the back line did really well and didn't let much get through," Conley said. "Madison did a good job of going straight to the ball and sticking it hard. I thought maybe this was her best game of the year.

"Heritage has a really good, young team and they are very athletic. They are going to be good for years to come, but I thought we did a good job standing them up."

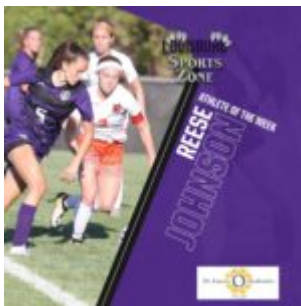
The Wildcats will try to make their third consecutive state championship match at 5 p.m. Friday when it squares off with Mulvane at Stryker Soccer Complex in Wichita. The championship and third place matches will be played Saturday.

"I'm extremely excited for this weekend and know that we can

do great things,” Barber said. “It’s gonna be tough, but if we show up and play our game we’ll be a force to be reckoned with.”

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## **Week 9 Athlete of the Week: Reese Johnson**



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week nine of the spring sports season, sponsored by Dr. Laura's Orthodontics.

### **Reese Johnson, Junior, Girls Soccer**

Louisburg junior Reese Johnson has been one of the veteran leaders for the Wildcat girls soccer team and it showed up at the right time last week. The Wildcats were tied with Eudora in double overtime of the regional championship match, but with 12 seconds left Johnson got the game-winning assist on a goal from Lexi Hampton to help the Wildcats to their fifth regional title.

On the season, Johnson has initiated a lot of the attack for Louisburg as she is second on the team with eight assists and also has nine goals on the year. Johnson and the Wildcats will compete in the Class 4-1A Final Four this weekend in Wichita.



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

**Previous winners:**

Week 1: Lexi Hampton

Week 2: Kolby Kattau

Week 3: Jaden Vohs

Week 4: Mia Wilson

Week 5: Johnny Eberhart

Week 6: Alyse Moore

Week 7: Brandon Doles

Week 8: Delaney Wright

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# Wildcats outlast Eudora for

# fifth regional title in five years



*The Louisburg girls soccer team hoists its regional championship trophy following the Wildcats' 2-1 double overtime win over Eudora on Thursday at Wildcat Stadium.*

The one thing that the Louisburg girls soccer program has known is regional championships.

In the team's previous four seasons, the Wildcats have won regional titles in all four and has never known what it is like to lose a regional championship game.

Louisburg still doesn't know, thanks to some heroics.

In a double overtime match with Eudora on Thursday at Wildcat Stadium, freshman Lexi Hampton scored the game-winning goal on an assist from Reese Johnson to give Louisburg the 2-1 win over the Cardinals.

"Winning the regional title meant so much to me and the team because we have worked so unbelievably hard to get where we are," Louisburg senior Olivia Barber said. "It just proved to us and others that hard work pays off and to never underestimate us."

The Wildcats are now onto the state quarterfinals for the fifth straight season after missing last season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the biggest difference from teams of the past is Louisburg did it with almost a brand new

roster.

Louisburg features a lineup full of freshmen and sophomores, and many thought it would be rebuilding year for the Wildcat program.



***Louisburg sophomore Adyson Ross leaps in the air to knock a ball down against Eudora.***

"We legitimately replaced 15 kids from that roster in 2019 and half of our squad is freshmen and sophomores," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Everyone said this was going to be a down year or a rebuilding year, but if 11-6-1 and a regional championship is a rebuilding year, then ok. These girls have grinded from day one till now and have improved so much. They have raised the standards for themselves. They didn't want to give up and they didn't want to stop."

Louisburg and Eudora, which split their contests earlier this



season, played to a scoreless first half. The two teams made up for it with a lot of action in the second half and in the overtimes.

Wildcat sophomore Tehya Harvey found herself in the right place at the right time early in the second half. The Eudora goalie went to dive on a ball into the box, but it squirted away and Harvey found an empty net to put Louisburg on top.

Eudora's Kate Erpelding tied the match 10 minutes later as she scored on a shot from about 25 yards out, over the head over Louisburg goalie Sierra Hahn to tie the match.

Just minutes earlier, Hahn knocked a a Cardinal shot away from the net to keep them off the board for the time being.



***Louisburg freshman Lexi Hampton races to celebrate with her teammates after she scored the game-winning goal with 12***

***seconds left in the second overtime.***

The match then went into overtime – then into double overtime. It appeared like it was headed for a third, but Hampton struck at the right time.

With 12 seconds remaining, Johnson passed the ball into the box and Hampton was there to put it away and send the Wildcats onto the state quarterfinals.

“When Reese made that incredible pass into the box and Lexi scored, I was so happy,” Louisburg senior Madi Quinn said. “I was so proud of us for not giving up and persevering even though we were all so tired. I think we played pretty well, we were aggressive with the ball and were outworking them.”

The game-winning play wasn’t anything new to the Wildcat players. It was a play that Conley has stressed to them on a daily basis.

“Reese did a great job attacking the endline, played it across and Lexi was right there to come through and hit it,” Conley said. “We have practiced that play every day in practice and it finally paid off. It was awesome and a great finish for a freshman. Couldn’t be happier for these girls.”



***Members of the regional champion Louisburg girls soccer team are (front row, from left) Catie Lemke, Reese Johnson, Emma Christy, Olivia Barber, Madi Quinn, Ruth Minster, Kennady Wilkerson, Missy Meigs, Kassidi Lomax, Nova Ptacek, Lola Edwards; (back row) head coach Kyle Conley, Sierra Hahn, Hailey Sword, Bronwynn Williams, Lexi Hampton, Tehya Harvey, Bree Gassman, Liz Guzman, Brianne Kuhlman, Adyson Ross, Sammy McDaniel, Macy Lemke and assistant coach Jordan Roquemore.***

Louisburg did have opportunities throughout the match and had 10 shots on goal. Johnson, Hampton and Harvey all had two, while Hailey Sword, Ruth Minster, Nova Ptacek and Lola Edwards each had one.

Louisburg will now try for its fourth straight trip to the Class 4-1A state final four Tuesday when the Wildcats travel to face off with No. 1 seed Heritage Christian (14-2).

The match is set to begin at 4:30 p.m. at Heritage Christian and the Wildcats are hoping to keep the momentum going.

“Heritage Christian will be a challenge for sure, but so was



Eudora,” Quinn said. “If we walk off the bus with confidence and the right attitude, the game is ours. I am excited to see what will happen, but being this far into regionals, games like this go to double overtime easy. If we play our game, we can do great things.”

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## Wildcats roll to regional title game with rout of Bishop Ward



*Louisburg freshman Hailey Sword battles a Eudora player earlier in the season. The Wildcats, who beat Bishop Ward 10-0 on Tuesday, will play Eudora for the regional championship today at Wildcat Stadium.*

Finding the back of the net and taking advantage of opportunities have been a problem at times for the young Louisburg girls soccer team.

It wasn't Tuesday.

The Wildcats hosted Bishop Ward in the Class 4A regional semifinals and Louisburg made the most of its chances in a 10-0 victory.

Louisburg will now play host to Eudora today for the regional

championship as the Wildcats look to advance to the state quarterfinals.

"We were in delay several times (due to lightning), but the girls came out and possessed the ball well and attacked," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I liked how aggressive we were and how our team moved the ball and found the open player. The girls were very unselfish and played a really nice game. They did a nice job communicating and playing simple. It was nice to see the girls play that way."

The Wildcats (10-6-1) dominated possession as they racked up 33 shots on goal and put away their fair share.

Senior Olivia Barber, along with freshmen Hailey Sword, Lola Edwards and Lexi Hampton, each finished with two goals.

Junior defender Ruth Minster got into the scoring action late with a goal off a corner kick and Catie Lemke came off the bench to score her first varsity goal of the season.

Reese Johnson was a catalyst for the Wildcat attack as she led the way with two assists. Adyson Ross, Tehya Harvey, Bree Gassman, Edwards and Barber each had an assist to their line.

The game also allowed Conley to empty his bench and everyone had the opportunity to play in the first playoff game of the year.

"It was nice to get every girl in the game and for a lot of them it was their first playoff game," Conley said. "It was fun to watch them compete and play for each other. We dominated possession and did a very nice job of executing our game plan."

It figures to be a bigger challenge for the Wildcats tonight against Eudora. Louisburg, which will host the Cardinals at 5 p.m. at Wildcat Stadium, split with Eudora during the season as each won on their home field.

With a regional championship on the line, stakes are much higher and Conley believes his team is ready for the challenge.

“This is going to be an absolute battle,” Conley said. “To me, both teams are solid and play well. I think this game is going to come down to who wants it more and who can execute. Weather could come into play and who can handle that the best will be a factor. Our girls are ready and are prepared. Eudora is a solid team and we will have to play well to beat them.”