

# 2020 Senior Spotlight: Hannah Straub



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

When the news came down that spring sports were cancelled for the 2020 season, members of the Louisburg girls soccer team were in a state of disbelief.

The Wildcats were considered to be one of the top teams in Class 4-1A again after making the state championship game in back-to-back seasons. Louisburg also had a roster of 12 seniors who had no idea they had played their final game.

However, for senior Hannah Straub, she had no idea that her final game would be played her sophomore year. Straub spent all of last season recovering from an ACL tear and she had been looking forward to this final year of soccer.

“I was extremely excited to be able to play this year, especially since I sat out last year,” Straub said. “Getting a chance to go to state again and play with my family would have been the perfect end to my senior year.”

That perfect scenario isn't a reality anymore as Straub and the rest of her teammates are left to wonder what could have been. The current reality has been difficult to take at times.

"In the beginning I was extremely upset about the cancelation of senior year and soccer, but I've been trying to make the best out of a bad situation," Straub said. "I feel like the realization that it's all actually over keeps coming in as I realize what we're missing out on. I'm in denial that it was all taken away so quickly."

Straub was a key defender on the Wildcats' first two state final four teams, and as a sophomore, helped to Louisburg to a second-place state finish. She was all set to return to that role again this year after starting all 42 games she played in her first two years.

"Hannah was a great player for us," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "She would have been a player who would have played every minute of every game if she was healthy. Hannah tore her ACL towards the end of her sophomore year, but still completed that season. Before that injury, Hannah really excelled for us."

Not being able to play in her final season has hurt her, but for Straub, she will also miss the team comradery with her fellow seniors and being able to be with her coaches.

"The soccer senior class is extremely special because we have gone to state every year that we have been on the team," Straub said. "This group is always willing to give their all and make any sacrifice needed for the good of the team. The coaches have always pushed us to be our best and work our hardest no matter the outcome. They find a positive with every experience and always support us."



**Senior Hannah Straub missed her junior season with an ACL injury, but was ready to rake the field one last time with her team.**

Soccer has been a fixture in Straub's life ever since she was in elementary school and has never given up on it. However, playing the sport almost did happen.

"I have been playing soccer since I was in second grade and I honestly signed up just because one of my friends played," she said. "I started playing competitively in fourth grade and since then it has been a major part of my life. I'm always playing year round."

Even though Straub won't get the opportunity to close out the sports she loves the right way, she still has plenty of good memories with a Louisburg program that accomplished a lot in the last three years.

"My favorite memory of LHS soccer would just be seeing the progress we made each year and how much closer we all really became," Straub said. "I think it really showed on the field."

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Hannah on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**HS:** I miss how close everyone gets during the season. Throughout the year we really do become a family and we can rely on each other for anything and I'm going miss that.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**HS:** The most memorable moment I had as an athlete for the school was being a starting player on varsity as a freshman. Making an impact on the team in such a way was a rare privilege most wouldn't get as a freshman going to any other school.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**HS:** During the school year I don't typically have any hobbies really since I'm so busy and would much rather relax. I do enjoy reading, which is a hobby I've been able to take up again with this time off.

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**HS:** After I graduate I plan to attend KU and major in accounting and pursue that career.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**HS:** My proudest accomplishment other than athletics would probably be my grades and being able to keep them up while being busy.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**HS:** A lot of people don't know that I am the hair stylist of the team and I do almost everyone's hair before every game.

## **Hannah's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Becky Sauerbrunn

**Pro team:** US Women's Soccer

**Movie:** On the Basis of Sex

**TV Show:** Brooklyn 99

**Song:** I don't have one

**Band/Musician:** Taylor Swift

**Pregame meal/snack:** Granola Bar

**Class/subject:** Accounting

**Teacher:** Mrs. Lane

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

Skylar Bowman – Soccer

Gabby Dugger – Softball

Sydni Keagle – Track

Olivia Chase – Soccer

Colin Cook – Golf

Morgan Messer – Soccer

August Daniels – Softball

Carter Anglin – Track and Field

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# 2020 Senior Spotlight: Morgan Messer



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

Morgan Messer didn't make the move to Louisburg till the fifth grade, but little did she know, she was going to be a part of something special.

Messer and her parents, along with several other families in Louisburg, banded together to help raise money to start the girls soccer program at the high school. Many of those players and their families were a part of the 12-member senior class this spring season that helped the Wildcats to three straight state final appearances and two back-to-back state runner-up finishes.

Over the past seven years, Messer still remembers the time where it all began for her in Louisburg.

"This senior class is really special," Messer said. "These are some of the girls that started up the program and made everything happen. I am truly grateful to have been one of those families that started it all. I moved here in the fifth grade and I was still playing soccer up in Overland Park. One

evening my sister had a practice at Broadmoor, and as I was walking in with my mom and sister, I had some of my friends playing soccer against a brick wall. I asked if I could join them and so I did. I quit my club team up in the city and joined what was called the Miami County Legends.

"This senior class has been together for so long and we have played ever since we were little and I think it is amazing that none of us have ever stopped loving the game. We have stuck with each other through thick and thin."

That has included dealing with a canceled spring season that was supposed to bring many more memories to a senior class that has helped the program reach new heights in just a short amount of time.

Louisburg was considered one of the favorites to reach the state final four once again and were poised to try for its first state championship.

"I was really looking forward to this season," Messer said. "It is the season with so many lasts and it just amazes me still that we are not having it. I have been waiting for this year for so long and we had a really good team this year and the chemistry on the team, I think personally, was already outstanding. I really believed this year was the year we would go back to that state championship game and potentially beat Miego."

It is the lack of closure that hurts Messer and the rest of the Wildcat team. Along with their lost season, the Louisburg seniors also lost the rest of their final year of high school and everything that goes along with it.

"I have been really upset, frustrated, and confused," she said. "Senior year is like no other time of your life. You have your prank day, skip day, prom, graduation, last sports season, or even just hanging out in the halls. I never would have thought that any of this would get cancelled. I thought I



would be going to FBLA state a week or so after getting back from spring break, but that got cancelled. I never would have thought Friday, March 13 was my last day with my full team and playing with them. I never would have thought March 12 was my last day in the hall or in the classroom with my teachers and classmates.

"I truly wish it did not have to end like this at all because this is some of the the worst pain anybody could go through in my opinion, especially if you have a spring sport and love that sport dearly. I wish it did not have to end so abruptly, but it does and we cannot change that. Yes, I have been quite upset and have many other emotions, but we have to find ourselves and come to a realization that our administration and staff members will do the best they can to make any of this up to us that we have lost and they are greatly appreciated during these times."



**Senior Morgan Messer finished her Wildcat career with nine goals and five assists.**

Messer was a forward on the Wildcat team a year ago and was set to play the same position this season as she has played a vital role on the Louisburg team the last couple of years. In her career, Messer played in 53 games and finished up with nine goals and five assists.

“Morgan was always a happy go lucky kid,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “She is a young lady who played in a variety of positions for us. Last year, we finally decided she would play forward for us. She had to learn the position, but did just that. She always had an open mind about playing a new position.”

Soccer has played a big role in Messer’s life as she has competed in it since she was 5-years-old and is now preparing for a life of collegiate soccer at Highland Community College.

The sport has given her things that are irreplaceable.

“Soccer has always been my sport since I was little,” Messer said. “I fell in love when I was younger and the love for it has grown and grown. I honestly do not even know how or why I fell in love with the game. I told my parents I wanted to try a bunch of different sports out and when I played soccer it just stuck with me until now, 13 years later. I would say it is a big part of my life and I obviously did not want to stop playing, because I am now going to be playing in college.”

Even as she prepares for life in college, Messer can’t help but look back at the all memories she had with the Wildcat program.

“Well I have a lot of great memories, but the LHS girls soccer team is truly one of the best environments that you probably could ever be placed in,” she said. “My favorite moment for me personally was when I was a freshman on the team and we were on the road headed towards a team in the KCMO area and Conley put me in. I was so nervous, but I received a through ball and I had dribbled all the way to the endline in line with the goal and I went to go shoot it and I scored. At that moment, I was so happy it was my first ever varsity goal.”

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Morgan on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**MM:** I have been missing soccer the most. I have been so hyped up about this season for so long and just getting that taken is heartbreaking.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**MM:** Honestly, I cannot choose a favorite at all because the amount of stuff I have done as a student is so much and everything was just amazing.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**MM:** Probably FBLA. I have worked really close with Mrs. Lane this past year and being in FBLA is an amazing opportunity to have not only for the great people involved but for really preparing ourselves for what is yet to come in the future for us in the real world. It is an amazing thing to have to practice new things and even conquer some fears you may have had before such as public speaking or presenting.

**LSZ:** I know you are going to Highland next year, but how have you been trying to stay in shape for soccer during a time like this and how tough is it to be able to work on soccer skills during this time?

**MM:** So, it actually has not been too hard for me personally. I work out once a day, every day whether that be in my house or outside in my yard. It really is not as tough as I thought it would be to work on soccer skills during this time of quarantine.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**MM:** Some big accomplishments I have received are being a photo editor of the yearbook my junior year and the commander in chief this year. I also was the reporter for FBLA as well as the conference coordinator.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**MM:** That I was born in Indiana.

## **Morgan's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Mia Hamm

**Pro team:** Kansas City Chiefs

**College team:** K-State

**Movie:** A Star is Born

**TV Show:** The Flash

**Song:** Damn Good Goodbye – Mike Ryan

**Band/Musician:** Kenny Chesney

**Pregame meal/snack:** Bang (energy drink)

**Class/subject:** History

**Teacher and why:** Mrs. Lane because she has helped me so much with everything and I can always count on her to be there when I need her.

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

Skylar Bowman – Soccer

Gabby Dugger – Softball

Sydni Keagle – Track

Olivia Chase – Soccer

Colin Cook – Golf

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Olivia Chase



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an*

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Olivia Chase had never really given soccer a second thought.

Chase, who hadn't played soccer before high school, was approached by LHS assistant coach Michael Pickman during summer weights. He asked her to give the sport a try and thought she would make a good addition to the team.

More than two years later, Chase has a second place state medal to show for it and many memories that she will take with her for the rest of her life.

"I am very grateful that he pushed me to do so, because soccer was a huge part of my high school career," Chase said. "I gained self-confidence by trying something completely new and working to get better at the game."

Chase, who played mainly junior varsity last season, got the opportunity to suit up on the varsity squad for their state tournament run a season ago and saw some playing time in the state quarterfinals and state championship game.

"Olivia was very new to soccer," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "She is an incredibly smart young lady who always had a fantastic attitude and worked as hard as she could each and every day. Olivia was working hard to learn the game as much as she could to be prepared."

The senior midfielder/defender was looking forward to her final season with the Wildcats and had every intention of helping Louisburg to reach its ultimate goal – a state championship.

"Soccer season was something I had been looking forward to since the start of senior year," Chase said. "I was really excited for all the fun times and memories to be made with such a great group of people. It was going to be especially

memorable to be seniors with 11 other girls, as we have formed a strong bond over the years and work great together on the field. Our ultimate goal was to go to state again, and I truly believe we would have made it happen."

Chase was a part of a big senior class, many of whom played big roles in the Wildcats' three straight final four appearances and back-to-back state runner-up finishes. It was a group of teammates that helped her along in a game she hardly knew.

"The senior class in the girls' soccer program is very special," Chase said. "I started playing my sophomore year, and had never played soccer before. One thing I can say is that the girls in my class always helped me out and taught me so much about the game when I was new to it all. The group of seniors on the team really looked out for each other on and off the field."

That closeness became even more important more than a month ago when Chase and her teammates found out their season was cancelled due to the spread of COVID-19. They were able to help each other deal with a big loss to what was supposed to be a special season.

"Dealing with the cancellation of senior year has been difficult," Chase said. "It has definitely been emotional, but the team has been able to pick each other up. We had just gotten started with our soccer season and I could tell it would have been one of the best yet. It is disappointing to have such meaningful times be taken away but I know that our health and safety is the most important."





**Olivia Chase was one of 12 Louisburg seniors this year and was a three-year member of the Wildcat program.**

Although she is left to wonder what this season could have been, Chase is thankful for her time with Wildcat program.

“There have been so many great moments and memories playing on the LHS soccer team, but one of my favorites was when we went to state during my junior year,” she said. “We worked so hard to be at state, and even though we got second we were still proud of ourselves and our program.”

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Olivia on how she has been coping with an early

end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**OC:** I miss my friends and going to soccer practices the most during this time away from everyone. I even miss running sprints (haha). I miss game days and team dinners and being able to laugh and make jokes with everyone.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**OC:** My most memorable moment as an athlete was getting a medal at state because that was the first time I experienced something like that.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**OC:** My favorite activity/hobby outside of sports is spending time with friends and family because it helps me relax and have fun

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**OC:** After graduation, I will be attending Pittsburg State University and intend on majoring in the Nursing program.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**OC:** An accomplishment outside of sports that I am proud of is my grades. It might sound simple but I have put a lot of effort into my grades and it has paid off in the end!

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**OC:** Something that people may not know about me is that I love

dogs and I want to have a golden doodle when I am older.

## **Olivia's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Alex Morgan

**Pro team:** Kansas City Chiefs

**College team:** Pitt State

**Movie:** The Help

**TV Show:** Friday Night Lights

**Song:** Independent Woman by Destiny's Child

**Band/Musician:** Luke Combs

**Pregame meal/snack:** Sliced apple with peanut butter

**Class/subject:** Biology or Psychology

**Teacher and why:** Mrs. Quinn, because I learned the most in her class and she works hard.

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

Skylar Bowman – Soccer

Gabby Dugger – Softball

Sydni Keagle – Track

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Skylar Bowman



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

Since joining the Louisburg girls soccer program, all Skylar

Bowman has come to know is winning.

Of course, the same could be said for the 11 other seniors in the Wildcat program as that class has been a part of three consecutive final four appearances and two Class 4-1A state runner-up finishes.

"I was really looking forward to getting a chance to get to state four years in a row," Bowman said. "I had been to state all my other years of high school, so it would have been really cool to get there all four years. I would love to get the chance to play one last time with a team that really had it all."

Louisburg was considered one of the favorites to get back to the championship game this spring as the Wildcats returned 12 seniors and some key underclassmen from last season's second place squad.

That is what made the news in March all that more difficult to take.

Spring sports across the country were canceled due to COVID-19 – and just like that – Bowman's soccer career came to a close before her last season could really get started.

"I'm just trying to find a positive in everyday life," Bowman said. "It has been super hard, but I have come to the realization that there is nothing we can do about it now and what has happened has happened. Knowing that I will never step on the field again with the team that I love was heartbreaking."

Bowman has played a big role for the Wildcats on the defensive side of the ball and has started in 20 games for the Wildcats. Even before she became a starter, she was also vital player off the bench as she played in 58 games. She finished her career with two goals and two assists.

"Sky was a solid defender and defensive midfielder," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "She did a really good job of anticipating the play and shutting the opponent down. She did a very nice job of keeping the play in front of her and became very dependable in the back for us."

Soccer has been a large part of Bowman's life – ever since she can remember. Now, she is preparing for a life away from the game she loves.

"I have been playing soccer since I was 4," Bowman said. "My mom just signed me up because we had just moved to Kansas and we didn't know many people. I started playing on Louisburg rec teams and then went competitive when I was 7. It has always been a big part of my life because I have played it for so long."

Preparing for life without soccer also means preparing for life away from her teammates, which for Bowman, has been difficult. Still, she will remember her time with the Wildcat program with fond memories.





**Senior Skylar Bowman is a returning starter from last season's state runner-up team.**

"The soccer senior class is really special because we went to state every year that we had played," Bowman said. "We got a taste of what it was like to go to state and be in the final two. We all wanted the same thing, and it made us closer as a team. The coaches are amazing. They push each and every one of us because they know what we can do. They always believe in us and never doubt us.

"I don't think I have one favorite memory about high school soccer. My favorite times are just seeing how far we had come from the beginning of the season to the end and to see how

hard everyone has worked as a team to get where we were.”

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Skylar on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**SB:** The thing that I have missed most about being away from everyone is just having a team full of people who really care. We all always had something to laugh about and it was nice getting away from the stress of school and other things going on to just practice with a team who was really driven.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**SB:** My most memorable moment as an athlete was getting to go to state as a freshman. Most athletes in other schools don't get that chance but I did.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**SB:** My favorite activity outside of school is probably anything outdoors. I also really enjoy art. I just find it super relaxing and to get my mind off of other things that are going on

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**SB:** My plans after high school are to go to Johnson County Community College and become an EMT.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**SB:** One thing that I am proud of is helping others around me



and doing what I can to help the people in the community through volunteer work.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**SB:** One thing that a lot of people might not know about me is that I really enjoy art. I enjoy creating art or just seeing what other people have done with their imagination.

## **Skylar's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Tobin Heath

**Pro team:** US Women's Soccer

**College team:** Kansas State

**Movie:** Armageddon

**TV Show:** Grey's Anatomy

**Song:** I don't have one favorite

**Band/Musician:** For King and Country

**Pregame meal/snack:** Granola bar or orange

**Class/subject:** History

**Teacher and why:** My favorite teacher is probably Conley. He just makes learning easy and fun.

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field

Erin Lemke – Soccer

Luke Wickersham – Golf

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Erin Lemke



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Going into the spring of her freshman season, Erin Lemke had every intention of going out for track and really didn't think about anything else.

Then it was brought to her attention that maybe she should give soccer a try.

"I played a couple of seasons when I was little, but nothing competitive," Lemke said. "I was planning on running track my freshman year, but was convinced otherwise. Soccer quickly became my favorite sport."

By the time her freshman year was over, it didn't take long for Lemke to realize she made the right decision.

During the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal game against Piper in 2017, Lemke scored the game-winning goal in overtime to put the Wildcats in the state final four for the first time in school history. It was also just the second year of the program's existence.

That goal catapulted the Louisburg girls soccer program to three state final four appearances, including back-to-back state runner-up performances in 2018 and 2019. It was a magical moment for everyone involved.

"Erin has an incredible work ethic and drive," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "She became such an impact player for us in such a brief time. She always put the team first and was a great leader for us. Erin always gave everything she had.

"Scoring that goal was incredible her freshman year. Mack (Mackenzie Scholtz) took the ball down the right side and crossed it in to Erin, and she wanted it more than her defender as she buried it in the left corner of the net to send us to our first ever state final four."

For Lemke, it led to something special as the Wildcat midfielder/forward was named a team captain in 2019 and then again for this coming season. She was a second team All-Frontier League player in 2019 and was a first team all-state selection by the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association.

Even with all the state success and the game winning goal, it was the team moments that Erin Lemke will remember most – especially an emotional victory over Spring Hill last season on Senior Night.

“My favorite memory playing for LHS soccer was the second time we played Spring Hill last season,” Lemke said. “We had lost to them earlier in the season and it was our revenge game. It was close to going into overtime and we played so well together and it was a really fun game.”

Lemke was also looking forward to a Senior Night of her own as she was one of a 12-member senior class for the Wildcats and it was all set to be a special season. Louisburg was considered one of the best teams in Class 4-1A once again this year and the senior class had played vital roles in the team’s past successes.

It was supposed to be a perfect sendoff for Lemke and her senior teammates. Instead, they are all left wondering what could have been with the cancellation of spring sports due to the spread of COVID-19.

“When I found out it was cancelled, I just immediately started crying,” Lemke said. “I was so disappointed we couldn’t see our work pay off. The team started texting each other and the girls were thanking all of us seniors, so it made it better. Not knowing what this team could have accomplished is definitely the hardest part. I am staying positive about the situation because I know that we don’t have it the worst.

“I was looking forward to this season more than any other because it was like these past three years of taking fourth

and then second twice, were building to us winning the state championship this season. We have so many seniors and experience, and we are all really good friends, so as soon as my volleyball season ended I was looking forward to my soccer season."



**Louisburg senior Erin Lemke was a two-time captain for the Wildcats and was one of 12 seniors returning this year.**

Lemke experienced a lot of success in her high school career, including on the volleyball court. She was a member of the state runner-up team in 2018 and then helped Louisburg to a fourth-place finish in 2019.

Still, she was looking forward to taking that next step on the soccer field with the rest of her senior class. Through the first couple weeks of practice, everything was headed in the right direction.

“From the very first practice, it was like we had not missed a beat, and we were all working so well together,” Lemke said. “We all felt like it was our year. We had so much experience and Conley and (Michael) Pickman felt it was gonna be our year too. They had watched us lose in the championship twice and they wanted it just as much, if not more than us.”

Lemke had a very productive career for the Wildcats as she started 48 of her 59 games and earned all-league and all-state honors as a sophomore and a junior.

She finished her career with 29 goals and 27 assists and Lemke has the second-best assist mark for a season in program history with 17 and is third in career assists. She also added seven game-winning goals.

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Erin on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**EL:** I am missing our team dinners and home games the most because that is what I look forward to most in the spring.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**EL:** My favorite memory as an athlete would have to be our win against Bishop Miege at Sub-State for volleyball. I love playing revenge games and losing to them the year before in the State Championship motivated our whole team. It was the

most fun I had had playing volleyball.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**EL:** I don't really have a hobby outside of sports, besides hanging out with my friends.

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**EL:** I plan on attending the University of Central Missouri, but I am undecided on my major.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**EL:** Outside of athletics, I am most proud of my involvement in student council. I served as Vice President of Student Council this year, I assisted the President in planning homecomings, fundraisers and led meetings. It was so fun to make the homecoming videos and lead the pep rallies. It created most of my favorite memories from senior year.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**EL:** That I like to paint and practice calligraphy.

## **Erin's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** I really don't have one

**Pro team:** Chiefs? I don't watch pro sports to be honest.

**College team:** I don't have a specific one, but I like watching college volleyball

**Movie:** Little Women

**TV Show:** Parks and Rec

**Song:** Bluebird by Miranda Lambert

**Band/Musician:** Kenny Chesney

**Pregame meal/snack:** Protein balls

**Class/subject:** English

**Teacher and why:** My favorite teacher is Conley. He's taught me for 2 years and coached me for 3, so we have developed a close relationship. He's a good mentor and coach. We usually have something, as he would say, "snarky", to say to each other.

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

Lauren Cutshaw – Softball

Trent Martin – Track and Field



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# Pickman named as new LHS activities director



Michael Pickman (left) was hired as Louisburg High School's new activities director and assistant principal last week following the USD Board of Education meeting. Current Louisburg AD, Scott Hinkle (right), will move to the middle school to serve in the same capacity starting next school year.

Louisburg High School will have a little different look to its activities department for the 2020-21 school year.

Following the USD 416 Board of Education meeting on April 13, Michael Pickman was hired to serve as the school's new assistant principal and activities director. Pickman will replace Scott Hinkle, who has been in that position for the last two years.

Hinkle will remain in the district and will move over to the middle school to serve in the same capacity.

"I had known for a while that I wanted to continue my education by getting a second master's degree, but I didn't really know which area," Pickman said. "I talked with current administration and was both inspired and encouraged to explore administrative leadership. This is the job I wanted because it meant staying in Louisburg and continuing to work with the

staff and coaches who I know have, can and will achieve great things when it comes to our students and student athletes.

“We are a Louisburg family and I want my daughter in the Louisburg community and school system, so I wouldn’t have done this anywhere else. The atmosphere from district leadership to the building leadership is top notch and I am ready to grow as an educator and work alongside (principal) Jeremy (Holloway) and the administrative staff at the high school and the amazing coaches and support them.”

Pickman has taught English at the high school for the last seven years and has also worked in the Prairie View, West Franklin and Maur Hill Prep school districts.

He has also spent a lot of time in the athletic arena as he has served as the Wildcat boys and girls soccer assistant coach, alongside head coach Kyle Conley, for the last five-plus years.

“It will be tough to give up all aspects of it, but the magic of these soccer programs will be especially difficult,” Pickman said. “Kyle has been an amazing person to coach with and his passion is contagious. Getting to start the girls program with him and the immediate success has been amazing. State finals and big wins and the atmosphere – some don’t ever get to experience that – and lastly the players, both boys and girls who have graduated and those who remain to carry on the greatness are why I said yes to coaching. They make the whole experience amazing and fun.

“So it will be hard, but I would also not have gone anywhere else to do a different job and so I will still be able to support the soccer players and every other student and athlete through my new opportunity and to do so the Wildcat Way.”

As for Hinkle, he spent the last two years as the LHS activities director after coming from Liberal High School. He is excited that his new position at the middle school will

allow him to spend more time with family.

“I really enjoyed my time at the high school, even though it was only two years,” Hinkle said. “I am leaving behind a great workplace with a great culture and an unbelievable staff. It was not an easy decision.

“I made the move to the middle school to get back some evenings and weekends. I have been an athletic director for 11 years at the high school level in my career, and I was ready to free up some time. I know I am joining another great staff at LMS, and look forward to the new challenge ahead of me.”

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Andie Masten



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

The sport of soccer and Andie Masten never really crossed paths – that is until late in her junior year.

Louisburg head coach Kyle Conley asked her if she would be a team manager and she agreed. Then as the season got closer, plans started to change.

"The first day of tryouts, he convinced me to just give it a shot," Masten said. "I borrowed some cleats and showed up the next day. It wasn't a part of my life at all, until Conley pushed me to tryout. He has a way of convincing people."

To this day, she doesn't regret the decision.

Masten played on junior varsity, but was a part of the Wildcat team that finished as the state runner-up last year at the Class 4-1A tournament in Topeka. It was a great experience for her to be a part of something special – but her favorite memory came a lot earlier in the season.

"It is definitely the first time I've ever scored a goal in a soccer game," Masten said. "It was last year, in a JV game at Tonganoxie. The coaches told me to pull forward and go play up top. All of my teammates and coaches were cheering me on and it was just the greatest experience when I FINALLY kicked it in. Hearing all of them cheering and hollering was the best."

Masten played in three varsity contests in 2019, including the regional and state championship games and was more than ready for her final season.

"Andie is a fantastic young lady who started out wanting to be a manager, but we convinced to actually play," Conley said. "She started soccer her junior year and she worked as hard as she could to improve. She had a great attitude and always kept practice fun with her personality."

She was a part of a 12-member senior class that had played together for several years and were a big part of the Wildcats' three-straight state final four appearances. This year the Wildcats were ready for something special.

"I was very optimistic in what this season was going to hold for us," Masten said. "This year's team was something extremely special and I was looking forward to see how this season was going to pan out. Making it to state was always a

goal and eventually a priority for us, and I was really eager to see how far we'd make it."

Unfortunately, a harsh reality set in for the Wildcats, and teams across the state, as spring sports were canceled due to the spread of COVID-19. The opportunity of winning the program's first state title was no more.

It was a crushing blow – not only to Masten – but to the rest of her team.

"I was extremely upset," Masten said. "It was my only sport and I was looking forward to making great memories with the other girls and win some games. But if I'm being honest, my heart really goes out to the girls who have been preparing for this season, and soccer is their whole world. For some, it was their last season of soccer. Each day, it gets easier and we still have been reaching out to comfort one another."



**Louisburg senior Andie Masten received her state runner-up medal from coach Kyle Conley following the state championship game last May.**

Even though Masten only got to play one official season of soccer, it was a time she will never forget and is thankful the Wildcat coaching staff gave her the opportunity to be a part of it.

“I’m not sure I can even put into words how special the soccer program is, none-the-less how fantastic the group of senior girls are along with my coaches,” she said. “When I decided to play last year, these girls were so welcoming and encouraging. I truly had no idea what I was doing, and still am unsure of

how to actually play soccer. They were always patient and pushed me to be my best, as did the coaches, who are some of my all-time favorite people. I've never had a group of people truly believe in me like they have."

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Andie on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**AM:** It sounds so goofy, but truthfully I have been missing the silly things like water breaks with the team, and walking to and from practice. I miss talking to each and every one of the girls, making them laugh and working hard. It could've been the last time I will ever get to talk to and play with some of the girls.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**AM:** My most memorable moment as an athlete is definitely going to state for my first time, last year, and taking second. While the loss was disappointing and upsetting, it was one of the coolest experiences I have ever had.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**AM:** It is very boring but I love to read. Quarantine has put me in the position where I have lots of free time and I've been flying through books!

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**AM:** After graduation, I plan on attending Pitt State and hopefully pursue a degree in Occupational Therapy.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**AM:** I guess I would have to say that an accomplishment of mine would be my grades, as of right now. I try my best to take school seriously and work hard to maintain pretty good grades.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**AM:** I guess something a lot of people don't know about me is that I'm ambidextrous. I write with my left hand but switch it up on other things or tasks.

## **Andie's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Patrick Mahomes

**Pro team:** Texas Rangers

**College team:** Pitt State

**Movie:** Step Brothers

**TV Show:** The Office

**Song:** Butterflies by Kacey Musgraves

**Band/Musician:** Khalid

**Pregame meal/snack:** Rice Krispie treats before every game!

**Class/subject:** Spanish

**Teacher and why:** Definitely Mr. Hinkle (assistant principal), although he isn't technically a teacher. I was his T.A. this past year and he and I just built a great relationship!

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf



Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Avery O'Meara



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

Avery O'Meara has had more than her fair share of special

memories when it comes to the Louisburg girls soccer team.

O'Meara has started for the Wildcats since her freshman season and has been a part of three Class 4-1A final four appearances and two state runner-up finishes. It has been a ride full of amazing moments.

"Honestly, I don't think I can pinpoint a single memory that was the best because they are all amazing," O'Meara said. "The whole experience has just been amazing."

The Louisburg senior is coming off a strong junior campaign herself as she was named to the Class 4-1A all-state second team as a midfielder. She was hoping to use the momentum of that second place state finish to possibly go even further this season.

"I was really looking forward to this season because this season was supposed to be special, and not just because we are seniors," O'Meara said. "We all worked so hard in the off-season and during conditioning to get better – underclassmen included – and this was the year that I truly believe we could've been a powerhouse of a team. I believe with all my heart that we would've made it to the state final four again and that we may very well have won."

O'Meara was one of 12 Wildcat seniors that won't get that final opportunity to reach the state's highest prize as the spread of COVID-19 shut spring sports down across the state, along with the closure of schools.

The news was a shock to O'Meara and the rest of her teammates. It prevented one final run at a state title, but more importantly, a chance to play with a team and coaching staff that have played vital roles in her life the last several years.

"The senior class in general is so special," she said. "I feel like we are all family, we all get along and support each

other. The soccer senior girls are on a whole other level though. The majority of us actually grew up playing on the same team. We didn't always get along, but we always supported each other no matter what. We got to know each other better than anyone else, and we could say one word or give one look and know the exact meaning behind it. Sure, some of us didn't grow up playing soccer, but we were all sisters as soon as we hit the field. We were truly a family.

"As for the coaches, they are the best coaches a girl could ask for. They have really made me into the player and person I am today. They have some kind of superhero power that allows them to see what you can be and give you the confidence and direction needed to get you there."

Head coach Kyle Conley appreciated what O'Meara gave to the team, especially with her presence as a holding midfielder. She was reliable player in critical moments for the Wildcats.

"Avery was one of the hardest working kids on the field each and every time we played," Conley said. "She worked her butt off and never backed down or said she was tired. She never complained and always gave everything she had. Avery would have been a four-year starter for us and she played extremely hard each and every game."



**Louisburg senior Avery O'Meara was slated to be a four-year starter for the Wildcats in 2020.**

With the cancellation, O'Meara will now put a sport behind her that she has competed in since she was little and will focus on her future. However, it was soccer that has helped her get to where she is today.

"I have been playing soccer since I was old enough to play on the Louisburg rec team," O'Meara said. "My step dad played soccer most of his life and got my older sister to play, so I decided to follow suit. Soccer has been a huge part of my life. It has been my outlet my whole life. Practice was always the one place where I could just be me without feeling

judged.”

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Avery on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**A0:** The laughter. Both during school and soccer there was always someone who would make everyone laugh or, at least, lighten the mood. It made everything seem fun, and work felt a little less like work.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

**A0:** This would definitely be the first time I was a varsity starter my freshman year. It was the second game of the season and I had finished the junior varsity game to go right in to warmups. During pre-game huddle with Conley he apparently told me to start, but I was not paying one lick of attention. It wasn't until the national anthem that anyone realized I was not on the field with the rest of the starters so I had to run out to the middle of the field with everyone watching. According to the entire team during pre-game huddle, Conley had told me I was starting multiple times and every time I nodded my head to say that I had heard him but I don't remember any of it.

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**A0:** I really enjoy hiking. It gives me an escape from reality, fresh air, and likely a good view.

**LSZ:** What are your plans for after graduation?

**A0:** I will be attending Colorado State University with the

intent to earn a Bachelors in Equine Science.

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**A0:** I am proud of my academic standings. My GPA, grades and ACT got me accepted into my dream college.

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**A0:** That I absolutely hate running. As a soccer player, that sounds very counter intuitive.

## **Avery's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Beezie Madden

**Pro team:** USA Equestrian Team

**College team:** Colorado State Rams

**Movie:** The Sandlot or The Little Rascals

**TV Show:** Outlander

**Song:** I Hope by Gabby Barrett

**Band/Musician:** Luke Bryan

**Pregame meal/snack:** Pop Tarts

**Class/subject:** Either Math or Science

**Teacher and why:** All of them. They are all so supportive and fun.

## **Previous Senior Spotlights**

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Girls Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

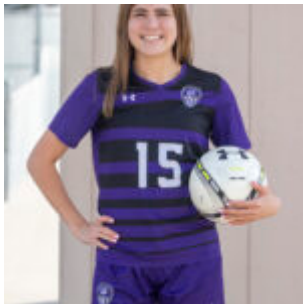
Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

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## 2020 Senior Spotlight: Trinity Moore



*Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an efforts to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.*

Trinity Moore was already having a senior year to remember.

Moore cemented herself as the most decorated cross country runner in Louisburg High School school history last fall when she finished third at the Class 4A state meet and broke her own school record in the process.

She ended her career with four state medals and later signed to run cross country and track for Pittsburg State University. Everything was falling into place.

Moore, along with the rest of the Louisburg girls soccer team, was preparing for another run at a state title after finishing the last two seasons as the Class 4-1A state runner-up. It was set up to be a season to remember and a perfect conclusion to her high school career.

"I was very much looking forward to this soccer season," Moore said. "I'd been looking forward to it the entire school year and have been very hopeful for what it would've brought. To think we could've made it to the state championship for the third year in a row seemed so unreal, yet so achievable for our team."

Then came the middle of March when Moore, and the rest of the Wildcats, were burdened with the news that spring sports across the state of Kansas were canceled due to the spread of COVID-19.

It was heartbreaking news for all of them, but especially for Moore and the other 11 seniors on the Wildcat team. Louisburg was supposed to take the pitch on March 17 for its season opener against Harmon, but instead, they are all forced to wonder what could have been.

"The cancellation of my senior soccer season and the other events I won't get to have this year has been extremely difficult," Moore said. "The first few days were the worst and I found myself crying multiple times because it felt so unreal. I got a little better after talking with teammates and friends.

"Then came the day that was supposed to be our first game. That made my heart sink, but I knew that I just needed to keep my head high. It is very heartbreaking that I won't get to experience this season and many other things to end up my



senior year at LHS.”

Even though her athletic career will continue in a different sport, soccer has always been a big part of Moore’s life and the fact it has been taken away prematurely has been tough to handle at times. Still, she is grateful for the role soccer has played in her life.

“I have been playing soccer since I was 4-years-old,” Moore said. “My parents both played in soccer in college and they put me into the sport as early as possible. Soccer is one of the most important aspects of my life. It has turned me into a determined, hardworking and strong athlete I am today. It has shown me how much hard work goes into something you love and want to exceed at.”

Louisburg soccer has provided Moore with plenty of memories to look back on as well. Maybe none more than last year’s run to the state championship game after an exciting semifinal win against Topeka-Hayden that ended in penalty kicks.

“My favorite memory in all of high school soccer would probably be last season when we went into penalty kick’s to make it to the championship game,” Moore said. “I had to make my PK because we were tied and I had to score to get us to another round, and then Hallie Hutsell started the second round of the PK’s and scored the goal we needed to advance to the championship game. When this happened we all ran together and it was an amazing experience and created such an awesome memory.”



**Senior Trinity Moore finished her Louisburg soccer career with 18 goals and eight assists over four years.**

Moore played several different positions for the Wildcats over the years and was voted as a team captain for the upcoming season. She also earned first team All-Frontier League and all-state honors in 2019.

She started 43 games for the Wildcats and concluded her career with 18 goals and eight assists. She is fifth in school history with 44 points.

“Trinity was a fierce competitor and played all out each and every game and practice,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “She never took a day off and was a player who would play anywhere to help the team. She has played multiple positions at the varsity level and excelled at all of them.”

Other than soccer, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to

catch up with Trinity on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

**LSZ:** What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

**TM:** I have really been missing soccer practice and getting to spend three hours every day with the best teammates and family. Practice is such a great part of my day that makes me happy and spend with other people doing what we love. I love to train and get better at the sport so it has been hard to not have it every day.

**LSZ:** What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school and why?

**TM:** My most memorable moment in high school as an athlete is being able to go to state multiple times with such great teams. In my time on the cross country and soccer teams I have got to create such amazing memories and experiences and accomplish going to state multiple times with them!

**LSZ:** What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

**TM:** My favorite hobby outside of school is probably cooking. I love to make homemade meals and spend time with my family in the kitchen. I'm very passionate about it and I can use my creative and fun side when I cook. It is another way besides working out that I can relieve stress, have fun, and do something for the people I love!

**LSZ:** I know you are going to Pitt to run next year, but how have you been trying to stay in shape during a time like this?

**TM:** To stay in shape during this time I have been following a very routine running/training program as well as many home workouts. It's time for me to start preparing to run at Pitt

next year, so I've been doing various long runs, workouts, and even taking my dog with me when I exercise every day to make sure I stay healthy, get outside, keep in shape and have fun!

**LSZ:** What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

**TM:** The accomplishments I am most proud of outside of athletics are probably my service work and success in school. I love to serve others in this, as well as other communities on mission trips or doing community service. I am also very proud of how hard I work in the classroom to get honors such as a 4.0 GPA every year and things like honor roll. These require the same passion, determination and drive as sports, so I am very proud of them!

**LSZ:** What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

**TM:** Something a lot of people might not know about me is I love to clean all the time. People know I am very organized at school and with all my work, but when I get home I spend hours cleaning. Even though my house and my room are very clean I like to organize and clean things because it's how I relieve stress. It's a very weird thing about me but I can stay up until 2 a.m. and not realize it because I love to be so organized!

## **Trinity's Favorites**

**Pro athlete:** Carli Lloyd

**Pro team:** USA Women's Soccer

**College team:** Pitt State, of course!

**Movie:** 16 Candles

**TV Show:** Grey's Anatomy

**Band/Musician:** I love and listen to all different types of music such as rock, rap, pop, and country.

**Pregame meal/snack:** Any type of pasta the night before and homemade protein balls the day of.

**Class/subject:** AP Biology- it is a high level college class that pushes me to work and think more complex and prepare me for college. I am going into the science field so it is a very interesting class that I enjoy going to.

**Teacher and why:** I have so many to choose from because I have learned a bunch from them and they have rubbed off so much good in my life, but I am forever a Quinncredible!

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## Players, coaches mourn loss of spring sports season



Louisburg softball, along with the rest of the Wildcat spring sports teams, saw their season come to a close with the spread of COVID-19.

It has been almost a week since Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly closed all schools for the rest of the 2019-20 school year due to the spread of COVID-19.

When most students hear school has

been closed, especially in the winter, cheers erupt. In this case, however, the tone was much more somber – especially among the senior class.

Proms were canceled. Any plans they had for a graduation ceremony were put on hold, and for more than 30 seniors, their last opportunity at playing a sport at Louisburg High School was taken away.

In fact, close to 200 students were planning on participating in an activity in the spring, but with no school, the Kansas State High School Activities Association followed suit and canceled the spring season the day after Gov. Kelly's declaration.

Students, parents and coaches alike have had to come to grips that a season they had been looking forward to all year, was never going to happen. Tears flowed, walls were punched in frustration and some were left speechless.

There would be no game days, no Senior Nights and no postseason runs. Athletes had to figure out how to cope with this fact – and in many cases – are still trying to do so.

## **GIRLS SOCCER**

Mackenzie Scholtz didn't spend as much of her Spring Break relaxing with family and friends as she wanted.

Instead, she found herself focused on social media, constantly checking updates on what was going to happen with the rest of her senior year. She was scared that her final soccer season was going to be taken away from her.

Turns  
out, those fears became a reality.

“When  
I read it for the first time, I just couldn’t believe it,”  
Scholtz said. “I  
immediately broke down in tears. I think I cried for about  
four hours non-stop  
just thinking that I would never get to step on that field  
with my best friends  
ever again. I had such high hopes for this season too and had  
been so excited  
all year.”

Before  
this all came about, none of the 12 Louisburg seniors had any  
idea they had  
already played their last match as a Wildcat.

The  
senior class of Scholtz, Avery O’Meara, Erin Lemke, Lily  
McDaniel, Ashley  
Moore, Trinity Moore, Skylar Bowman, Haley Cain, Hannah  
Straub, Olivia Chase,  
Andie Masten and Morgan Messer provided Wildcat coach Kyle  
Conley with a lot of  
good memories, which left the news even harder to stomach.

Louisburg  
was looking for its fourth consecutive state final four  
appearance after  
earning second place finishes the last two seasons.

“The decision absolutely broke my heart,”  
Conley said. “I couldn’t in a million years fathom something  
like this could  
happen. I honestly felt the cancellation was harsh this early,  
but would have

rather like to have seen a postponement and then reevaluate at a later date.

This group of 12 seniors was going to be very special. If they would have

returned to the state final four this season, they would have been one of only

two 4A-1A teams to do this improbable feat. This group was 44-18-1 in their

three years. I would be willing to bet this is the most successful program over

those three years in regards to win percentage. Obviously, winning state

championships would trump that, but we were extremely successful."

The one thing that has helped players get

past this disappointment is that there are so many seniors to lean on and they

have done a lot of that this past week.

"The amount of support from this team has

helped me so much," Scholtz said. "As soon as we found out that we would no

longer play, all of us seniors were sending nothing but love to one another as

well as to the whole team. Individually, there were many messages sent showing

how much we love each other and that this would get better.

Coach Conley and

the younger girls also shared a lot of great messages as well.

Hearing positive

words is really helping me get through this whole thing."





### **The 2020 Louisburg High School girls soccer team**

Many of the 12 seniors and their parents were a part of the group that helped raise money to start the Louisburg program nearly five years ago. They had always dreamed of winning a state title, but the wondering what could have happened is the worst part for a lot of them.

“This group had three goals: they wanted to win a league title, to win a regional championship and finally win a state championship,” Conley said. “This would have been our program’s fifth year and everything was built for this season. I believed in this group and I felt we were going to compete for that league title and we were going to go back to the state final four. We wanted three banners: league title, regional championship, and a state championship. It’s so sad that we will never get the opportunity to show the state what this team is capable of accomplishing.”

## BASEBALL

Kade Larson was all set to begin his first season as the head baseball coach at Louisburg High School.

Larson, who was hired late last spring, was looking forward to leading his alma mater and had high expectations for a group that was young, but returned experience from the year before.

Then came the news from KSHSAA to cancel spring activities, which left Larson, and the rest of the Wildcat program, speechless – including seniors Madden Rutherford, Andrew Krause and Kaden Oehlert.

“To say I am disappointed is an understatement,” Larson said. “I was very excited for this upcoming year. Being my first year as head coach I was more than ready to get the season underway and see what kind of team we had. I thought we could do some great things this year with the group that we were working with. For the short time we were able to practice, they had a great chemistry and worked super hard.

“I feel terrible for all the players having to lose a season like this, especially the seniors. Madden Rutherford and Andrew Krause were showing great leadership skills and I hate that they had their final season taken away. They are unprecedented times that I never thought would happen.”

Rutherford, who is a two-time All-Frontier

League player himself, was ready to make one final run with the Wildcats. Even though he has signed to play baseball for Washington University in St. Louis, he regrets not being able to have one final run in high school.

“Personally

I was just ready to just play ball again,” Rutherford said.

“My football season

ended with an injury, and two surgeries later I was just starting to get back

into the swing of things. I was excited for the baseball team this season; we

had a different looking coaching staff and a different mentality which was

evident at practice. I’ll always be left wondering what could have happened.”



**Senior Madden Rutherford, along with fellow seniors Andrew Krause and Kaden Oehlert, all saw their high school careers come to a close with the spread of COVID-19.**

As

difficult as it was for the seniors, the junior class will also have some

obstacles to overcome – especially for those who are wanting to play at the college level.

“To go with the seniors, this is also horrible for the juniors,” Larson said. “Junior year is a big recruiting time and a lot of these guys are missing that. So all around

this just is a bad time for an athlete, but I know they will work through it

and come back next year ready to go.”

Even  
with all the hardships athletes are facing, including the loss  
of a season,  
several are trying to find the silver lining in it all.

“The  
whole COVID-19 situation has made me appreciate what I have,”  
Rutherford said. “It’s  
hard to truly recognize how nice you have things until they’re  
taken away. I  
just hope and pray that things don’t escalate further.”

## **TRACK AND FIELD**

Carlee  
Gassman and Sydni Keagle were ready for the seasons of their  
lives on the track  
this season.

Gassman,  
who is a returning a state medalist in the hurdles, was  
considered one of the  
best returning 300-meter hurdlers in Class 4A. As for Keagle,  
she finished one  
spot away from a state medal last year in the 100 hurdles.

Both  
Louisburg seniors had high hopes, as did the rest of the Lady  
Cat track team  
that was ranked high in Class 4A in the preseason. That made  
the news of  
canceling spring sports all the more crushing.

“I honestly couldn’t believe it,” Keagle said. “At first I  
was in shock and then I was just incredibly sad at this loss  
of opportunity and  
it’s taken a while to come to terms with the fact that I won’t  
be able to  
compete in my favorite sport one last time.”



Gassman felt much the same way as she earned three state medals as season ago. Along with sophomore Delaney Wright, who garnered four state medals, the two athletes figured to score a lot of points for the Lady Cats this season.

“When I heard the last quarter of my senior year was cancelled and knowing track would be over as well, I found myself crying about not having school,” Gassman said. “I never thought I’d find myself crying over school. I am just trying to keep my head high – there are better things to come.”

Girls coach John Reece said there were 34 out for track before the team departed for Spring Break, which was one of the bigger groups the Lady Cats have had in several years.



The Louisville 4×400 relay of (from left) Carlee Gassman, Rain

**Pugh, Sydni Keagle and Delaney Wright were some of several returning Lady Cats trying for a big state performance.**

"It is a huge bummer that everything got nixed," Reece said. "We had a chance to do some great things this track season on the girls side. We could have been a top three team at state with a handful of very talented girls. My heart goes out to the girls and the missed opportunity for them."

The same could be said for the boys as the Wildcats featured a big roster of 74 athletes and Louisburg would have been competitive in most events throughout the season.

"I am just extremely disappointed," boys coach Andy Wright said. "We had 74 boys out, which is the biggest number we have had in several years. We had multiple state qualifiers returning as well as some newcomers that could have helped contribute to a successful year."

One of those qualifiers was javelin thrower Michael Waldron. The Louisburg senior finished just a few feet away from earning a state medal a season ago, and now his attempt at getting there has been dashed.

"It's really hard to describe the disappointment I had when I heard that I wouldn't be able to throw javelin this year," Waldron said. "It was tough and very hard to wrap my mind around, it's tough

knowing that I had about a week of practice under my belt and a lot of preparation for the first meet of the year. Just finding out I wouldn't be competing at all was crushing."

The season was an important one, not only to Waldron, but to the rest of the track seniors as well. Anthony Davis (distance), Trent Martin (pole vault), Charlie Koontz (sprints, relays), Carter Anglin (discus), Garrett Harding (shot put) and Indy Strumillo (jumps) were all in their final year and were excited with what lied ahead. A few of them had already made plans to work out together over Spring Break to get some extra work in.

"I texted Carter Anglin and Garrett Harding about the fact that our season was over, since we all threw together," Waldron said. "It was tough for Carter because I knew he was thinking about a possible state appearance this year. For Garrett, it was his first year but he had some good success in the first few weeks with throwing shot put, so I know he was excited. It's just a bummer and we have texted each other, and comforted one another. We are just still in shock – it was like a slap in the face."

## **GOLF**

Calvin Dillon has already had the best career in Louisburg High School golf history, and he accomplished that after his junior season.

Still, he wanted a lot more.



Dillon, who is a three-time state medalist, was looking for that elusive state championship this year and was considered one of the favorites going into the season. With the cancellation of spring sports it left Dillon, like many others, wondering 'What if?'

"It was definitely hard to hear that the regular season, as well as postseason were canceled," Dillon said. "It seemed like it happened all of a sudden. When you hear of professional and collegiate seasons being cancelled, you feel some remorse and disappointment for them, but when your own season gets cancelled, it becomes real."

The remorse for his own season wasn't what Dillon was feeling. It was the fact that he had hoped to lead a team – full of seniors – to its second consecutive state tournament appearance.

Seniors Drake Varns, Garrett Rolofson, Ryan Haight and Colin Cook all returned from that team, while other seniors like David Perentis, Deven Wieland and Luke Wickersham were also trying to vie for the final spots.



**Five of the six golfers from Louisburg's state team returned in 2020 to try and make another trip to the state tournament. (From left) Colin Cook, Drake Varns, Calvin Dillon, Ryan Haight and Garrett Rolofson.**

"We definitely had high expectations for this season," Dillon said. "With the heavy amount of seniors on the team, as well as our regional and state experience last year, we were really excited. I think the most disappointing thing for all of us is going to be the lack of closure. We were all looking forward to one last go-around, and to have our season disappear in a matter of days is devastating."

Like with every other conflict in life, the Wildcats are trying to make sense of it all and find a positive side to what has been a forgetful week.

“One positive that comes from this situation is the gratitude we will now have for our everyday lives,” Dillon said. “You never know when something catastrophic like this can happen, and we need to be thankful for the life we do have. Although this situation is disappointing for us, it was ultimately God’s plan. He is the one that is in control, and if we seek him in this time of discomfort, we will find the closure and satisfaction that we lost along with our senior season.”

## **GIRLS SWIMMING**

It was an historic season before it even started as Louisburg would join the Osawatomie-Paola girls swim team for the first time this year.

Unfortunately, thanks to the pandemic spreading across the country, history will have to take a back seat for another year.

Head coach Maddie Carrigan was in her first year with the program after assisting with the boys team last winter, so finding out the news with everyone else was a little tough to take.

“It was really upset when I heard the news,” Carrigan said. “Obviously, I understand the reason for the cancellation of school and

sports season, so I completely back the decision. It was still a huge bummer for me because this was my first time having a high school head coaching role. It was a pretty big honor since I'm only 23 and I was super excited to try some fun new things I came up with for the girls. The first two weeks were already so much fun and the girls improved so much, so I can't imagine how great the whole season would have been."

Osawatomie-Paola-Louisburg had three seniors swimmers this season, including Shayla Aye from Louisburg and Brayden Hanf and Grace Shore from Paola.

In all, Louisburg had eight swimmers on the team including Aye, Claire Brown, Bailey Hallas, Sydney Keaton, Dana Mattison, Anna Morrison, Dagen Page and Reese Reitz.

"Everyone is really bummed, especially the seniors," Carrigan said. "We had a lot of first time swimmers, as well, so I hope this doesn't deter them from joining the team again next year."

## **SOFTBALL**

Last year was a special season for the Louisburg softball team as the Lady Cats made a run to a regional championship and a state tournament appearance.

It was a great last part of the season for several of the Lady Cats.

Unfortunately, with the news of COVID-19, this year's version of Louisburg softball team will never get another chance at a magical season.

"When I found out my season was canceled, I was devastated," senior Reilly Ratliff-Becher said. "It would be the last time I ever played softball and it's just taken away from me."

The seven Lady Cat seniors were excited to begin this season, as was their coach, Nick Chapman. Chapman was in his first year as head coach with the program after spending last season at the junior varsity level.

After a couple weeks of practices, Chapman had barely gotten a chance to get to know his new team. Then he had to deliver the news that no one wanted to hear.

"This was not easy news to get," Chapman said. "It was even harder to have to tell the girls and even worse that I had to do it over the phone. It's still not real. Next week, we were going to get back to work and prepare for a special season. The girls had bought into what we were trying to accomplish. Just in two weeks, the culture was changing and girls were understanding what it meant to play team softball and do what is best for the team. The end of last week we had our first team bonding night."

The seniors set their team expectations and goals for the year. I listened to each of them say how excited they were for this specific year and to make one last run at it.

“I was crushed to have to tell them they weren’t going to get that chance. All seven of them helped mold this team into something special and set the tone for what Louisburg softball should be. I was excited for the product we were going to put on the field game one. I thought this year was going to be a season full of success.”

The seven seniors consisted of Ratliff-Becher, Allie Boles, Lauren Cutshaw, Kayla Willey, Kat Coolidge, Gabby Duggar and August Daniels. Some of those seniors were a big part of the Lady Cats’ state run a year ago, while others were looking to make an impact on the varsity level this year.

“I had very good expectations for this year,” Ratliff-Becher said. “As much as I feel bad for myself, teammates and my fellow seniors, I feel especially bad for Chapman. He worked so hard once he found out he got this job. I was so ready to learn and make him proud this season.

“I tell myself is that I have to think of other people in this situation. This could all be much worse. We are just containing this virus and protecting the

ones at the most risk, although it's going to be hard on everyone for a while."