

Senior Night Blowout: Wildcats shutout Cyclones



Louisburg senior Madisen Simpson heads the ball away during the Wildcats' match with Ottawa on Monday during Senior Night. The Wildcats defeated the Cyclones 10-0 to get their 10th win of the season.

Seniors Madisen Simpson, Bryn O'Meara, Lily Cook and Quincy Rice were flooded with all different kinds of emotions as they were honored during the Senior Night ceremony Monday prior to their game with Ottawa.

They were proud. There were some sad tears, followed by some happy ones. They felt honored.

Despite all those emotions, the four Louisburg seniors – along with their teammates – felt only one thing after the game was over.

Victory.

The Wildcats needed just one half to get a 10-0 win over Ottawa at the Wildcat Sports Complex. Louisburg's 10 goals forced the mercy rule and the players got a chance to celebrate a little earlier than usual.

"I know it has only been two years, but these kids have been with me for multiple summers and have been engaged in multiple aspects of our program," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "To

be honest, all these kids have given their absolute everything. They all showed up to offseason stuff and busted their butt and worked hard. A lot of these kids are involved in different things, so for them to show up and come fight was a fitting way to cap this off."

It was the underclassmen who got the Wildcats (10-4-1) off to a good start on the scoreboard.

Junior Savannah Reinhart scored the game's first goal five minutes in, and from there, the flood gates opened. Freshman Mackenzie Scholtz scored one and then fellow freshman Trinity Moore responded with flurry of her own.

Moore, who has been easing her way back from a foot injury, recorded three goals in a span of about 10 minutes to get the hat trick and her team a 5-0 lead.

"Trinity is a super aggressive kid," Conley said. "She is back being fit again and she works hard. We definitely got her some good looks. Ottawa played a high line, so it made easy for us to get it and go. She just ran by people out there and she is like a little deer. She has been out for so long, and dealt with such frustration, and now she looks like she is ready to go. She is a grinder and a competitor and that is all you can ask."

Scholtz followed that up with her second goal of the game and junior Bailey Belcher added one to make it 7-0. Conley wanted to make sure his seniors got involved in the scoring too.

Rice put one in the back of the net to give Louisburg an 8-0 advantage, and after Reinhart scored her second goal, it was O'Meara's turn.



Senior Bryn O'Meara hits a shot past the Ottawa goalie Monday in the Wildcats' 10-0 win.

O'Meara, who is the team's outside back on defense, was moved up top by Conley to try and get her a good look.

"She just looked at me and yelled, 'Coach, what do I do?'" Conley said. "I just told her to go run and score a goal."

O'Meara did just that. After a few missed opportunities, the Louisburg senior snuck a shot past the Ottawa goalie to give Louisburg a 10-0 lead with 10 minutes remaining in the first half.

"To see Quincy get one and then Bryn get her first varsity goal was a lot of fun," Conley said. "It was cool to see their teammates do whatever they could and get them a good chance and have one. It took a couple chances, but it was good to get

the icing on the cake eventually. It was great to have a good finish like that.”

It was a fitting ending to what was a special evening for the Wildcats. Rice and O’Meara scored a goal, Simpson played strong in the midfield and Cook walked onto the field for the final time after missing most of the season with an injury.



Louisburg seniors (from left) Madisen Simpson, Bryn O’Meara, manager Noah Juarez, Lily Cook and Quincy Rice were honored Monday during the Senior Night ceremony.

“They are just fantastic,” Conley said of his seniors. “Lily got knocked out in that De Soto game and she just hasn’t been able to come back. We got her to walk out with us one last time to start, just so she could enjoy it a little bit, but it is still not the same. She is a kid that always had a great attitude and works so hard. Her work ethic is one that the kids want to emulate because it is what you need to have. She is a great kid as are all the seniors. They all work very hard

and have good attitudes.”

The Wildcats have one more regular season game at 6 p.m. today when they travel to Spring Hill as both teams are fighting for the No. 1 seed in the Northeast Regional. Conley hopes it is still a few more weeks before he has to say goodbye to his seniors for good.

“I don’t want to be done just yet,” he said. “I want to keep them around a little while longer, talk to them, hang out with them and see them before they get too cool and run away. They are like a bunch of little daughters. You just grow attached to them and it will be hard to see them go.”

Wildcats rally to beat Kansas City Christian



Louisburg goalie Shay Whiting comes out to make a save Thursday against Baldwin at Baldwin High School. Whiting earned her sixth shutout of the season and the Wildcats came back the next day to defeat Kansas City Christian 5-3.

The Louisburg girls soccer team had its work cut out for itself last week as the Wildcats had to play three games in four days.

This late in the season, every win matters for the Wildcats as they are trying to get the highest seed possible for the upcoming regional tournament. Louisburg certainly took a big step forward in that regard.

After losing to De Soto, 3-0, last Tuesday, the Wildcats redeemed themselves in a big way.

Louisburg shutout Baldwin on Thursday and then it followed it up with a 5-3 victory Friday at home over Kansas City Christian. The wins improved the Wildcats' record to 9-4-1 on the season and puts them in good position for the postseason.

"That win was really good for our program," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said of the Kansas City Christian win. "It gives us the opportunity to possibly get to 10 wins and almost ensures we will host a regional. The girls are really determined and are playing to my style of play almost perfectly. I couldn't be more excited how we are playing right now."

The Wildcats had to work a little extra harder to get the win as they had to play from behind for most of the match.

Kansas City Christian (KCC) opened the match with a goal to take an early lead, but freshman Mackenzie Scholtz tied it up to get the Wildcats on the board. KCC followed it up with another score, and again, Louisburg tied it on a goal from junior Bailey Belcher.

KCC found the back of the net before halftime to take a 3-2 advantage, but the Wildcats came out firing in the second half.

Belcher scored back-to-back goals to give the Wildcats a 4-3 lead and also earned a hat trick in the process. Scholtz sealed the win with her second goal later in the half as the Wildcats' defense tightened up in the final 40 minutes.

Freshman Avery O'Meara, junior Savannah Reinhart and Scholtz each had an assist in the win.

"It was an incredibly physical game that got pretty chippy towards the end," Conley said "We came out a little flat and struggled to play our game for the first 20 minutes or so. It could have been due to the little bit of lay over from playing the previous night, but that's no excuse.

"We were trying to do too much to pick up teammates, instead of letting the ball do the work and playing within ourselves. We did come back three different times until we finally took the lead for good. The girls kept fighting and grinding. It was great to see how they all stuck together and didn't give up. I was extremely happy how hard we played and how we responded to such a physical game."

Louisburg will play its final regular season home game at 6 p.m. tonight when it hosts Ottawa for Senior Night. The Wildcats will end the regular season Thursday at Spring Hill.

Wildcats blank Baldwin on the road

BALDWIN CITY – After getting shutout itself two days before against De Soto, the Louisburg girls soccer team returned the favor Thursday against Baldwin.

The Wildcats scored two goals in each half and left Baldwin City with a 4-0 victory over the Bulldogs.

"Our girls have a lot of expectations and goals for themselves and we talk about only being as good as your last game," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Playing a good Baldwin side like we did was fantastic. We were focused and played very determined. We did a fantastic job letting the ball do the work and moving off of the ball. I loved how much energy we played with as well."

Junior Savannah Reinhart helped out with all four Louisburg goals. Reinhart had her best day of the season as she scored a pair of goals and assisted on the other two.



Louisburg junior Savannah Reinhart sends the ball toward the net for one of her two goals Thursday against Baldwin.

“Savannah had the best day of her career,” Conley said. “Her runs off the ball were fantastic and when she received the ball she knew exactly what she wanted to do with it. Her vision and anticipation for the game has been really, really good the past couple weeks. I could not be happier for her. She was definitely the lady of the match for us. “

Junior Bailey Belcher opened the scoring early for Louisburg when she found the back of the net just three minutes into the match on an assists from Reinhart.

Reinhart assisted on the Wildcats’ second goal just a few minutes later after freshman Mackenzie Scholtz scored to give Louisburg a 2-0 halftime lead.

Baldwin had a couple different opportunities with shots on goal, but the Wildcat defense held, including goalie Shay Whiting. The Louisburg junior, along with sophomore goalie Carson Buffington, combined to earn the shutout – which was Whiting’s sixth of the season.

Louisburg’s attack continued to work well with each other in the second half as Reinhart scored both goals in the second half on assists from Belcher and Scholtz to lock up the win.

“We did a great job of moving the ball and being very productive on the offensive end,” Conley said. “I am not sure it was our best game, but it was top three for sure. Our team chemistry is at an all-time high right now. The girls are understanding the system, and with the style of play, they are making it look easy right now.

“The positive from all of our injuries is we have had a lot of different girls step up and now they are playing major roles on our team. I am very excited with how the girls are executing offensively.”

Three schools to join Frontier League



Three schools have accepted invitations, or will soon, to join the Frontier League for the 2018-19 season and beyond.

Piper, Bonner Springs and Tonganoxie will be leaving their current home – the Kaw Valley League – to join the Frontier after all three were offered spots during a meeting in early April.

Their addition will now bring the Frontier League to 10 members, along with Louisburg, Paola, Ottawa, Spring Hill, De Soto, Baldwin and Eudora. The trio of schools made presentations to the current Frontier League members for admittance due to the fact the Kaw Valley is in the process of breaking up. Current member Bishop Ward is leaving the league next school year, which leaves them at six.

Piper quickly accepted the invitation following a vote of its board of education and is looking forward to joining the Frontier.

“We are extremely excited to get into a league with like-size schools and competition levels,” Piper High School activities director Doug Key said. “We believe Piper High School is good fit for the league due to the competition level in all activities and will match up well. We have played all current

schools in various activities and felt like this would be a positive move for the future.

“Being in a league with various size schools and us being the smallest wasn’t going to be optimal. We are still are competitive in many areas, but we needed to secure a more balanced future. We feel like being in the middle, size-wise, will keep us competitive for years to come.”

According to this year’s classification numbers, Piper has a current enrollment of 601 students. Turner is the Kaw Valley’s biggest school with 1,114 students, followed by Lansing (910), Bonner Springs (758), Basehor-Linwood (710) and Tonganoxie (618).

Bonner Springs, Piper and Tonganoxie compare to other Frontier League programs. De Soto is the biggest school in the league with 854 students, followed by Ottawa (709), Spring Hill (699), Paola (612), Louisburg (563), Eudora (471) and Baldwin (410).

Bonner Springs’ board of education also approved the move to the Frontier League and Bonner Springs High School principal Rick Moulin echoed Key’s statement.

“We have competed against teams in the Frontier League the past several years,” Moulin said. “The schools in the Frontier League are a lot like Bonner Springs – we are competitive and value sportsmanship. The teams in the Frontier League are similar in size to Bonner Springs, which will be a great gauge for us as we try to compete at the highest level possible in 4A. Bonner Springs is a small town community, with great community support, much like the schools in the Frontier League.

“We are excited to be joining with Piper and Tonganoxie. We hope to continue to be able to compete against Basehor-Linwood, Lansing and Turner. I have a lot of respect for their schools and their programs. Ultimately, the Frontier League

was a better fit for our students and our community.”

Tonganoxie hasn’t officially accepted the invitation, but it is just waiting for its board of education to approve the move during its May 8 meeting. At that point, according to Tonganoxie High School principal Mark Farrar, it will immediately send letter accepting the invite.

“We are very excited to join the Frontier League,” Farrar said. “This new partnership will be very good for our students as well as our community. Joining the Frontier League will provide some great opportunities for our students from an athletic and activities standpoint. Tonganoxie mirrors many of the activities that most or all Frontier League schools offer. We see it as a league that will be a good fit for many years to come.

“One of the things that I think gets overlooked is the idea that a strong league doesn’t just offer opportunities on a playing field, but it also offers a chance for kids to network and make lifelong connections with students from all across the league. The Frontier League is a strong and stable league and we believe that it can advance the overall mission of what we want to do at Tonganoxie.”

Louisburg High School activities director Darin Gagnebin now believes the league is healthier than ever.

“By adding teams to our league, it solidifies our league numbers for years to come ensuring that we, as a league, will remain strong and competitive whether schools decide to leave or stay,” Gagnebin said. “We could have been in a situation in which the Frontier League could have dwindled to four or five schools, but instead we will be stronger at 10 teams, if all teams decided to stay.

That situation came about in March when it was reported by the Tonganoxie Mirror that Kaw Valley League member Lansing wanted to create a larger league that would have contained all or

some combinations of Lansing, Blue Valley Southwest, De Soto, Leavenworth, Bonner Springs, Basehor-Linwood, Tonganoxie, Ottawa, Piper, Spring Hill, Turner and Topeka schools Seaman, Shawnee Heights and Topeka West.

A meeting was held between all the schools to look at possibilities of building a stronger league that would rebuild the current Kaw Valley that has Lansing, Turner, Piper, Bonner Springs, Tonganoxie and Basehor-Linwood.

The Frontier League responded with meetings of its own shortly after to discuss each member's happiness in the league after De Soto, Spring Hill and Ottawa attended the March meeting with Lansing.

De Soto mentioned needing more competition at the sub-varsity level since it has a growing enrollment and looked at the possibility of playing in a league with bigger schools since it has made the jump to Class 5A.

Spring Hill's enrollment also looks to make that jump in three to four years, while Ottawa's enrollment usually hovers around the line between 4A and 5A. Still, all three schools stated during league meetings they were happy in their current position, with De Soto and Spring Hill stating they might need to make a move due to increasing enrollment numbers.

Faced with the possibility of losing at least two members, the Frontier invited Kaw Valley members to make presentations to join the league in order to fill those spots. Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs all made presentations and the Frontier League principals all offered invitations shortly after.

At this point, it appears the league is going to move forward with 10 members as no school has stated their desire to leave the Frontier – however, it doesn't mean it can't happen in the near future.

"I cannot speak for other schools in the Frontier League about their desire to stay or to leave," Gagnebin said. "I know some are considering their options and will do what they believe is in the best interest of their school, and I would support them in whatever they decide. I do believe though whatever they decide, with the addition of these new schools to our league, the Frontier League will remain solid in numbers and will continue to be one of the most competitive leagues in Class 4A.

"I believe the three schools that chose to petition our league for membership will be a great fit for the Frontier League. They offer all sports and activities that are currently offered by the league at all levels. Their enrollments, though larger than Louisburg, will put them in the middle to upper middle in size within the league."

The league schedule will also look different beginning with the 2018-19 season, as there will no longer be a double round-robin schedule in certain sports and not every school will play each other in football.

"The biggest challenge will be league scheduling," Gagnebin said. "Although it will change how we schedule things as a league, most league schools already have some or all of these schools on some of their athletic schedules already. It could increase the amount of non-league games we have to go out and find in some sports, since with 10 teams you can no longer play a double-round-robin schedule as we have currently, due to the amount of games allowed by KSHSAA.

"This is both good and bad, meaning, it could increase travel and some expense, but it allows us greater flexibility in the schedule to play other teams outside the league as well. One negative will be in football. With 10 teams, we will not be able to play every team in the league as we do now. As stated before though, solidifying the league as far as numbers go and increasing the competitiveness of the league are also

positives.”

Wildcats shut out Piper for second straight win



Louisburg freshman Mackenzie Scholtz splits the Piper defense as she dribbles into the box for a shot on goal Thursday in Louisburg. The Wildcats defeated Piper 4-0.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team found the back of the net quickly as it scored three goals in less than 30 minutes against Piper.

That was almost a month ago.

Still, Louisburg picked up right where it left off when inclement weather postponed the April 4 match. When the game resumed Thursday, the Wildcats scored a goal a minute into the contest and ran away for a 4-0 win over Piper.

“We came out early and got on them quick,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “Looking at the score, it is easy to come out and get complacent and go through the motions. Piper has several really good players and it was important that we did a good job of standing them up and forcing them to do things

they aren't comfortable doing. It was good to come out and pick up where we left off and get this game finished."

Junior Savannah Reinhart didn't waste much time when the game resumed as she scored the lone goal Thursday before the two teams had a chance to get settled.

Going back to April 4, Reinhart finished with a pair of goals to lead Louisburg (7-3-1), while freshman Mackenzie Scholtz had two assists and a goal. Junior Bailey Belcher also added a goal and an assist.

Conley liked what he saw out of his offensive attack as the Lady Cats had other chances to score later in the match, but couldn't connect.

"Our final third is doing a great job finding feet, running off the ball and making great cuts," he said. "Our give-and-go's are just shredding teams right now. If we keep doing that, and find feet, we are tough team to stop offensively."

The back line also limited Piper's shots on goal and helped goalie Shay Whiting earn her fifth shutout of the season. Kaitlyn Lewer, Camdyn Clark, Bryn O'Meara, Hannah Straub and others kept Piper away from the net.



Louisburg's Kaitlyn Lewer clears the ball out of the back for the Wildcats on Thursday against Piper.

"Defensively, I thought we did a really good job of talking," Conley said. "In the second half against Baldwin, we really picked that up and it continued. The biggest issue right now is when we do call the ball, other girls have to get out of the way. I am proud of the way the girls talked and they were super aggressive in the back. That is what we are looking for."

It is a big week for the Wildcats as far as postseason seeding goes. Louisburg has three games in five days and it starts at 6 p.m., Tuesday when it travels to undefeated De Soto.

The Wildcats will then travel to Baldwin on Thursday for a 3:45 p.m. matchup – a game that was originally scheduled for

Monday, but had to be moved due to wet field conditions. Louisburg will wrap it all up Friday at home against Kansas City Christian.

“It is huge,” Conley said. “We have Baldwin, which is a physical team, and then we have one of the best teams in Class 5A right now in De Soto, who hasn’t lost a game yet. They are trying to go undefeated and it would be great to play spoiler there. It will be on the turf so it will be quick and we just have to be ready to go. We have back-to-back away games, and that definitely isn’t a good thing, but it is what it is. We are just going to do our job, take one game at a time and see what happens.”

Wildcats end losing streak with win over Baldwin



Louisburg senior Quincy Rice heads the ball near the goal Tuesday during the Wildcats’ game with Baldwin in Louisburg. The Wildcats ended a two-game losing streak with a 4-2 win over Baldwin.

Going into Tuesday’s game with Baldwin, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team was dealing with something none of them had felt before.

For the first time in program history, the Wildcats were on a losing streak – albeit only two games. Still, it made head coach Kyle Conley wonder how his team was going to respond.

The Wildcats didn't let him down.

Although both teams combined for five goals in the first half, the Louisburg defense tightened up in the second half and added a goal to get a 4-2 win over Baldwin at the Wildcat Sports Complex.

"Baldwin is a very aggressive and physical team, but I think our kids responded and did a nice job," Conley said. "It was really good for us to get a positive result, considering the losing streak was a first for us. Baldwin was a team that was ranked No. 1 in our region prior to the game, so for us to come out and play as hard as we did was fantastic. I loved how aggressive we played to match their intensity."

Louisburg (6-3-1) was especially aggressive on the offensive end and Baldwin had a tough time keeping up with the Wildcats' speed – more specifically – Mackenzie Scholtz.

The freshman forward outran the Baldwin back line, which led to a couple one-on-one opportunities with the Baldwin goalie. Scholtz took advantage of that as she scored two goals and assisted on another to lead the Wildcats.

"Mackenzie has been playing really well and really buying into my philosophy," Conley said. "She is moving a ton off of the ball and playing very simple. She has been getting better each and every game. Her greatest quality might be how she gets everyone else involved in the game. When our attack buys into the game plan by moving the ball quickly and moving off the ball, we are really tough to stop."

Scholtz used her speed and got the Wildcats on the board early as she scored four minutes into the contest, but Baldwin responded with a goal of its own to tie the match with 13

minutes remaining in the first half.

In between that time, Louisburg junior Bailey Belcher had a chance to put the Wildcats up even more as she had two shots that went just wide and another when she was taken down in the box on shot, but no call was made.

A minute after Baldwin scored the tying goal, Scholtz responded as she got a through ball from Belcher and beat the Bulldog defense for a goal, then with seven minutes left in the first half, Belcher scored on a shot from an assist from Scholtz to make it 3-1.

It appeared the Wildcats were going to go into halftime with a two-goal lead, but Baldwin made two long passes up the field and managed to get a goal with 27 seconds left.

Louisburg's defense didn't allow the Bulldog players to get behind them in the second half as it limited the Bulldogs' shots on goal and never threatened to give up its lead.

"Defensively we are still working on our communication," Conley said. "I felt the girls did a very nice job in the second half talking and having each other covered. We struggled at first with their formation, but after a few adjustments I felt we were really strong in the back. We had depth and were able to support our outside backs a lot more. We will keep working and keep getting better."

Belcher sealed the win for Louisburg late in the second half as she made a defender miss at the top of the box and then struck the ball with her left foot for her second goal of the game with four minutes remaining.



Freshman Erin Lemke kicks the ball away from a Baldwin player Tuesday. Lemke recorded an assist in the win.

The Wildcat offense had more than 10 shots on goal in the game and put pressure on the Baldwin defense. Along with Scholtz and Belcher, Louisburg also got a good performance out of its midfielders, especially from Erin Lemke. The Louisburg freshman recorded an assist and started several runs toward

the goal

"I think the midfield did a very nice job of playing as a unit and keeping us spread out," Conley said. "It made it difficult for them to mark us and swarm the ball defensively. The midfielders did a very nice job in the second half of the Basehor game and for the majority of this game of moving the ball and moving to find space. We struggle when we stand and makes us way too easy to defend.

"Erin has been playing really well right now. She is always looking to get teammates involved and works her tail off. I am very pleased with how much she has improved and how hard she plays."

Louisburg returns to action at 4:30 today for a makeup game with Piper in Louisburg. They will finish a game that was postponed, in which the Wildcats have a 3-0 lead with 10 minutes left in the first half.

Wildcats come up short on the road

The last time Louisburg faced off with Basehor-Linwood was in the regional championship game a year ago.

The Wildcats left with their first regional championship and they hoped to have the same result last Friday in Basehor. Unfortunately, the Bobcats got their revenge as they held on for a 2-1 win over Louisburg.

Basehor-Linwood scored two first half goals to take an early lead, but the Wildcats responded in the second half and got several shots on the goal. One of them went in on a goal from Savannah Reinhart, thanks to an assist from Mackenzie Scholtz, but the Wildcats weren't able to find the back of the net again.

“The Basehor game was a little frustrating,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “We gave up two soft goals on their only two shots of the game. The second half we absolutely dominated. They only actually made it over midfield only a few times. We had a massive amount of opportunities and failed to capitalize. It was tough, but we worked hard to get back to moving the ball well and attacking the other team instead of being passive.”

Wildcats blank Wyandotte, fall to Harmon



Louisburg goalie Shay Whiting stops a Wyandotte shot on goal Monday in Louisburg. Whiting, along with Carson Buffington, combined for the shutout in the Wildcats' 7-0 win.

Less than minute into the contest, Louisburg junior Bailey Belcher found the back of the net for the Wildcats against Wyandotte.

That goal was one of the first of many for Louisburg.

The Wildcats went on to score six more times and picked up their fifth win in a row with a 7-0 victory over Wyandotte on Monday in Louisburg. In all, two players earned hat tricks and

the Wildcats handed out five assists.

"We came out and just moved the ball so well," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We worked as a unit and moved really well off the ball. Our communication was up and we did a great job of working together. Our execution on the offensive end was really good. We were confident and played very aggressive on the defensive end."

Defensively, outside backs Bryn O'Meara and Camdyn Clark slowed the Wyandotte attack and limited the Bulldogs' chances on goal. The few chances they got were turned away by goalie Shay Whiting, and then Carson Buffington, who came in for the final five minutes to preserve the shutout.

Belcher and freshman Mackenzie Scholtz each scored three goals in the win and the Wyandotte defense had a difficult time shutting down the Wildcat duo. Savannah Reinhart also added a score.



Louisburg sophomore Hayli Detherage dribbles past a Wyandotte player Monday in Louisburg.

They also got some help from their teammates as Madisen Simpson and Erin Lemke each recorded two assists and Avery O'Meara added another.

Belcher got Louisburg up early with a goal 55 seconds into the match and Reinhart followed a few minutes later for the game's second goal. Belcher made it 3-0 on a cross from Simpson, while Scholtz scored midway through the first half on a pass from Lemke, another freshman.

The freshman pair teamed up again right before halftime when Lemke found Scholtz that led to her second goal and a 5-0 halftime lead for Louisburg.

Scoring slowed down a little for the Wildcats in the second half, but they had plenty of chances on goal. They took

advantage of one of them as Simpson sent a corner kick near the goal and Belcher took care of the rest with a header that found the back of the net to give Louisburg a six-goal lead and Belcher a hat trick.

Scholtz added a hat trick of her own several minutes later to complete the scoring and seal the win for the Wildcats.

Harmon stops Wildcat winning streak

All good things must come to an end sometime, and Louisburg's five-game winning streak came to a halt Wednesday in its home contest with Harmon.

Harmon scored three unanswered goals in the first half, and despite a strong comeback from Louisburg, the Wildcats couldn't overcome the tough start in a 3-2 loss.

"Harmon was difficult," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We went into the wind to start the game and we struggled to keep the ball on the ground. They were aggressive and attacked us off the dribble a lot. We did a nice job of limiting their scoring opportunities, but Harmon capitalized on all three of those opportunities.

"We were sluggish and were kind of just going through the motions. We did have a lot of opportunities. We just could not find the back of the net."

Mackenzie Scholtz got the Wildcats (5-2-1) on the board shortly before halftime as she cut the Harmon lead to 3-1. Bailey Belcher added another goal midway through the second half, but the Wildcats couldn't net the tying goal.

"I was extremely pleased with our work ethic and how we kept fighting," Conley said. "We just struggled with moving off of the ball and passing the ball to our feet. When we were able

to do that we created a lot of unbelievable opportunities. The girls never gave up, but we struggled to just find that final pass.”

Louisburg will try to get back on track today when it plays its third game this week. The Wildcats travel to Basehor-Linwood today for a 4:30 p.m. junior varsity start, and the varsity will follow.

Wildcats get first-ever win over Spring Hill



Freshman Avery O'Meara battles a Spring Hill player for a 50-50 ball Thursday during the Wildcats' home contest against the Broncos. Louisburg defeated Spring Hill, 2-0, for the first time in program history.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team accomplished several “firsts” during its inaugural season last year.

The Wildcats accomplished so many that there aren't many “firsts” left to be had for the second-year program. However, there was one that stuck out.

Louisburg wasn't able to pull off a win against Spring Hill a

season ago and was the only Frontier League team the Wildcats weren't able to beat.

They can now check it off the list.

The Wildcats got a goal in each half and downed the Broncos, 2-0, on Thursday in Louisburg. It also gave Louisburg its fourth consecutive win after starting the season off with a scoreless tie and a loss.

"I know we are only a second-year program, but Spring Hill was the only team on our schedule that we haven't gotten a win against," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Our goal was to show everyone that we can play a little bit. They had us on our heels quite a bit and we did a good job of taking away good opportunities, but they had a lot of good chances and we are glad they didn't find the back of the net."

Both teams traded close calls during the two 40-minute halves as both sides watched as shots sailed either just wide or hit off the post.

A tie at halftime appeared evident, but the Wildcats put together a good scoring opportunity and converted. Junior Bailey Belcher had the ball in the middle of the field and passed it off to freshman Mackenzie Scholtz, who made a couple moves, dribbled into the box and scored with five minutes remaining the first half.

Louisburg (4-1-1) had several more opportunities to increase its lead and Belcher was involved in a handful of them. The Wildcat midfielder just missed the back of the net several times, including one shot that hit off the post and rolled toward the line only to have the Spring Hill defense knock it away.

With 20 minutes remaining in the game, Belcher finally got one to go as she took a shot from the top of the box, which ricocheted off the Spring Hill goalie and Belcher was able to

collect the rebound and sneak it in for the team's second goal.

"It is relieving," Belcher said. "We have been working really hard at practice and it is all kind of paying off right now. We are all still pretty out of shape, but we have been working hard and everything has been getting better. I see so many improvements over a year ago and it is so great.

"There were a few miscommunications on who should go get the ball and occasionally we stepped back a little bit and we shouldn't have, but overall I think with the passes and everything I think we were able to work really well with each other."



Junior Bailey Belcher heads the ball away Thursday at home against Spring Hill.

The Wildcats put together a bend-but-don't-break performance out of their defense as the Broncos were able to put together quality shots on goal, but none found the back of the net as junior goalie Shay Whiting earned another shutout.

Louisburg's defense of Bryn O'Meara, Camdyn Clark, Kaitlyn

Lewer, Hannah Straub all tightened down when they needed to, while midfielders Madisen Simpson and Avery O'Meara all won key 50-50 balls and stayed in front of the Spring Hill attack.

"They did a really good job marking up and that is something that we have been working on," Conley said. "We have been working on trying not to stab and dive at the ball because Spring Hill is a team that wants to cut the whole time. We did a good job of standing them up, but there were a few times where we did dive in and they made us look silly and luckily for us they didn't score. Fortunately we came out on top and we did just enough to win."

It is about to get really busy for the Wildcats as they play their first of three games this week, beginning tonight with a home match at Wyandotte. Junior varsity is slated to begin at 4:30 p.m., and the varsity will follow.

Louisburg will then host Harmon on Wednesday and will travel to Basehor-Linwood on Friday.

"I think every night we are getting better and every night we are solving a problem for the night before," Conley said. "Then a new one arises, but it is just one of those things where we have to keep learning and growing. We are playing a lot of freshmen and sophomores and Spring Hill is really young and talented as well. We just have to keep grinding and evolving, but it was a good night."

Quick goals lead to blowout

win for Louisburg



Louisburg freshman Mackenzie Scholtz puts a shot on goal during the Wildcats' match with Ottawa on Monday at Ottawa High School. Scholtz scored two goals in Louisburg's 10-0 win, which was the Wildcats' third straight win.

OTTAWA – Fans didn't even have a chance to warm their seat before the Louisburg girls soccer team scored its first goal Monday against Ottawa.

In fact, the seat still wasn't warm when the Wildcats scored their second – or the third. Louisburg had four goals in the first seven minutes and put on an offensive display at Ottawa High School.

The Wildcats defeated Ottawa 10-0 to pick up their third consecutive win and continue to shine offensively as they have scored 21 goals in those three victories. Louisburg shared the ball well Monday as it notched assists on almost every score.

"The game was great," Conley said. "The kids were always looking to pass and help their teammates. I think every goal we had, except for one, we had an assist on and that is great to see. I think two-thirds of our goals last year were unassisted, so the girls are sharing the ball right now and building their teammates up and making everyone better."

Junior Bailey Belcher continued her torrid goal-scoring pace as she finished the game with four goals, including her first

coming 16 seconds into the match. She had a hat trick with 26 minutes left in the first half and also finished with an assist.

In the three victories for Louisburg, Belcher has tallied 11 goals during that stretch to lead the Lady Cats.

Following Belcher's first goal, a minute later the Wildcats (3-1-1) scored again when sophomore Hallie Hutsell found the back of the net on an assist from junior Savannah Reinhart – her first of three assists on the day.



Freshman Erin Lemke sneaks a shot past the Ottawa goalie Monday at Ottawa High School.

Several minutes later, freshman Mackenzie Scholtz scored her first of two goals and Belcher followed with two more to make it 5-0. Freshman Erin Lemke came off the bench to make it 6-0 on an assist from senior Madisen Simpson.

Simpson handed out another assist on Belcher's final goal that came off a corner kick. Scholtz found the back of the net to make it 8-0, and then Simpson scored a goal herself late in the first half – her first of the season – to make it 9-0 at halftime.

Lemke ended the game midway through the second half with the team's 10th goal, which invoked the mercy rule. Along with her two goals, she also had two assists as did Simpson. Sophomore Hayli Detherage also had an assist.

Junior Shay Whiting and sophomore Carson Buffington combined to earn the shutout.

"The kids work so hard in practice, and some maybe get limited minutes here and there, but here we were able to get all the kids a lot of minutes," Conley said. "It also helps too because we are pretty banged up right now and it helps us to get rested and get a few reps in.

"We have some internal motivation to play hard and that helps us a lot. The kids were focused and they understand that this is a meaningful game regardless of who we play and that is a good thing. I think we learned from Tonganoxie (0-0 tie) that when we don't come ready to go that anything can happen. Now, every time we get off the bus we are focused and ready to go."

The Wildcats will try for their fourth win in a row Thursday when they host Spring Hill at home as they hope to make program history.

"For Spring Hill, they are just reloading right now," Conley said. "They are almost a 5A school and have lots of kids to choose from and that is a team that beat us twice last year. They are the only team on our schedule that we haven't beaten before, or tied. We are looking to try and avenge that a little bit. We just need to come out and do our job and see what happens."

Louisburg downs Heritage Christian for second straight win



Louisburg junior Savannah Reinhart dribbles past a Piper defender during the Lady Cats' game on April 4 that was postponed. The Wildcats traveled to Heritage Christian on Thursday and came away with a 5-1 win.

OVERLAND PARK – The Louisburg High School girls soccer team has certainly found a rhythm offensively and it continued Thursday against Heritage Christian Academy.

Louisburg scored four first half goals and came away with a 5-1 road victory in Overland Park. It was the second consecutive victory for the Wildcats and they have now scored 11 goals in the last two games after scoring just one in their first two.

"I felt the girls did a fantastic job moving the ball and making runs off of the ball," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We were really aggressive and attacked non-stop. I think our chemistry is getting really, really good. We are starting to react and anticipate what the other is going to do. I am very pleased with our level of focus and

determination. We came out very strong and driven yesterday.”

The combination of junior Bailey Belcher and freshman Mackenzie Scholtz provided a big challenge for the Heritage Christian back line. Both players scored two first half goals to give the Wildcats a big lead early.

Scholtz added two assists to go with her two goals, while Belcher added a third goal in the second half to record her second straight hat trick. Belcher also added an assist in the win.

Midfielders Hallie Hutsell and Savannah Reinhart also worked well with Scholtz and Belcher to give them looks at the goal.

“Bailey and Mackenzie are playing extremely well right now,” Conley said. “I feel that their play is opening up a lot of space for others because they are drawing so much attention. They both are doing a fantastic job moving off of the ball and it make it very difficult for teams to defend them and try to keep up with their work rate.

“More importantly they are getting the outside midfielders involved and are getting great play from them (Hallie and Savannah). The chemistry between the midfield and targets is the best it has been all year and I feel that it is only going to get better. Sholtzy is doing a very nice job of doing what I am asking her to do and she is playing extremely well right now.”

Louisburg (2-1-1) also got good play out of its defense as the Wildcats have given up just two goals total in their last two wins and limited Heritage’s shots on goal Thursday.

Outside backs Bryn O’Meara and Camdyn Clark, along with Hannah Straub, Bria Jensen, center back Kaitlyn Lewer and goalie Shay Whiting led the Louisburg defense.

“The defense is getting better and better each and every

game," Conley said. "Heritage was a very physical team and I feel we did a nice job standing our ground. The second half we had some difficulty because they were hitting the ball almost 30-40 yards in the air with the wind. I feel we struggled a little bit to anticipate the bounce or the carry the ball would have from the wind pushing it, because it was the first time we played with a massive wind. I do like their communication and how they are playing with one another. I think this group has the potential to be extremely good."

Belcher got the Wildcats off to a good start as she scored back-to-back goals to give Louisburg a 2-0 lead. Heritage scored to cut the lead in half, but Scholtz responded with two goals to end the first half and the Wildcats led 4-1 at halftime.

Louisburg added another goal in the second half as Belcher converted a penalty kick to seal the win.

The Wildcats put this winning streak together at less than full strength. The injury list is a long one for Louisburg as it has five players that will miss several weeks of action and others that are playing through the pain.

Among those are starters Trinity Moore (broken toe) and Lily Cook (concussion), while sophomore Hayli Detherage hopes to return soon after dealing with a back injury. With some of those injuries, other players have stepped up for the Wildcats and Conley likes what he has seen from his team.

"I was extremely happy with how well we played," Conley said. "I think the second half we struggled to find feet and got into a kick match with them in which the wind won, but when we found feet and attacked we were a lot of fun to watch."

Louisburg returns to action today when it travels to Ottawa. It is a varsity only matchup that will begin at 5 p.m. The Wildcats return home Thursday when it hosts Spring Hill.

The Wildcats hosted Piper on April 4, but the game was postponed with 10 minutes remaining in the first half as Louisburg had a 3-0 lead at the time. Belcher, Reinhart and Scholtz all scored goals in the contest and will be resumed April 27 with the lead intact.

Frontier League shakeup could happen soon



In a few months – or even weeks – the Frontier League as it currently stands could have a different look.

Since March, meetings have gone on within member schools of the Frontier League and Kaw Valley League to discuss possible realignment of both leagues.

The Frontier League currently has seven members – Louisburg, Paola, Spring Hill, De Soto, Ottawa, Baldwin and Eudora – and a meeting between the schools took place on March 28 to discuss where each school stood as far as their happiness in the league.

Brian Biermann, superintendent of USD 416, and Louisburg High School athletic director Darin Gagnebin attended the meeting on Louisburg's behalf and both relayed the fact that every school stated they were happy with the way the league is currently set up, but a couple schools came to the realization

the Frontier League might not be able to offer what they are looking for.

De Soto and Spring Hill currently have growing enrollment numbers are interested in playing Class 5A competition. De Soto moved up to 5A this school year and Spring Hill will look to make the jump in the coming years with its larger enrollment. The rest of the schools all compete in Class 4A.

Both schools stated they would like more competition at the sub-varsity level that schools like Louisburg, Baldwin and Eudora cannot provide. Competing in a mainly 5A league would relieve some of those problems.

“De Soto said they will probably open next year with 950 kids and they would grow by 100 the year after that,” Biermann said. “They are happy in the Frontier, but they feel like they need 5A competition and they feel like it could hurt them in football with seedings and tie-breakers. They could potentially get penalized by competing in a mainly 4A league.

“Spring Hill wants to be proactive. Their growth is coming. Their classes in the middle school are pretty good size. They won’t grow a lot next year, but they will in the next few years.”

What started the meetings is due to the fact that the Kaw Valley League is looking to rework their situation or create a brand new look altogether. The Kaw Valley currently has seven schools in Lansing, Turner, Bonner Springs, Tonganoxie, Piper, Bishop Ward and Basehor-Linwood, but one member – Bishop Ward – is leaving for a new league beginning next school year.

According to report in March from the *Tonganoxie Mirror*, Lansing wants to create a larger league that would contain all or some combinations of Lansing, Blue Valley Southwest, De Soto, Leavenworth, Bonner Springs, Basehor-Linwood, Tonganoxie, Ottawa, Piper, Spring Hill, Turner and Topeka schools Seaman, Shawnee Heights and Topeka West.

Many of those schools are either in Class 5A already or are close based on enrollment numbers. The idea of competing against bigger competition is intriguing to De Soto, Spring Hill – and possibly Ottawa – the three largest schools in the Frontier League.

An idea was thrown around of creating a league of two divisions between the Kaw Valley and Frontier. One division would be 5A schools and the other would be 4A.

“We visited with our board of education and we are not in favor of a mega-league,” Biermann said. “That has been talked about – having a league of 5A and 4A schools. We don’t want to invite new 5A schools. We are ok with Spring Hill and De Soto staying in the league, even though they are growing, but we don’t want to invite other 5A schools or have a mega league so they can have better competition.

“Our stance is if De Soto and Spring Hill feel like they need 5A competition and leave, then they can work towards that and we can work on filling those spots with 4A schools.”

Both Biermann and Gagnebin feel like the Frontier League needs to be proactive as changes could be made sooner rather than later.

“We aren’t panicking as a league as much as the Kaw Valley schools are because they know they are headed for a break up,” Gagnebin said. “We could easily stay with the seven schools we have. Pretty soon, De Soto will have close to 1,000 kids. It is more on them if they want to be in our league, and if they are happy, by all means stay. We are not saying they have to leave, but they have to do best what is for their school, and if this league isn’t the best option for you, then you have to look elsewhere.”

Due to the fact De Soto and Spring Hill could be moving on, the Frontier is being proactive and inviting some members of the Kaw Valley League to come make presentations at a meeting

Wednesday to see if they would be a fit in the Frontier.

According to Biermann, Tonganoxie, Piper, Bonner Springs and Basehor-Linwood High Schools will all make presentations at the meeting and then schools from both the Kaw Valley and the Frontier will meet to discuss options at a later date.

"I led the (March 28) meeting and I wanted to make sure everyone was as honest and open as possible," Biermann said. "There were no hurt feelings. Collectively we don't want a mega-league, no additional 5A schools and that is firm from us, Paola, Baldwin and Eudora. Spring Hill and De Soto left the meeting, I think, that they need to start looking for potential 5A competition.

"The easy fix would be for De Soto and Spring Hill to join the bigger league and we take someone like Tonganoxie and Piper to replace them. Every school said they loved the Frontier League and competition, but it is time there has to be some conversations. The biggest thing is we don't have three baseball, softball or soccer teams to schedule, but De Soto and Spring Hill want that. We can't field C teams in some cases."

The leagues are on a sort of a time crunch. With football reclassifications and scheduling beginning this October for the next two years, it would be the best case scenario to get the reshuffling done before then so they can schedule for the 2018-19 season and beyond according to Gagnebin.

The Louisburg activities director also believes keeping the right number of teams is also imperative for a healthy league.

"We want to maintain the integrity of our league, whether that is with seven or even eight schools," Gagnebin said. "We want to maintain that number. Nine is a scheduling nightmare, and if you only have six teams, you are opening up a can of worms where if you leave an open spot, then the state could come in and assign certain schools to us that aren't a good fit.

"I don't necessarily want them to leave the league, but we need to be told if they are. I am more afraid of them leaving our league than them staying in our league. I am not afraid of the competition we face with them. We can compete with them in all the sports, but I am more afraid of us dropping from a seven to a five-team league."

However, one hiccup remains. The Frontier League bylaws state that a member school must give two years notice before leaving the league.

"If the dominoes start falling fast, the league could pass a bylaw amendment to allow for movement for De Soto or whoever, which is something I think they will have to do," Gagnebin said. "Not much is happening now, but when it does it is going to happen quick. You better be ready to move with it and have a plan in place or you could be stuck on the outside."