# Wildcats beat the heat, get better at camp



**The Louisburg girls soccer team ended its team camp last Friday with an intrasquad scrimmage. The Wildcats not only competed against themselves, but against the heat as well as temperatures reached close to 100 degrees later in the week.**

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Coming off a 14-win season that ended in a regional championship in the program's first year, the Louisburg girls soccer team took to the field less than one month following the end of its season.

With temperatures and the heat index soaring close to 100 degrees, the Wildcats battled through the tough elements during their week-long team camp that ended last Friday. The Wildcat players gathered every morning for two hours working to refine their game.

Of course, the success they had last season made the heat a little more bearable.

"The heat was a problem for us, but we have tough kids that work hard and are focused on getting better," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We have twice as many water breaks as usual, but we were able to overcome it. Our program will never makes excuses. It was just another obstacle that we need to overcome and I feel we did fine with that."

Approximately 24 players attended camp each day and close to 30 have reported for summer workouts. The Wildcats also added eight freshman players to the mix, which could give them more depth next season.



**Louisburg coach Kyle Conley looks on as the team started its scrimmage last Friday.**

Although he wanted to stress fundamentals and conditioning, Conley also wanted to develop chemistry among the team. Louisburg lost three seniors off of last season's squad and he hopes to see different players step up as leaders.

"I felt camp went pretty well," Conley said. "With eight incoming freshmen, we needed to expand on our team chemistry. The girls had some issues with filling the void of (seniors Maddie) McDaniel, (Lilly) Scott and (Rylee) Bergh in regards to leadership. We worked that out and allowed the girls to discover how practice was going to be and expectations for our program.

"I was very pleased with the dedication that the freshmen had in attending their first high school soccer summer. They consistently showed up ready to work. I was very pleased with

the upperclassman and their focus to get better. Leadership isn’t always the one who does all the talking. I was very pleased with how my leaders led by example and supported and helped the freshmen within drills and training sessions.”

This camp was much different than the last one the Wildcats took part in a year ago. Back then, they were trying to get to know one another and prepare for their inaugural season.

Fast forward to this summer, the Wildcats are coming off a spot in the state quarterfinals and thoughts on the program have changed dramatically.



**Bria Jensen makes a pass during the team’s scrimmage Friday.**

“Last year we focused on the building blocks of playing soccer, but this year the bar has been set and we are expanding more on our tactical and technical aspects of the game,” Conley said. “We are expecting to keep improving our style of play. This camp and summer has been vastly different because of the expectations that our team has created for ourselves. It is a very exciting time for Louisburg girls soccer.”

It has been a busy time for the entire team as it hasn’t had much time to relax. Louisburg will continue its team workouts

over the summer, along with weight sessions.

Several Wildcats won't take much of a break at all as they will continue playing with their respective club teams. Still, Conley believes he was able to accomplish a lot during the team camp.

"We were looking to improve technically, formations, movement off the ball and communication," Conley said. "Those are four of the aspects that I feel we needed to improve on and they were our focus. I am very pleased with how we are developing, but we will have our work cut out for us. We need to increase our speed of play as well. I am excited to watch this team to continue to grow."

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# Five Wildcats placed on all-state soccer team



**Louisburg senior defender Rylee Bergh clears the ball away during a game earlier this season. Bergh and four other Wildcats were named to the Class 4-1A all-state team. Bergh and sophomore Bailey Belcher earned first-team honors.**

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Coming off a successful first season, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team was already well-recognized on the

regional level with nine all-Frontier League selections.

As it turned out, many of those same players were named to the all-state team that was released last week. Louisburg earned five spots on the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association all-state team.

Senior Rylee Bergh (defender) and sophomore Bailey Belcher (midfielder) were named to the Class 4-1A first team, while senior Maddie McDaniel (midfield), sophomore Shay Whiting (goalkeeper) and freshman Camdyn Clark (defender) were selected to the all-state second team.



Bailey Belcher, first team, midfield



Maddie McDaniel, second team, midifield



Shay Whiting, second team, goalkeeper



Camdyn Clark, second team, defender

“I think it is a fantastic honor to have our kids honored by other coaches within the 4A-1A class,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “These kids, as well as their teammates, bought

into our system of play and gave this town, the high school and the coaches everything that they had each and every night. I couldn’t be more proud of these young ladies.

“None of these accolades could not have been accomplished without their teammates. I think this is just the icing on the cake on how fantastic this season was for our 2016 girls soccer team. These young ladies are a great example of our program and how we want our program to be thought of.”

The Wildcats had a strong defense all season, which was a big reason for their 14-4-1 season and why they had three of those players selected to the all-state team. Bergh, the team’s centerback, led the way and limited several scoring opportunities.

With the help of Bergh, Clark and the other Wildcat defenders, Whiting was credited with eight shutouts on the season.

Belcher was one of the top scorers in the Frontier League this season as she finished with 33 goals to go along with four assists from the midfield spot. As for McDaniel, she was second on the team in scoring nine goals, but also had a team-high 13 assists.

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# Wildcat girls soccer earns nine spots on all-league



**Louisburg sophomore Bailey Belcher scorched the net this season as she finished with a team-high 33 goals and added four assists to earn first team all-Frontier League honors. The Wildcats earned nine spots on the team overall.**

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The Louisburg High School girls soccer team made quite an impression on the rest of the Frontier League in its first year.

Louisburg racked up 14 wins, won a regional title and advanced to the state quarterfinals in the Lady Cats' inaugural season. It was quite the feat and the league coaches made sure Louisburg was recognized for it.

The Lady Cats were awarded with nine selections on the all-league team that was released last week. Sophomore Bailey Belcher, along with seniors Maddie McDaniel and Rylee Bergh, led the way as each earned first team honors.

Junior Madisen Simpson, junior Shay Whiting (goalie), sophomore Georgia Wilde and freshman Camdyn Clark were named to the second team. Senior Lilly Scott and sophomore Izzie Ford were selected as honorable mentions.

"I was extremely happy with how the league viewed our girls," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "Of course I always feel we could have had more kids, but I am thankful for the honors that these young ladies received. These girls worked their tails off."



**Center back Rylee Bergh was named first team all-league as she led the Wildcat defense.**

Belcher was one of the top scorers in the Frontier League this season as she finished with 33 goals to go along with four assists from the midfield spot. Also when team awards were announced following the season, she was named as the team's Most Outstanding Player and earned the Golden Boot award for the most goals.

"Bailey had an exceptional year," Conley said. "I don't envision that record of 33 goals getting broken any time soon."

As for McDaniel, the Louisburg senior ended the season with nine goals and led the Lady Cats with 13 assists. She was also named as the team's Offensive Most Valuable Player.



**Maddie McDaniel recorded nine goals and 13 assists to earn first team all-league honors.**

“Maddie was a great leader on our team,” Conley said. “She was an individual who knew how to keep things light at practice, but also knew when it was time to work.”

Bergh was the Lady Cats’ leader on the defensive side as she helped post eight shutouts from the center back position and kept Louisburg’s defense organized. Bergh was also awarded the team’s Defensive MVP honor following the season.

“Rylee was an awesome center back and saved us countless times back there,” Conley said. “She was aggressive and relentless in the back. She was a major reason why we were able to post eight shutouts and a 1.06 goals against average.”

Simpson played well at the midfield spot, and while she wasn’t on the attack much, she finished with one goal and two assists.

As a first-year goalie, Whiting left quite the mark as she posted eight shutouts and also had 86 saves on the year.

Clark and Wilde were key parts to the Wildcat defense as they helped out Bergh and Whiting from the outside back positions. Clark was also named the team’s Freshman of the Year and added

four goals, while Wilde also finished with one goal.



Shay Whiting, goalie, second team



Madisen Simpson, second team



Georgia Wilde, second team



Camdyn Clark, second team



Lilly Scott, honorable mention



Izzie Ford, honorable mention

Before her season was halted to an injury, Ford was among the team leaders in goals scored, but still added six goals and five assists on the season from the forward position.

As for Scott, she finished with two goals and two assists. She was also given the Wildcat Award at the end of the year, which is for the best leader and attitude on the team.

**ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER**

**First team**

Mikayla Smith, Spring Hill, senior

Tarah Phongsavath, De Soto, junior

**Bailey Belcher, Louisburg, sophomore**

Tanith Beal, De Soto, junior

Bailey Billings, De Soto, senior

Hailey Jones, Spring Hill, senior

Madison Plake, De Soto, junior

**Maddie McDaniel, Louisburg, senior**

**Rylee Bergh, Louisburg, senior**

Erica Petry, Baldwin, senior

Goalie: Taylor Rogers, De Soto, sophomore

**Second team**

Alyssa Hargrove, De Soto, junior

**Madisen Simpson, Louisburg, junior**

Emily Girrens, Spring Hill, senior

Sara Watson, Spring Hill, sophomore

Carmen Rush, De Soto, junior

Caitlin Countryman, Baldwin, freshman

Madeline Keleher, De Soto, senior

**Georgia Wilde, Louisburg, sophomore**

Isabel Tiller, Baldwin, freshman

**Camdyn Clark, Louisburg, freshman**

**Goalie: Shay Whiting, Louisburg, sophomore**

**Honorable mention**

Olivia Young, De Soto, senior

Amanda Wray, Ottawa, sophomore

**Izzie Ford, Louisburg, sophomore**

Megann Lawrenz, Baldwin, senior

**Lilly Scott, Louisburg, senior**

Chloe Brown, Ottawa, senior

Goalie: Mallory Fredricks, Ottawa, senior

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# McDaniel to start new soccer journey at Allen




**Louisburg High School senior Maddie McDaniel recently signed**

**her letter of intent to play soccer for Allen Community College next season. Sitting next to Maddie are her parents Ian and Angie McDaniel. Standing (from left) is LHS assistant coach Michael Pickman and head coach Kyle Conley.**

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Soccer has always been a part of Maddie McDaniel's life.

She played it when she was a little kid, all the way up through high school as a member of the first senior class on the inaugural Louisburg girls soccer team.

Even though her high school career is finished, McDaniel doesn't want to leave soccer behind just yet.

McDaniel recently signed her letter of intent to play soccer for Allen Community College in Iola and is ready to take the next step in her life.

"It is pretty exciting since I have always played soccer and I knew since I was in middle school that I wanted to play soccer in college," McDaniel said. "It is a small school and it is a community college so I only have to go two years and I can maybe try and go to a bigger school. They even take you to showcases so that four-year colleges can look at us and hopefully move on. They are just like a family there too and that is the way they play."



**Louisburg’s Maddie McDaniel (left) will trade in her Louisburg uniform for an Allen County one next season.**

Playing in college wasn’t always a certainty for McDaniel, who has played club ball since her freshman year in high school. She had given up on the idea early on in high school, but her interest was rejuvenated after taking part in a tryout.

“I kind of got away from it a little bit, but then during one of my college showcases I had four college coaches come up to me and said they wanted me to play for them,” McDaniel said. “That was awesome, so I started to look more.”

McDaniel didn’t have to look far as she had interest from several smaller area schools, but Allen stood out among the rest. Two years ago, the Red Devils finished with a 13-4-2 record and were ranked in the top 20 in the nation under head coach Jeremy McGinnis.

Allen was 9-10 a season ago, but McDaniel is excited to help the Red Devils back toward the top.

“I think they are really good,” McDaniel said of the program. “The coach is fantastic and he really knows what he is doing. They have told me that he sees me as more of an attacking forward or attacking midfielder. He just wants me to make passes and score a lot of goals.”

This season with Louisburg, McDaniel made quite the impression with the first-year program. She helped the Wildcats to a regional title and a 14-4-1 record.

McDaniel finished the season with nine goals and 13 assists as a midfielder and was one of the team captains.

“That is fantastic to have someone to sign to further their

playing career," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "She was so influential to get girls soccer to LHS and then to have her sign to play at Allen County is just surreal. I could not be prouder of her. She is raising the bar of our program. It couldn't happen to a better young lady."

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# All-Frontier League Girls Soccer Team

**ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER**

**First team**

Mikayla Smith, Spring Hill, senior

Tarah Phongsavath, De Soto, junior

**Bailey Belcher, Louisburg, sophomore**

Tanith Beal, De Soto, junior

Bailey Billings, De Soto, senior

Hailey Jones, Spring Hill, senior

Madison Plake, De Soto, junior

**Maddie McDaniel, Louisburg, senior**

**Rylee Bergh, Louisburg, senior**

Erica Petry, Baldwin, senior

Goalie: Taylor Rogers, De Soto, sophomore

## Second team

Alyssa Hargrove, De Soto, junior

**Madisen Simpson, Louisburg, junior**

Emily Girrens, Spring Hill, senior

Sara Watson, Spring Hill, sophomore

Carmen Rush, De Soto, junior

Caitlin Countryman, Baldwin, freshman

Madeline Keleher, De Soto, senior

**Georgia Wilde, Louisburg, sophomore**

Isabel Tiller, Baldwin, freshman

**Camdyn Clark, Louisburg, freshman**

**Goalie: Shay Whiting, Louisburg, sophomore**

## Honorable mention

Olivia Young, De Soto, senior

Amanda Wray, Ottawa, sophomore

**Izzie Ford, Louisburg, sophomore**

Megann Lawrenz, Baldwin, senior

**Lilly Scott, Louisburg, senior**

Chloe Brown, Ottawa, senior

Goalie: Mallory Fredricks, Ottawa, senior

# Wildcats’ special season comes to a close



**Louisburg senior Rylee Bergh tries to beat a De Soto defender for a 50-50 ball during the Wildcats’ state quarterfinal match May 24 in Louisburg. The Wildcats came up short against De Soto in a 3-1 loss, but finished their season with a 14-4-1 record.**

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Following the final buzzer, this year’s version of the Louisburg High School girls soccer team huddled together for the final time.

Some players had tears in their eyes, others left the field with their heads down. Their journey was over.

Their inaugural season was complete after a 3-1 loss to De Soto in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal round on May 24 in Louisburg. It wasn’t the way they wanted to see their season come to a close.

“It is going to sting for a while,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “Ultimately, though, there is only one team that isn’t crying at the end of the year.”

De Soto, which split with Louisburg this season, came out on a

mission and scored three goals in the first 25 minutes of the match and the Wildcats quickly found themselves in a big hole.

The Wildcats weren't the same team that beat De Soto two weeks prior and it took them a little while to get into a rhythm.

"The first 20 minutes or so we just played scared," Conley said. "Unfortunately, that 20 minutes determined the game. It stinks because we have played so hard and free all year. Maybe it is my fault for meeting with them before the game and talking with them more about this than any of the others, I don't know. We just played nervous, afraid and played not to make mistakes instead of playing free."



**Georgia Wilde tries to console teammate Bailey Belcher (4) while Maddie McDaniel (right) tries to do the same to Madisen Simpson following the Wildcats' loss on May 24 in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinals.**

With every De Soto goal, however, the Wildcats played a little looser and it finally ended up with a goal of their own.

A minute following De Soto's third goal, Louisburg answered.

Sophomore Bailey Belcher took a shot on goal – the shot bounced off the goalie and junior Lilly Cook was there for the rebound and cut the De Soto lead to 3-1.

The Wildcats had a couple other shots on goal late in the first half to creep even closer, but couldn't find the back of the net.

"After that first 20 minutes it was a back and forth game," Conley said. "It really wasn't dominated by either team. It wasn't pretty soccer, but it was what it was and almost got another one at the end of the half and would have made the second half much different.



**Senior Lilly Scott clears the ball away from a De Soto player on May 24 in Louisburg.**

"We just had some mistakes early when they scored and there was no cover help like we have been preaching the last couple weeks. We weren't as united as we have been in the back. You will have games like that throughout the year, but when you have a game like that against De Soto, you have to play well to beat them and unfortunately those things came back and got us."

The loss also meant the team had to say goodbye to its three seniors. Midfielders Maddie McDaniel and Lilly Scott, along with defender Rylee Bergh as all three suited up for the Wildcats for the final time. The team also said farewell to manager Leslie Damian.

“Losing our three seniors is going to be difficult to replace,” Conley said. “They are good kids who work their butts off and leadership wise other kids are going to follow what they do. They don’t have to lead by voice that often, they lead by example and that is the best kind. It is great to have a vocal leader, but if you can lead by example and be that example every time, it just sets the tone for everyone else.

“Maddie had a nagging ankle injury for half the season and Lilly has had quad problems the last three weeks. There isn’t any fussing and not a lot of whining, it is just working hard and doing their job and carrying the team. They busted their butts and never played soft. Rylee kept us in a lot of games in the back and was just all over the place. Maddie got a lot of assists and Lilly helped distribute the ball out of the back which is huge. A lot of the times she was the girl before the assist and that opened up a lot of things. They all did very well academically and are going to further their education. Leslie was awesome too being the manager and team mom. When Mama Leslie talked, the team listened.”

The Wildcats shattered everyone’s expectations for the first-year program as it racked up a 14-4-1 record and captured a regional title. It was a special season for everyone involved and increased interest in girls soccer in Louisburg.

There were no baby steps in the program’s infancy. Instead, the Wildcats took one big giant step forward and are ready to get off the ground and take another one after a little stumble.

Still, the Wildcats know putting together a season like this one could be difficult to duplicate.

“I don’t know if a season like this is going to be repeated because it is going to be tough to do,” Conley said. “With 4A what it is, and the team’s you run into at regionals, it is tough to accomplish what these girls have done. We aren’t going to sneak up on anyone now. They are going to look at the schedule and say ‘Oh, look there is Louisburg, a first-year team.’ There were some teams that didn’t take us very seriously and we outworked them. That is not going to happen next year.”

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# Opinion: Wildcats pulling off improbable season



**The Louisburg High School soccer gathers on the field to celebrate Thursday’s regional championship win over Basehor-Linwood on Thursday. In just their first year in program history, Louisburg has posted a 14-3-1 record and is one win away from the state tournament.**

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Two months ago, 24 players got off the bus for the first time nervously anticipating history.

The butterflies in their stomach wouldn’t settle down and they didn’t know what to expect. That night in March at Harmon High School, the group of Louisburg High School girls soccer players were about to become something bigger than themselves – they were becoming a team.

It was a new frontier for the players, along with coaches Kyle Conley and Michael Pickman. Neither had been a part of a new program before as they embarked on trying to form a group of girls – some who haven’t played soccer in several years – into a cohesive unit.

After the Louisburg community helped raise nearly $40,000 to help fund the team, no one on the Wildcat roster wanted to let anyone down. They wanted to make everyone proud, but with that, comes a sense of anxiousness.

The Wildcats came together to win their season opener 2-0 over Harmon and the entire team breathed a collective sigh of relief. That night gave Louisburg the confidence is was looking for.

As it turned out, the players had nothing to worry about. Fast forward to the present and the Wildcats have put together a record no one in the program could have ever imagined in its first season.

Louisburg racked up 13 more wins since that night at Harmon and just captured a regional title with a 3-1 victory over Basehor-Linwood on Thursday. The Wildcats are also currently ranked No. 4 in Class 4-1A.

“I don’t think you can ever envision a new program winning a regional title,” Conley said. “We don’t have a bunch of super club kids and we aren’t a school that gets a bunch of kids to come in every year, but these kids work so hard. We may not be the most skilled teams at times, but we play with so much passion and heart.”

That they do.

This is my first go-round at covering a team in its infancy stages, but I can't imagine many programs can boast about the start this group of Louisburg players is having. Before the season, Conley was hoping his team could reach the .500 mark – which still would have been a great stepping stone.



**Senior Lilly Scott gets ready to pass off to teammate Savannah Reinhart during Thursday's regional title game.**

Instead, Conley and the Wildcats decided to take the elevator to the top floor. There apparently was no reason to stop in the middle.

Louisburg used the leadership of seniors Maddie McDaniel, Lilly Scott and Rylee Bergh to help form the team early in the season and the underclassmen have responded.

Sophomore Bailey Belcher is on a frantic scoring pace as she is sitting at 33 goals for the season, which would probably be a record in many long-standing programs, but Belcher keeps making Louisburg history with every goal.

Then there is Shay Whiting. The Louisburg sophomore had never played goalie before this season, but it hasn't shown. Whiting has eight shutouts on the season and has emerged as one of the best goalies in the Frontier League.



**Louisburg goalie Shay Whiting dives on ball to prevent a goal Thursday.**

Whiting has done this being vastly undersized, but what she lacks in size she makes up with tenacity.

"She is a bulldog," Conley said of Whiting. "She has great instincts, her reaction time is pretty solid and her footwork isn't bad. She is undersized, so she has to fight that. She just plays hard and doesn't want to let anything in. If it is going to hit her, she doesn't care. She is going to break a ball one of these times because she is going to stand there, wear it and eat it up.

"Shay is a smart kid, she learns quickly and she figures it out. Her and Sarah (Wilson) both know what is expected and both work their butts off. Shay has played well all year but Sarah has been right there with her to push her. She has the right attitude and I am really proud of her."

Although they have been major cogs in the Wildcats' success, the most astounding thing is Louisburg is winning with a roster filled with freshmen and sophomores. They have all

played their roles and done them well.

Those underclassmen have come through with game-winning goals, big stops on defense and have been there to pick each other up.

Yes, this group of Wildcats is quite the story. In just two short months, interest in girls soccer has taken off and more and more people are coming out to see what they are all about.

“Every one of them is playing so hard right now and I don’t think they want to let each other down,” Conley said. “That is awesome. We have avoided any drama and we are playing for each other. We are playing for everyone that comes to watch us, we are playing for this community and for all the girls that want to play high school soccer because now they have this opportunity.

“The girls are embracing that responsibility and they are going to run with it. We are a dangerous team because of it, because we are playing for everyone but ourselves.”

Louisburg hopes that run continues with a win Tuesday against De Soto in the state quarterfinals. The Wildcats defeated then-state ranked De Soto earlier this month in a dramatic come-from-behind win – a victory that put the rest of the league, and state on notice.

These girls are no fluke.

‘It just shows that we can work to get what we want,” Belcher said. “Granted, nobody expected us to be here but we want to go to state and this is what we are going to do.”

Even with a loss Tuesday, this team has nothing to hang their head about. Louisburg has overcome the odds in its first season to become something no one could have fathomed.

They have already won.

# REGIONAL CHAMPS! Wildcats knock off Basehor-Linwood



**Louisburg senior Maddie McDaniel holds up the Class 4-1A regional championship trophy following Thursday's 3-1 victory over Basehor-Linwood at Wildcat Sports Complex. The Wildcats will play De Soto at 4 p.m. Tuesday in Louisburg during the state quarterfinal match.**

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As the final buzzer sounded, members of the Louisburg girls soccer team rushed to each other in the middle of the field at the Wildcat Sports Complex. It was a sense of euphoria.

The Wildcats had every reason to be excited.

Louisburg – a program that has been in existence for all of two months – won its first regional title in program history Thursday after it ousted Basehor-Linwood in a 3-1 victory during the regional championship game. Needless to say those type of accomplishments for a first-year program don't happen every day.

In fact, it rarely happens.

"It is like we won everything," sophomore goalie Shay Whiting said. "This is our first year and it has never been done

before. Even if we have been playing for years and years, it is still a big accomplishment. I couldn’t be happier right now.”




**The Louisburg girls soccer team poses with their regional championship trophy Thursday following its 3-1 victory over Basehor-Linwood.**

The Wildcats (14-3-1) seemed to have the contest in control from the start as they scored a pair of goals in the first 30 minutes to take a two-goal lead. Just like in several other games this season, sophomore Bailey Belcher got things going for Louisburg.

Two minutes into the contest, Belcher dribbled past the Basehor defense and took a shot at the corner of the net to put it past the Bobcat goalie.

With 13 minutes left in the first half, it was a freshman who gave Louisburg a little breathing room. Hayli Detherage had an

opportunity in the box and took advantage with a goal to put the Wildcats up 2-0. It was the perfect time for Detherage to get her first varsity goal.

“For her to get her first goal in such a big game like this was so awesome to see,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “I couldn’t be happier for her and all her hard work has paid off.”



**Louisburg freshman Hayli Detherage gets some congratulations from her teammates following her first varsity goal in the first half.**

From there, it was Basehor that started to increase the pressure on the Wildcat defense. The Bobcats, who outshot the

Wildcats 9-8 on shots on goal, started putting some heat on Whiting.

It didn’t work early as Whiting made two diving saves on a flurry of shots to turn away what appeared was going to be a Basehor goal.

Basehor eventually cracked the Wildcat defense with five minutes left in the first to cut the lead in half, but Louisburg still clung to a 2-1 lead at halftime.

Early in the second half, Basehor continued to be on the offensive as it put together two corner kick opportunities and Whiting turned away both. Even when the Bobcats were able to get a ball past the Whiting, the Wildcat defense was there.

The Bobcats took a shot on Whiting, who was coming out of the goal, and it hit off the Louisburg goalie and rolled to the goal. However, senior Rylee Bergh charged toward the goal and kicked it away just before it crossed the line.

Louisburg’s back line of Bergh, Georgia Wilde, Camdyn Clark, Madisen Simpson, Kaitlyn Lewer and Lilly Scott bent, but didn’t break.




**Louisburg senior Rylee Bergh heads the ball away Thursday against Basehor-Linwood.**

“Defensively, we were sound enough,” Conley said. “We had some moments where we had some lapses, but that is going to happen. The kids just played so freaking hard and it is awesome. We are just playing with house money right now. No one, not even us, expected to be in this spot. Everyone said we wouldn’t be here, so why not see what happens and keep playing with passion and keep playing with heart and we will just sort it out later.”

Although the Wildcat defense didn’t break, it was Belcher who shattered the Bobcats’ spirit with 20 minutes left in the game. Belcher received a pass from Simpson as she took it around the right side and shot it when she was almost even

with the goal and hit it in the far corner of the net.

“I was just trying to get it over the goalie, but to be honest I don’t know how I did it,” Belcher said. “I am just so happy. I was hoping for this but I can’t say that I expected it. Everyone kind of came into this game saying it is going to be really close, which it was. I was worried for a little bit there but it turned out OK.”

Louisburg could have had more than three goals as sophomores Savannah Reinhart and Isabella Ford, along with junior Lily Cook and senior Maddie McDaniel all had decent looks at different points throughout the game.



**Louisburg sophomore Isabella Ford tries to head the ball into the goal before the Basehor goalie can stop it.**

However, it was Belcher’s final goal that left the Louisburg

sideline in a frenzy.

“There was not a lot of angle there,” Conley said. “I try to preach to all of them, but especially her, which is to aim at the far post. With girls soccer, goalies unfortunately they don’t have the explosion that a boys team will have, so if you chip it to the back side anything can happen. We like to go to that back stick a lot. Dadgum if that thing didn’t just go in. I am sure I looked like an idiot jumping up and down on the sideline, but it is worth it.”

The Wildcat sideline will be in more of a frenzy if they get another win Tuesday. Louisburg will host De Soto in a state quarterfinal match at 4 p.m.

Louisburg upset De Soto earlier this month as it scored two goals in the final 20 minutes to get a 2-1 win, and the two teams have split on the year. Conley knows De Soto will want to avenge its loss as both teams will have a lot to play for.

“(De Soto) is the program you want to emulate,” Conley said. “They play the right way, they have the right attitude and have the right tenacity. From 1 to 11, they are just quality players. It is going to have to be our work ethic against their skill and use our skill and just play hard. Anything can happen. We have proven that once so I think that gives us a little confidence that it can happen again.

“At the same time, they are going to have a little chip on their shoulder and they are going to come out fired up. It is on us to do our job and execute and anything can happen. I expect a well-played and physical game. I guarantee you that they think we stole it from them, so we just have to go earn it and show them that we are here. It is going to be a really good game.”

**Louisburg rolls Ottawa**

To get to the regional championship game, Louisburg first had to get past Ottawa and it did so in impressive fashion last Tuesday.

The Wildcats scored six first half goals on their way to a 9-0 victory over the Cyclones in Louisburg on what was a rain-soaked field.

The conditions didn’t seem to slow Bailey Belcher as she recorded a hat trick in the first half and finished with a season-high five goals for the game. Belcher was just one of several players to rack up stats.

Savannah Reinhart scored a pair of goals and also had a pair of assists. Isabella Ford finished with two goals and Maddie McDaniel recorded three assists on the day. Lily Cook also added an assist, while goalie Shay Whiting recorded her eighth shutout of the season.

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# Loss doesn’t dampen special senior night



**Louisburg seniors (from left) Maddie McDaniel, Lilly Scott, Rylee Bergh and manager Leslie Damian were honored during senior night ceremony following the the Wildcats’ game with Spring Hill on Thursday in Louisburg.**

Maddie McDaniel, Lilly Scott and Rylee Bergh were 20 minutes away from having a senior night to remember.

The Louisburg girls soccer team held a one goal lead over Spring Hill on Thursday in the Wildcats' regular season finale – one of just two teams to beat the Wildcats all season. With a win would come a spot as the regional's No. 1 seed and an outside shot at a Frontier League title.

Louisburg had its chance for redemption, but the No. 4-ranked Wildcats couldn't quite hang on. Spring Hill scored two goals in the final 20 minutes to end Louisburg's hope for revenge and the Wildcats fell 3-2 in Louisburg.

"I thought we played well enough to win," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We struggled at the start of the game and the start of the second half. We got pushed back and struggled to get our formation set. I felt overall the girls played a decent game, but we really struggled to find feet. It was almost like we tried to play too quick.

"I think we played well enough to win, but just couldn't quite make the most of our chances. We gave them shots, but they were from distance. That was part of the game plan to limit their quality scoring chances and I felt we did an excellent job at that."



**Senior Lilly Scott (right) clears the ball out of the back during Thursday's game in Louisburg.**

It was a disappointing loss for the three Wildcat seniors as they were honored, along with manager Leslie Damian, during senior night ceremonies following the game. The four were the first senior class to come through the LHS girls soccer program and Thursday's loss left some mixed emotions.

"It is really an honor because you will be known as the first senior class to have left the girls soccer team and it's also kind of sad because we only got to play for one year," McDaniel said. "The game was a good fight between both teams and we gave them a run for their money and had the lead. I think we got too cocky and let them go and that's when they took it from us, but other than that we had a great game overall. Everyone played great and I was so very proud of everyone and it was sure an emotional game for me."

The Wildcats found themselves down early as Spring Hill's Mikayla Smith found the back of the net in the 11th minute to give the Broncos a 1-0 lead. Smith was the focus of the Wildcat defense and made for a difficult matchup.

"Smith is a stud," Conley said. "She is as good as you will see at this level. We preached how essential it is to contain

them and stand them up. Unfortunately we couldn’t quite get that done, but it was a great match up that will help us from regionals.”

The deficit didn’t seem to bother Louisburg much.

Nine minutes later, it was a pair of sophomores that helped the Wildcats get back in the game on senior night. Izzie Ford crossed the ball to Bailey Belcher in the box and Belcher put the shot away to tie the match and it stayed that way until early in the second half.

Belcher continued her torrid scoring pace as she gave Louisburg the lead with 26 minutes left in the match. She lined up for a free kick from 30 yards out and her high-arching shot sailed over the outstretched arms of the Spring Hill goalie and found the back of the net.

“Bailey has been playing really well lately,” Conley said. “She has been able to get a lot of good chances and finish them. That was a nice free kick. It gave us a shot in the arm and we picked our pace up.”

Five minutes later, Spring Hill evened things up with a goal from Shelby Dawson. Smith then put Spring Hill ahead for good on a goal with 15 minutes left in the match.

Even with the loss, Conley realizes this is a special senior class in many aspects and one he is going to miss once the season is complete.

“This group is going to be tough to replace,” he said. “They are a great group that leads and challenges their teammates each and every day. They played their heart out and did so much to set the bar so high from the start of this program. I could not have asked for a better group of seniors. They are going to be greatly missed and hard to replace. I could not be more proud of them.”



**Louisburg sophomore Georgia Wilde wins a 50-50 ball Thursday against Spring Hill.**

The season has been special for everyone involved as the Wildcats accumulated a 12-3-1 record on the year and held the No. 4 ranking in Class 4-1A. Those results exceeded expectations many in the program had for themselves.

Two months ago, Louisburg was getting ready to compete in its first game. Now, the Wildcats are the No. 2 seed in the Northeast regional with hopes of state tournament aspirations.

“Being a newly created team, the expectations were to win a few games and just get better throughout the season, but being 12-3-1 is better than I could have ever imagined we would be,” Scott said. “A lot of hard work had been put in to get us where we are now. I’m really excited to start the postseason. We get the chance to continue playing as a team for a few more games and to face opponents we have played before, but might not have played well against earlier. I feel like we have a shot at a regional title and hopefully we do well at districts and eventually be on our way to state to battle for a title.”

The Wildcats host Ottawa (2-14) at 4 p.m. today in the first round of the regional tournament. Should Louisburg win, it

will play No. 7 Basehor-Linwood for the regional title at 4:30 p.m. in Louisburg.

Louisburg's junior varsity ended its season on a strong note as it defeated Spring Hill 4-0 to end its season with a 10-2-1 record.

The Wildcats got a unassisted goals from Camdyn Clark and Savannah Reinhart. Leia Shaffer scored on an assist from Hallie Hutsell and Quincy Rice scored on an assist from Reinhart.

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# Wildcats blank Baldwin for seventh win in a row



**Louisburg freshman Hayli Detherage dribbles past at Baldwin opponent during Tuesday's match in Louisburg. The Wildcats shutout Baldwin 4-0 to get their seventh consecutive win and are now 12-2-1 on the season.**

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All it took was one minute to put the Louisburg girls soccer team in prime position for its seventh victory in a row.

The Wildcats never let up after that.

Louisburg scored two goals in the opening minute and

eventually pulled away for a 4-0 victory over Baldwin on Tuesday in Louisburg. It marked the second win in as many days as it defeated Ottawa on Monday.

The two wins catapulted the Wildcats to a 12-2-1 record on the season and they have locked up one of the top two seeds in the regional tournament next week.

“We played well for the most part, especially playing the day before and that is always something that is unknown,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “With our limited numbers it makes it really hard to do so because it is so easy to get run down. Fatigue-wise we have 24 kids trying to play two games and we had a couple injuries hit again because of the physicality of the game, which is fine. It is the time of the year where you just have to suck it up and be tough.”

The Wildcats have certainly played tough in recent weeks as they have won seven consecutive games and haven’t lost since April 14. That loss, ironically, comes against the Lady Cats’ next foe, Spring Hill.

Louisburg hosts the Broncos on Thursday for senior night after falling to them 3-2 last month. The Wildcats have been on quite a tear since. They have jumped to the No. 4 team in Class 4-1A in the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association rankings and No. 3 in the latest KPI rankings.



**Junior Lily Cook (left) and sophomore Savannah Reinhart celebrate following a goal from Cook during Tuesday's game in Louisburg.**

"The girls are focused and they know what is going on," Conley said. "They are just playing well. We are pretty fired up. With social media and the parents getting a little more excited, people started to pay attention a little bit more, which is kinda cool. We have just been preaching the whole time that you have to stay level-headed no matter how bad or good it gets. You can't get too high or too low, otherwise it will fall apart one way or another.

"Credit to them, they have done a heck of a job staying level-headed and they enjoy it. They are ready to work and they want more and they know more is there to be had. It is awesome and a lot of fun right now."

Focus wasn't a problem for Louisburg against Baldwin as it opened the game with a goal 30 seconds into the contest. Sophomore Bailey Belcher took the open space, beat two Baldwin defenders and took a shot from the top of the box that sailed over the Baldwin goalie's head for the 1-0 lead.

Thirty seconds later, the Wildcats struck again.

Junior Lily Cook, off an assist from Belcher, found the back of the net to put the Wildcats up 2-0 and they were well on their way to another win.

Toward the end of the first half, Belcher struck again. Junior Madisen Simpson placed the ball over the Baldwin defense and caught Belcher in stride, as she beat the goalie on a 1-on-1 opportunity.

With 22 minutes left in the second half, the Wildcats sealed the win with their final goal. Sophomore Savannah Reinhart

made her way toward the goal and took a shot, which rebounded off the Baldwin goalie and Cook was there to put it away.

“It was a good start for us,” Conley said. “Unfortunately for Baldwin that is the way it has been for them lately. They have had a tough go of it with their starts so we knew we could get on them early. They are a much better team than what their record shows and they are really well coached and play the right way.

“It was big for us and I think we got a little comfortable, maybe too comfortable, because they started coming at us and we stopped playing so hard. We both played (Monday) knowing that fatigue was going to set in for somebody, especially with the heat. It was definitely a nice win.”



**Junior Madisen Simpson heads the ball away Tuesday against Baldwin.**

Louisburg’s defense held Baldwin to just four shots on goal and sophomore goalie Shay Whiting picked up her seventh shutout of the season.

Rylee Bergh, Georgia Wilde, Camdyn Clark, Lilly Scott,

Simpson, Bryn O’Meara and Kaitlyn Lewer provided the Wildcats with strong back line.

“In our first game against Baldwin we only gave up three shots and one was because of a foul and the other was a penalty kick,” Conley said. “We knew our defense was sound and that we were going to hold up well. We just needed to make sure we were covered up tight because they play a very direct style.”

The junior varsity picked up another win with a pair of second half goals. Wilde broke a scoreless tie in the second half and then Cook followed up with a goal on an assist from Peyton Shaffer.

Sophomore goalie Sarah Wilson recorded the shutout.

**Wildcats breeze past Ottawa**

OTTAWA – The question wasn’t whether the Lousiburg girls soccer team would beat Ottawa, but a matter of how long it would take.

Louisburg took it to the Cyclones early and never looked back in the 10-0 victory Monday in Ottawa. The Wildcats scored eight goals in the first half and added two more in the second before the game was called early in the second half due to the mercy rule.

“The girls did a good job handling a different playing style than we are used to seeing and poor field conditions,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “The girls played a direct game and were focused. I think it allowed us to work on some things that helped us against Baldwin. They girls played a nice game, but we focused on improving our communication on the field. I think that carried over against Baldwin very nicely.”

Sophomore Bailey Belcher recorded a hat trick in the first

half for Louisburg and finished the game with a season-high four goals. Senior Maddie McDaniel and sophomore Savannah Reinhart each had a pair of goals and McDaniel also had an assist.

Freshman Camdyn Clark and sophomore Isabella Ford each added a goal, while freshman Hayli Detherage and senior Lilly Scott each recorded an assist.

It was Ford who got the scoring started early in the first half in her first game back after sitting out with an injury for five weeks. Ford was among the team leaders in goals scored before her injury.

“It was nice to get some kids back that were sidelined with some lingering injuries and to have Izzie back,” Conley said. “She was a little rusty, but you could see that her thought process was in the right place. She knew what she wanted to do with the ball as she received it, so that is always a good sign.”