Wildcats pull off comeback in penalty kicks to get past Shawnee Mission North



Louisburg goalie Macy Lemke goes in for a save Monday against Shawnee Mission North during the Golden Bear Tournament at Turner High School.

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – Louisburg's first round game of the Golden Bear Tournament against Shawnee Mission North went from sunny and rosy, to bleak in a matter of minutes.

The Wildcats held a one goal lead, but gave up the tying score with just two minutes left in regulation. The match then went to penalty kicks and Louisburg found itself down 3-1 in a best of five attempts.

"Coming back from a 3-1 deficit in PK's, the odds on that are relatively small," Louisburg coach Ben York said.

Louisburg beat the odds as the Wildcats netted their final three penalty kicks and goalie Macy Lemke stopped the final three Bison attempts to leave with a 2-1 victory at Turner High School.

"For the majority of the game we did a really good job," York said. "The first half we were really on the front foot and had plenty of opportunities in the first 10 minutes. We strayed away from what got us success. With all that, and going against a big school with some talented players, it was good

to see the girls come away with a win.

“We faced a little adversity and it was good for the girls to go through that. Although we didn’t win how we wanted to, I think that will helps us later in the season.”



Louisburg’s Brylee Diederich (7) celebrates with Brianne Kuhlman (5) and Bree Gassman (20) after the team’s win in penalty kicks.

Lemke gave the Wildcats a lift when they needed most. Down 3-1 in penalty kicks, she got a pair of saves that kept her team in it.

Rowan Yows and Ellery Allen had makes to tie it at 3-all after the first five attempts. Each team brought an extra player out and junior Hailey Sword found the back of the net for Louisburg, while Lemke made a diving stop on a Bison attempt, that hit the post, and preserved the win.

Lemke was busy throughout the match, especially in the second half when she recorded six saves as the Bison dominated possession in the final 20 minutes.

“What is difficult is in the whole time I’ve been coaching,

penalty kicks is not something I have encountered but three times," York said. "We have gone over that a little in practice, but not much. What is difficult for the goalkeeper is you have to guess and have to be confident. I think Macy was waiting to react instead of letting her goalie instincts kick on the first couple shots. When she made that first save, that gave her a lot of confidence in the last three. She made some great saves earlier in the game too."



Junior defender Hailey Sword battles a North defender for the ball Monday at Turner High School.

From the opening whistle, Louisburg appeared in control of the game and the Wildcats took the lead in the first 10 minutes when a Yows shot from 25 yards out hit the back of the net.

The Wildcats (3-0) took a 1-0 lead at halftime and controlled possession in the first half. It could have been a bigger lead as they took nine shots on goal.

Shawnee Mission North put the pressure on in the second half and had the Wildcat defense on its heels for much of the final 20 minutes. The Bison, which had seven shots on goal, got one

to go with two minutes left in regulation when a cross hit off a Wildcat defender and in the back of the net.

All that set up the dramatics in penalty kicks and the Wildcats were able to advance to the tournament semifinals.



Louisburg's Lexi Hampton wins a 50-50 ball Monday against Shawnee Mission North.

"If we managed to hold our composure, we probably don't have to go through that mess," York said. "We were pressing toward the end of the game and were chasing a bit. We were a little tired, but that is a correctable thing and that will get better as the season goes along. We need to stay offensive and aggressive and not just sit in. It is something we can get better at."

The Wildcats will square off against Bonner Springs at 6 p.m. tonight in the semifinals at Turner High School.

Wildcats get road win at Leavenworth

Louisburg saw its lead slip away in the first half of Thursday’s game at Leavenworth, but that didn’t seem to bother the Wildcats much.

The Pioneers scored a goal in the final minutes of the first half to tie the match. In the second half, the Wildcats made sure the game was never in doubt.

Louisburg scored three goals in the final 40 minutes and left with a 4-1 victory over the Pioneers.

Senior Adyson Ross scored the Wildcats’ goal in the first half, and defender Ellery Allen came up on a corner opportunity and was able to find the back of the net to give Louisburg the lead in the second half.

Rowan Yows put the game away as she scored back-to-back goals to end it and gave the Wildcats their first road win of the year.

The Wildcats controlled possession for much of the action and kept the Leavenworth goalie busy as they took 31 shots on goals. Yows took eight of those, while senior Bree Gassman had six.

Week 1 Athlete of the Week: Rowan Yows



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week one of the spring sports season, sponsored by Landmark National Bank.

ROWAN YOWS, SOPHOMORE, GIRLS SOCCER

The Louisburg girls soccer team is off to an unbeaten start to its season and sophomore Rowan Yows is a big reason why. Yows helped Louisburg to a pair of wins over Lansing and Leavenworth last week. Yows scored a goal in the Wildcats' opener against Lansing in their 6-0 victory.

Against Leavenworth, Yows found the back of the net twice and also had an assist in Louisburg's 4-1 victory over Leavenworth last Thursday. Between the two games, Yows also finished with 11 shots on goal.

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

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Wildcats score five first half goals en route to shutout of Lansing



Louisburg junior Lola Edwards celebrates her first goal with teammates Rowan Yows (left) and Bree Gassman on Tuesday during the team's season opener. Edwards found the back of the net twice in the Wildcats' 6-0 win over Lansing.

Louisburg has practiced as a full team less than a handful of times, but there it was Tuesday, on the pitch for its season opener.

It wasn't ideal circumstances, but it didn't seem to bother

the Wildcats much – if at all.

The Wildcats scored five first half goals en route to a 6-0 shutout of Lansing at Wildcat Stadium. Five different players scored for Louisburg as it won its home opener.

“I told them at the onset that we didn’t need to focus on tactics,” Louisburg coach Ben York said. “I just wanted them to pressure and connect passes and see what happens. Fitness will only improve. We had a good first half, and good part of the second half, before we started to fade a little.”

“In the grand scheme of things, we are heading in right direction and I think theses games at beginning of season will help us. We were able to work on some stuff during the game and got settled in.”

Louisburg didn’t waste much time getting on the scoreboard as junior midfielder Lola Edwards found the back of the net to put the Wildcats up 1-0 just three minutes into the match. Sophomore Rowan Yows followed suit just a couple minutes later with a goal of her own to give the Wildcats a two-goal advantage.



Freshman Mena Fercho settles the ball during Tuesday's home match against Lansing. Fercho scored her first varsity goal in the first half.

Freshman Mena Fercho got into the scoring as she scored her first varsity goal to put the Wildcats put 3-0. Edwards then followed with her second goal of the game on a shot from more than 20 yards out.

Sophomore Jaden Bentz put the Wildcats up 5-0 late in the first half to help give them a large halftime lead.

In the second half, goals were a little harder to come by, but senior Adyson Ross sealed the win with a goal late in the contest.

York liked what he saw out of his team and the fact several different players got opportunities for shots on goal.



Senior defender Brianne Kuhlman takes the ball away from a Lansing player Tuesday at home.

“I was able to move kids around and look at them at different positions and some swing players got playing time as well,” York said. “It was good to see them come out with energy and ready to go.

“We also attacked differently than we did last year, and we changed the way we play. In year’s past, this was a fairly direct team. That just isn’t the way we are going to play. The result is many different people will have opportunities to score. The forwards are still going to have their chances, but it will be little different. Connecting and working the ball up the field, and scoring more off crossing opportunities, is something we hope to do more of.”

Junior goalie Macy Lemke also recorded her first clean sheet of the season as she tallied four saves, including a pair of diving stops in the first half to help preserve the team’s lead.



Junior defender Ellery Allen heads the ball away from a Lansing player.

“Macy is a good goalie,” York said. “She is fearless and very confident and has a good presence on the field. When it comes to that, she made some really good saves off the bat and it gives her and the girls some confidence. She is going to be tested a lot this year, so it was nice to see her do good things and she knows her role.”

Louisburg will try for back-to-back wins tonight as the Wildcats travel to Leavenworth. The match is set to begin at 6:15 p.m.

Experience, new coach ready to lead Wildcats for 2023

season



Louisburg junior Lexi Hampton returns as the team leader in goals scored and points from last season. The Wildcats open their season today at home against Lansing.

There hasn’t been the kind of prep that new Louisburg head coach Ben York would have liked going into his first season with the Wildcats girls soccer team.

School activities, spring break and other things have prevented the whole team from practicing together. With that, the Wildcats will open their season today as they host Lansing in their home opener.

Luckily for York, he has an experienced group coming back. Louisburg returns eight of its 11 starters from a year ago that lost in the regional championship game and finished with a 13-5 record.

“We really haven’t had a single practice with everyone there with trips, spring break and other things,” York said. “We will just see, but I couldn’t be more excited. I think the girls are ready to go.

“More than anything, we have a good group of responsible, intelligent and hard-working girls. The rest of it, we just need to figure how to get all that talent to work together on the field and provide good results.”

York is taking over for Kyle Conley, who coached the Wildcats since the program’s inception. The transition has been an easy

one according to York, and the girls have bought in since he started working with them over the summer.

“The biggest thing I am grateful for is since day one, there wasn’t a question of who is this guy and what is he doing,” York said. “I know they were upset when their coach left and he was a very, very large part of the girls program. He created just a wonderful environment for everyone.

“From day one, the girls didn’t question what I asked and that instant respect has been super helpful for me. Some of these girls might have known who I am before this started, but some of them don’t. It takes a little of the pressure off me and the girls have been ready to just move forward.”



Louisburg senior Adyson Ross is one of eight returning starters from a season ago.

The Wildcats will move forward with a lot of experience as they return six all-league players and eight starters in all.

It all starts in the midfield, where the Wildcats bring back a wealth of experience. That experience includes senior Adyson

Ross and junior Lola Edwards, who were all-state selections a season ago.

Sophomores Rowan Yows, Jaden Bentz and senior Brylee Diederich also return and played significant minutes for the Wildcats a year ago and will also see time in the midfield.

“I really think the midfield is the strength of our team,” York said. “We have six or seven quality midfielders and then we just need to figure out where we go from there.”



Junior Lola Edwards is back to lead a talented Wildcat midfield this season.

Louisburg also brings experience back up top. Junior Lexi Hampton, who returns as the team’s leading scorer from a year ago, will look to once again cause problems for opposing defenses.

Joining Hampton will be senior Bree Gassman, who will move up from her midfield spot she played a season ago. Sophomore Baileigh Johnson, Yows and Diederich could also see time up top as well. Senior Tehya Harvey would also see time at

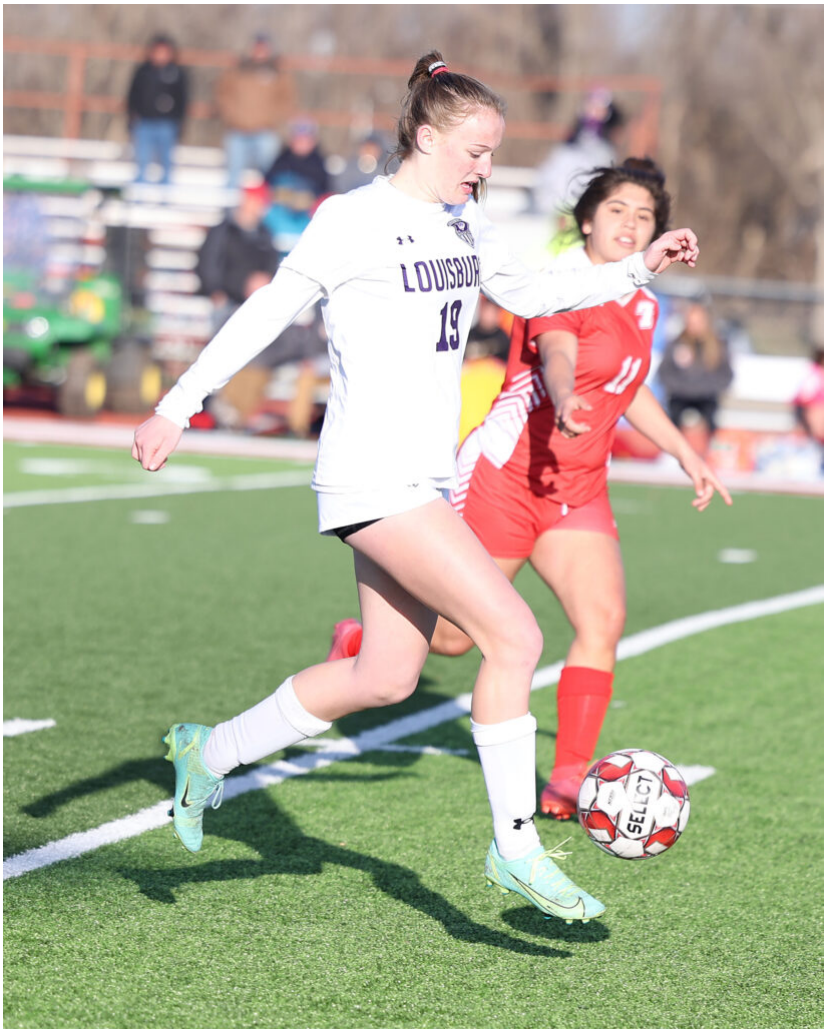
forward, but is out with an injury she suffered in the fall.

Defensively, the Wildcats will begin the season with four in the back and York will look to junior Hailey Sword to serve as the team’s stopper. She will join senior Brianne Kuhlman, junior Bronwynn Williams and junior newcomer Ellery Allen in the back.

Sophomore defender Evyn Richardson, who saw a lot of varsity time as a freshman, is out with an injury to begin the year.

“As far as what I am less sure about is our defense, just because we lost a good senior from last year and Evyn is out with an injury,” York said. “That is some big changes back there.”

“We are going to pull Hailey back and have her be our stopper and I think that will help solidify us back there, just because we are so strong in the midfield already. She is really good in the air and good with organizing. It may not be her favorite thing to do, but it is best for us. We might play with three in the back, but for now we are going to start with four and see how that goes. It is a little safer way to start with.”



Louisburg junior Hailey Sword will make the move to defense this season and is the team's stopper in the back.

The Wildcats will also introduce a new goalie as junior Macy Lemke will take on the starting role full time after seeing some playing time on the varsity level a year ago.

"I watched a few games last year and I could tell that Macy was the future in goal and she did a great job," York said. "Macy hasn't missed a beat taking over for Sierra (Hahn), who is off playing college ball right now. She is confident and a good presence on the field. I have all the faith in her and has made some great saves."

Louisburg has a good amount of depth this season, but York isn't quite sure how he is going to use it all yet.

"I don't like to sub a whole lot," York said. "I have 17 girls that can play and probably 14 of them that wouldn't like to

sub off. I like the cohesiveness on the field and letting them play, but I also understand that we are blessed right now to have extra talent. If we can find ways to make that all happen without killing the chemistry, then we will do that."

The Wildcats begin their season tonight when they host Lansing and will begin their journey to what they hope is a successful season.

"I don't try to set expectations until I know more about the group," York said. "We are just going to take (Tuesday) and see what we do. This is all new to me as far as knowing what challenges other teams present. I just want them to do their best every day and will see what happens after that."

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2022

It was a successful, and eventful, 2022 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program.

This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and a few programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the top stories from 2022, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the writeup is the link to

the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account – whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site.

This year was a blast to cover and I am looking forward to seeing what 2023 will bring. Thank you to everyone for their support and can't wait for it all to begin again.



10. Louisburg golf qualifies for state

FORT SCOTT – As the scores were rolling in, the Louisburg golf team was a little worried.

The Wildcats were in jeopardy of not qualifying for state after a few of the golfers didn't have the scores they were hoping for in the Class 4A regional tournament in Fort Scott.

Chanute and Independence had already assured themselves of a spot, but the third place team was up in the air as the top

three teams automatically qualify for state.

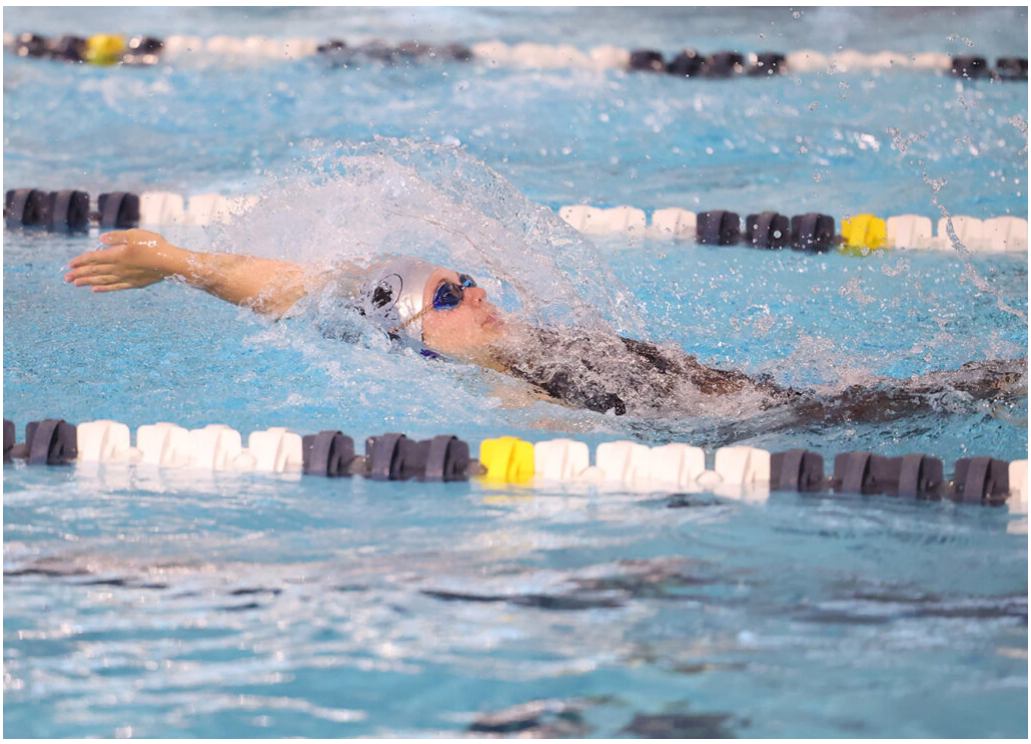
As it turned out, the Wildcats had nothing to worry about as they edged Paola by four strokes to finish in third with a 357 to secure their third consecutive spot in the 4A state tournament.

Seniors A.J. Arriola, Sam Wheeler, Ian Kirkpatrick, Johnny Thompson, along with juniors Jackson Olson and Nick Lancaster, advanced to the state tournament.

Arriola carded a 78 and finished as a regional runner-up, as he was just two strokes behind regional champion Drayton Cleaver of Chanute.

As for Olson, the Louisburg junior set a personal record by six strokes to shoot an 81 and took fourth overall. Those personal bests were enough to get the Wildcats into that third place spot.

At state, Arriola and Wheeler finished as the team's top two golfers. Arriola carded a 97 to take 59th overall, while Wheeler finished with a 98 and came in 66th.



9. Brueggen’s earns school’s first state swim medal

LENEXA – Even though she is just a freshman, Sabra Brueggen is already putting a stamp on her high school swim career at Louisburg High School.

It all came to a rousing end on May 21 as Brueggen earned her first state medal at the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Diving Championships at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center.

Brueggen became the first swimmer in school history to earn a state medal as she finished fifth in the 100-yard backstroke in 1:00.58.

On the day before in the preliminaries, Brueggen also took fifth in a season-best time of 1:00.15.

“Medaling as freshman means the world to me, and it proves to me that all of my hard work for all of these years, has paid off,” Brueggen said. “I feel like I performed my absolute best at state, and I was very happy with the results. It gives me confidence that I will have a bright future representing OzPaLou at the state swim meets.”

She nearly had a second medal in the 50 freestyle. Brueggen put together a season-best time of 25.26 seconds, but finished ninth overall. It was the same finish she had the in the preliminaries.

The top eight in each event earn a state medal as she was just .06 away from earning another spot on the medal stand.



8. Harding takes over as Wildcat football coach

The Louisburg football program had a different leader on the sidelines this past season.

The USD 416 Board of Education approved the hire of LHS assistant coach Drew Harding to be the team's new head coach in January after the district decided not to renew the contact of former coach Robert Ebenstein.

Harding spent the last five seasons as a Wildcat assistant coach, including time as a defensive coordinator. He is a 2010 Louisburg graduate and was a big part of the Wildcat program during his time as a student-athlete at Louisburg High School.

However, Harding didn't see himself be a head coach of any sport coming out of college.

"It means a lot," Harding said. "When I got out of school, I didn't get into education right away and started somewhere else. I decided to get into education because of the impact my former coaches at Louisburg had on me. To come full circle and

to be in the position that I am in now, is pretty surreal. I am really excited for the opportunity and hopefully I can have the same type of impact on student athletes as they come through the program.”

Ebenstein has the been the head coach the last five seasons and helped the Wildcats to a 30-18 record during that time, including a Frontier League and regional title in 2018. He had a winning record three of those five seasons.

He was also named the KFCA Coach of the Year during that season and was selected to be an assistant coach for the Kansas Shrine Bowl. He was an assistant coach for the Wildcat program for five years before earning the head coaching job.



7. Conley resigns a Louisburg head boys and girls soccer coach

Louisburg High School head boys and girls soccer coach Kyle Conley stepped down from his position after seven years.

He was recently hired to lead the boys and girls soccer programs at Blue Valley West, where he will serve as the head coach of both teams.

Conley, who also taught social studies at LHS, informed the players and parents of his decision on May 4. The Blue Valley Board of Education approved his hire on May 9.

“Making the decision to leave Louisburg was extremely difficult,” Conley said. “The players and parents, both past and present, made this decision tough. No parents or players caused this decision. I am very thankful to Mr. (Dave) Tappan and Mr. (Darin) Gagnebin for giving me this opportunity to coach and teach at Louisburg. The amount of support that my teams, my family and I received from Louisburg soccer parents and the community was incredible.”

Bobby Bovaird was hired as the new boys head coach, while Ben York returned to the program as the new assistant. York was also named the girls head coach after serving 13 years as the boys head coach previous to Conley.

Conley has the been head girls coach at Louisburg since its inception in 2016 and has led that program to four consecutive state final fours.

Twice, the Wildcats made the state championship game and finished runner-up on both occasions. He has guided the program to an 82-34-3 record.

Conley took over the boys program in 2016 and finished with a 77-32-3 record. He led the Wildcats to two state final fours during that span, including a third place finish in 2020.

“I am so proud of the things that our student athletes in the soccer programs have accomplished both on and off the soccer field,” Conley said. “I will always cherish the memories that we have made here with the Louisburg soccer programs.”



6. Girls cross country qualifies for state, Vohs earns state medal

WAMEGO – For the second consecutive season, Emma Vohs left the Class 4A state cross country meet with more than was she arrived with.

Vohs earned her second state medal at Wamego Country Club as she finished 10th overall with a time of 20 minutes and 51 seconds. The Louisburg junior did what she set out to accomplish.

“I was so excited to win another state medal this season and couldn’t be happier that I reached my goal for that race, which was placing top 10,” Vohs said. “The race was a tougher course, as was the competition this year, but I am blessed to run with such talented girls that push me to do better each race.”

Vohs led the Lady Cat team that qualified for state for the sixth consecutive season. As a team, Louisburg finished eighth overall with 208 points.

A week earlier at regionals, the team of Vohs, Maddy Rhamy, Lola Edwards, Nova Ptacek, Bree Gassman, Erin Apple and Madison Huggins finished third to punch their ticket to state

“It never gets old seeing the joy in the team’s eyes when they hear they qualified for state,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “The girls work hard to accomplish this goal each year, and because of their dedication to their sport, they achieve great things even if they might not make it, but they did.

“The program has built itself and I’m just glad to be a part of it. Yes, we put together a training plan to accomplish great things at the end of the season, but the runners do the work to get there. It takes self discipline, motivation and guts to be there at the end of the season.”



5. Wildcat wrestling medals 3 at state

Louisburg wrestling has had its fair share of state medalists in its long history, but what the Wildcats accomplished in February at the Tony’s Pizza Events Center in Salina was something the program had never seen before.

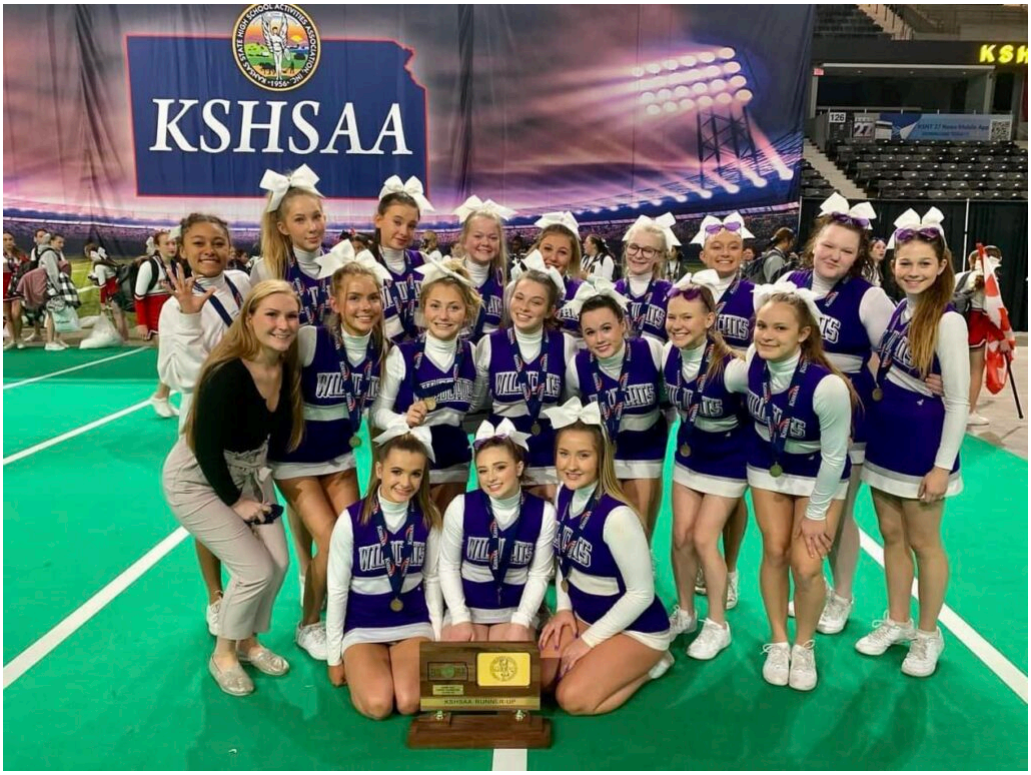
The Wildcats left the Class 4A state tournament with three state medalists, the most for one year in program history.

Aiden Barker (195 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126) and Elijah Eslinger (285) each finished in the top six in their respective weight classes and put together their best performances of the season. It was also the first time each of them earned a state medal.

“This season was the most state placers we’ve had in a single year in program history,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Prior to 1992, KSHSAA only medaled the top 4 in each weight. In both 1988 and 1989, we had two top-4 placers and one top-6 placer, but this really shows how the program is progressing and developing. We nearly had four medalists, too.”

Barker, a senior, was a favorite for a medal heading into Salina and finished fifth overall with a 13-1 major decision over Ottawa’s Jared Ferguson in the fifth-place match.

Bartlett and Eslinger also left lasting impressions on the Wildcat program as each medaled sixth overall after both nearly turned their brackets upside down as they advanced to the semifinals on Friday. They both guaranteed themselves a medal on the first day.



4. Louisburg cheer earns state runner-up performance

TOPEKA – It has almost become commonplace to see the Louisburg High School cheer squad in the finals of the Class 4A Gameday Spirit Showcase.

However, that doesn't mean the cheerleaders are any less excited about it.

For the second straight season, the Wildcats finished as the state runner-up in the Class 4A competition at the Stormont-Vail Events Center. They finished with a score of 79.45 and were one point behind champion Paola.

It is the fourth straight season that the Wildcats have finished in the top three, which included a state championship in 2019.

"I am so unbelievably and incredibly proud of this team," Louisburg coach Marissa Morrow said. "This positivity and attitude that these girls have shown this year have been the

key to our success. I had no doubt that the material and performances we brought on Saturday had the potential to do well, but it was the girls who made it possible to pull it together. They were all such competitors and left it all out on the mat, and I couldn’t ask for more. We also could not have done it without the support of our amazing cheer families.”

Members of the team are Sydney Dudzik, Bella Feikert, Zoe Cutshaw, Caroline Dugger, Elizabeth George, Addison Drake, Brooklyn Harmon, Adison Vargo, Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Sienna Finch, Alayna Stohs, Alaina Dudzik, Maddie O’Keefe, Liz Willming, Kayleigh Ramsey, Taryn Osborn, Anna Brizendine and Jocelyn Burk.



3. LHS football secures Frontier League title

With just over a minute left in regulation, Louisburg was staring at the possibility of their first league loss and was

watching an outright Frontier League title slip away.

Spring Hill scored a touchdown and took a four-point lead with 1 minute and 12 seconds left. Things were looking bleak for the Wildcats.

As it turned out, 52 seconds was all the Wildcats needed to pull off one of the season's most memorable moments. Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle found junior Caden Caplinger in the endzone on an 18-yard touchdown pass with 20 seconds remaining to give the Wildcats a 20-17 victory.

The win was the Wildcats' seventh straight on the season and clinched the team's first Frontier League championship since 2018.

"There weren't a lot of people who thought we could be league champions," Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. "I don't think it was anything that people expected out of us, and the Frontier League is really good. For this group to come to work, get better every day and to see success is pretty sweet."

The win was extra special for 16 Louisburg seniors as they were also able to celebrate that league title on Senior Night.

Jackson Kush, Nathan Apple, Carson Wade, Isaiah Whitley, Riley Van Eaton, J.R. Rooney, Will Hutsell, Brayton Brueggen, Christian Golladay, Nathan Vincent, Jase Hovey, Mack Newell, Hunter Moore, Mason Dobbins, Corbin Hamman and Layne Ryals all got to end their final regular season home game with a win.

"The Frontier League title means so much to me and this team," Rooney said. "As a team before the season, the seniors wrote down our goals, and league champs was on everyone's list. To clinch it on senior night was amazing. Going undefeated at home, to win it on our field in front of our town – it was an indescribable feeling."



2. Wildcat volleyball finishes fourth at state

HUTCHINSON – The state tournament ended the way it started for the Louisburg volleyball team – with a loss to Towanda-Circle.

Still, it was everything that happened in between that made for a lot of lasting memories for the Wildcat players.

Louisburg went 2-1 in pool play at the Hutchinson Sports Arena, which included a revenge win over Tonganoxie in the final match of the day. That gave the Lady Cats a spot in the state semifinals Saturday, where they finished fourth in Class 4A.

The Wildcats suffered a 2-0 loss to both Bishop Miege and Circle, but they still ended their season as one of the state's top teams.

"I am extremely proud of this team," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "Looking at how we started this season, and our ups and downs along the way, it is a huge accomplishment for

them to have come together as a team at the end of the season and play our best volleyball yet. It was apparent in the last couple of weeks that they really started playing for each other and capitalizing on the strong team bonds they built throughout the year.”

It was all thanks to an upset the previous week. Louisburg defeated the state’s No. 1 seed, Baldwin, in the sub-state championship match to earn the state berth.

The Wildcats, the No. 9 seed, knocked off No. 1 seed Baldwin, 25-18 and 25-19, at Baldwin High School in the finals of the Class 4A sub-state tournament. That win puts Louisburg in the state tournament for the first time since 2019.

Members of the team are Emma Prettyman, Adyson Ross, Claire Brown, Allie Kennedy, Ashlyn Berck, Delaney Nelson, Izzy Moreland, Bronwynn Williams, Caileigh Kilgore, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword and Madelyn Williams.



1. Wildcat boys take third at state

track; Koontz, Caplinger win state titles; Lady Cats medal nine

WICHITA – For the second consecutive season, the Louisburg boys track and field team brought home hardware from the Class 4A state meet.

After winning the state championship in 2021, the Wildcats once again found their way to the podium in Wichita as they finished third overall with 67 points.

Andale won the state championship with 101 points and Chanute was the state runner-up with 71.

Louisburg got points from a lot of different areas as the Wildcats medaled in 10 events and had 12 medalists overall, including all three of their relays.

Louisburg senior Tom Koontz won a pair of state titles in the hurdles, while sophomore Caden Caplinger captured the gold medal in the pole vault.



“I am not going to complain at all,” Koontz said. “I believe

we came here with less people than we did last year and everyone did their best. Even though we didn’t get exactly what we wanted, third place is still a great achievement.”

What he couldn’t believe was he had just won his first state title in the 300 hurdles and Koontz did so by breaking a 14-year-old school record. Koontz ran a time of 38.98 seconds to break R.J. Saunders’ record of 39.16 set in 2008 to earn the gold.

It turned out to be his second state title of the day as he also earned the gold medal in the 110-meter high hurdles with a time of 14.61 seconds. Koontz won the state in that event last season as well.

Caplinger cleared a lot of his marks in the pole vault and did so in convincing fashion as he was able to win a state title in just his second year with the program.



Last season at state, Caplinger medaled eighth after he cleared 12-6. A year later, the Louisburg sophomore improved his mark by two feet and is a state champion.

It was an impressive showing from Caplinger as he didn't miss an attempt until he tried for 15 feet at the end. He entered the competition at 12-6 and had five straight successful clearances.

"At first I was really nervous, but then it just kind of turned into a routine thing," Caplinger said. "I started going over heights consistently and the rest just kind of fell into place. I cleared 14-6 earlier this week twice in a row, so I knew I could do it. I was still a little nervous though."

As for the Lady Cats, Delaney Wright left the state meet with three medals. Wright, who has been coming back from a severe injury for most of the season, finished as the state runner-up in the 400-meter dash, third place in the 200 dash and fifth in the long jump.

A season ago, Wright was the state champion in all three events, but couldn't get the repeat she was hoping for.



“Going into state I knew I still wasn’t where I want to be due to my injury a couple months ago,” Wright said. “But I wanted to attack it still and give it all I had. I am blessed I was there to compete and earn three medals cause in the beginning I didn’t even know if I was going to compete my senior year.”

In all, the Lady Cats put together a strong state performance as they medaled in nine events and finished with 40 team points and took sixth overall. They were just eight points away from the third place spot, and a plaque.

“Once again the state qualifiers did an amazing job,” Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. “They all performed well and most beyond expectations. To leave the meet finishing in sixth place was outstanding. We left with lots of medals and great memories.”

York anxious to get back on sidelines as Wildcat girls soccer coach



New Louisburg girls soccer coach Ben York is back to work with his new team this summer. York was the boys head coach for 13 seasons, before resigning seven years ago.

When Ben York stepped away as head coach of the Louisburg boys

soccer team more than seven years ago, he always had in the back of his mind that he truly wasn’t finished.

York, who coached the Wildcat boys for 13 seasons as the program’s first head coach, has always enjoyed helping grow the game of soccer in Louisburg.

“When I stopped coaching all those years ago, I did so, not because I didn’t enjoying anymore, but I did it because I wanted to spend more time with my family and my kids who are growing up,” York said. “I’ve always loved coaching and helping kids grow in the game. Whenever the time was right, I knew that I wanted to get back into coaching.”

That time is now for York.

After coaching the boys team for more than a decade, York will shift his focus to the girls soccer team as he was named the head coach after Kyle Conley resigned his post after seven years with the program.

“I am absolutely excited to coach and get to know these girls better,” York said. “It really kind of came out of nowhere as I wasn’t expecting Coach Conley to leave. A lot of things had to line up for me to be able to coach again, but I am at the point in my life where I can put my energy into coaching again.

“There is a lot of talent in this program and Coach Conley did a great job building it up. I just want to carry it on and do what I can to move it forward.”

York didn’t waste any time getting to know the new group as he helped run the team camp back in June and is already conducting practices throughout the summer.

“It has been wonderful getting to know the girls, some of whom I was familiar with already, but they have been very welcoming and respectful to me,” York said. “Losing a coach like Conley,

that did a lot of wonderful things for the program, there could be girls who were hesitant about the change. But they have treated me so well and I have enjoyed my time with them.

“They are coming off a tough loss to end their season and they are already out here trying to get better for next year and I love to see that. They were very attentive to what I had to say and I think that says a lot about the quality of girls in this program.”

Although he spent 13 seasons as a boys coach, it will be first coaching a girls team and York realizes when it comes down to the game, there isn’t much difference.

“Honestly, as far as teaching goes, it really is about the same,” York said. “The cool thing I have noticed in working with the girls is they like to show up like 20-30 minutes early to workouts, visit for awhile and then get to practice. Whereas the boys would show up right on time, slip their shoes on and go. That is the main difference I see.

“We are going to be do doing the same type of drills and the teaching of the game is the same. I want to uphold the tradition that is already here and I think the girls are ready to do that. I am really excited to coach them.”

The foundation is set for the Wildcat girls program as they have two state runner-up finishes in seven years and made the state final four in four straight years before falling in the regional championship this season in a 1-0 loss to Topeka-Hayden.

Louisburg will return many of those players next season and York is excited for what lies ahead.

“This group is very talented and there are a lot of athletes out there,” York said. “We are returning a lot of starters and girls that saw a lot of varsity time, so I know their expectations will be high. I know we will have our fair share

of success.

“However I don’t judge a season based on wins or losses likes some people do. The thing I want to see is if we have made these kids better people on and off the field. I want to see them grow as players and represent Louisburg the best way possible. If we do that, some of those successes will follow.”

Conley’s family atmosphere lifted Wildcat soccer to new heights



Louisburg coach Kyle Conley hugs goalie Sierra Hahn following the team’s fourth place state finish in 2021. Conley stepped down after seven seasons with the Wildcats.

One hundred and sixty wins.

Nine regional championships.

Six state final four appearances.

Two state runner-up finishes.

Those are just some of the many accomplishments the Louisburg High School soccer programs had in the seven years under head coach Kyle Conley.

With all that success, many awards followed and the Wildcats became one of the top teams in Class 4-1A during that seven-year stretch.

In less than a decade, Conley accumulated a resume worthy enough to put him in the LHS Hall of Fame and is considered one of the top coaches in the state.

However, having that much notoriety brings more opportunities and Conley, despite it being a tough decision, has taken on a new challenge as he was recently hired to coach the Blue Valley West soccer programs.

It was one of the harder choices he’s ever had to make.



Kyle Conley watches from the bench as his girls team advanced to the state final four in 2021.

“It is bittersweet,” Conley said. “Everything we have established, accomplished and the culture we have at Louisburg

has been fantastic. There was just a great teaching and coaching opportunity that came along and it was hard to pass up.”

His decision left a lot his current and former players either sad or shocked – a lot of them probably both.

However, it didn’t make them appreciate him any less and it had nothing to do with the stats listed above. It is about more than just soccer.

It is about life.

It is about family.

Year One

It was a wild first season for Conley as he was hired to start and lead the girls program in 2016 and was named as the boys head coach later that year.

No one could have imagine the success that followed.

In the girls’ first ever season, Conley led the Wildcats to a 14-4-1 record, a regional championship and a spot in the state quarterfinals.

As if that wasn’t enough, he guided the boys to their best finish in school history (at the time) as the Wildcats made their first state final four and took fourth.

“For the girls, we just didn’t want to suck for three years so they would cancel the program,” Conley said. “The community raised $38,000 for the first four years. We had about 43 girls come out that were interested before the season and then it went down to like 24. We were trying to have a JV and a varsity and hope we would hold on.

“Then I took over the boys job in the summer and we were doing things a little differently and having the boys get used to

our expectations and how we were going to do things. It took the boys six games or so for them to truly buy in and then we just went on a tear. They had a really good year. I think we beat Tonganoxie 2-1 in overtime and the boys' confidence really seemed to grow. We made the state final four and it was pretty exciting. It was wild, actually."



Kyle Conley huddles his team up prior to the program's first-ever game in 2016.

Conley put pressure on himself, especially on the girls side, to get a program out of its infancy and grow it into something Louisburg could look on with pride.

The community had just raised more than $30,000 to fund the program for three years and Conley wanted to show that their hard work wasn't for nothing.

As it turned out, he had nothing to worry about.

Conley guided the Wildcat girls to four straight state final fours, including two state championship appearances in the program's first five years of existence.

The program went from an infant to being a full-grown adult in a matter of no time.

"It was an incredible situation," Conley said. "The kids did really well. The parents bought in, the school bought in and

the community bought in and we just took off. It set the standard. The kids just wanted to keep going back and they made that their goal every year. It has been a heck of a run.”



Kyle Conley coached the girls program to four state final fours and two state runner-up finishes.

One of the program’s first players, Bailey Belcher, saw that Conley was going to have success even before the Wildcats took the field for that first time in 2016.

Belcher, who went on to play for Missouri Southern after high school, saw a person that cared about more than wins and losses.

“Conley has made a huge impact on the soccer programs,” Belcher said. “I don’t think it would have ever been where it’s at, or what it got to, if he wouldn’t have started coaching for Louisburg. He knew every player was different and developing them wasn’t always the same process. He took the time to get to know his players and learn what they needed to be coached.

“Of course, there were certain things, like fitness, that were done his way, and for good reason. As hard as it was, we got better and it always showed. He gave everyone a chance to be at the best position they could be in. He is the only coach I’ve ever had that put as much time and effort into each

individual player the way that he did.”

Raistlin Brewer, who played under coach Ben York before Conley took over the boys program, noticed a change right away.



Kyle Conley gives instructions Brock Bila and Landon Johnson before entering the game.

“One of Conley’s first approaches for us was being in shape, so that meant tons and tons of running, even if it was triple digits outside,” Brewer said. “It wasn’t my favorite thing, but we definitely were in better shape than most teams. I loved having Ben as a coach, but having Conley at the school made things a lot easier. If we ever needed to talk to him about something, he was just down the hall. He would definitely get a little bit animated, but he just wanted us to be our best and to see us succeed.”

Success followed the Wildcat programs for the next six seasons as the boys won three more regional titles and had another state final four appearance in 2020, when the Wildcats finished third overall.

All that success, was due to the work the players – and Conley – put into the program.



The Louisburg boys celebrated their 2016 state quarterfinal win with a bucket dump on head coach Kyle Conley.

“First and foremost he is a great person who cares about every single one of his players,” said Braden Yows, a senior on the 2021 team. “One of the big things that differentiates him is the enthusiasm and passion he brings to the program everyday. During his time here we saw both the boys and girls programs grow in the number of players and success. He expected discipline and great effort in everything we did on and off the field.”

As much as the Wildcats’ accomplishments were formed during the season, Conley never slowed down in the offseason

Recruiting The Halls

Despite the accolades, Louisburg is not loaded with tons of soccer talent.

So, because of that, Conley put on his salesman’s hat and hit the hallways – trying to get as many kids out for soccer as he could.

“To be fair, people are always saying we have all these club kids and we don’t,” Conley said. “We have like five or six that play year-round, maybe a little more depending on the year. You buy into a kid, find what they are good at, find what makes them tick and then you just push that kid. Then all of a sudden you have an Erin Lemke.”

Lemke, a freshman in 2017, had plans on competing in track. She had just finished basketball and soccer really never entered her mind.

“Before high school I had only played maybe two seasons of soccer before,” Lemke said. “I planned on running track when I was asked by (Michael) Pickman my freshman year if I would play. Then Conley started asking me in the halls if I would play and to get my friends from the volleyball and basketball team to play. In the end, myself and Carson Buffington were at soccer tryouts that spring.”

Both Lemke and Buffington turned out to be key figures for the Wildcat program.

Buffington went on to be an all-league and all-state goalie, while Lemke had one of the more memorable goals in program history – as a freshman.

Lemke started the 2017 season at the junior varsity level, and due to injuries, moved up and got some varsity time. She saw more and more minutes as the season went along, and in the state quarterfinal game against Piper, scored the golden goal to send the Wildcats to their first state final four.



Erin Lemke is all smiles after she realized she scored the game-winning goal in the state quarterfinals in 2017 against Piper.

“I have used her as an example for a long time,” Conley said. “I told other players that they can be like her and not to be nervous. It is just fun to watch kids like that take off and gain confidence in themselves on the field and in life.”

One small conversation in the hallway changed Lemke’s time in high school for the better.

“Playing for coach Conley created some of my favorite memories at Louisburg High School,” Lemke said. “Being on the soccer team built my confidence as a high schooler that has carried into college.

“Conley helped us girls who had never played by teaching the fundamentals of soccer, literally how to kick a ball and who to pass to. Building on each skill and creating relationships with each of the girls really bonded our team.”

Lemke’s story is not an outlier as Conley has brought on a lot

of first-time soccer players and has had similar successes. It has even trickled down to the younger kids.



Kyle Conley gets dumped with water after one of the girls' state quarterfinal wins.

"We hit he hallways hard and recruited kids to come out and play," Conley said. "We found athletic kids and try to find those who wanted to come out and play soccer. The kids were put off or scared because they thought they had to just run a lot. It wasn't just running, and once we got a kid to practice, we could get them to play.

"When you have kids out there having fun and winning games, it just takes off. I think the youth camps we did helped tremendously. Diana Moore (Louisburg rec director) said that every year they are getting more and more kids play soccer. We just did a good job pushing information out there to kids and their families through social media or whatever."



Head coach Kyle Conley hugs Mackenzie Scholtz following her golden goal in 2018 that sent the Wildcats to their second straight final four.

Garrett Rolofson was another one of those stories as he played his final two years of high school under Conley during the 2019 and 2020 seasons.

He turned into an all-league and all-state goalie with the help of assistant coach Michael Pickman, who worked with the keepers. His time with Conley and the program changed his life for the better.

“Personally, playing for Coach Conley shaped me into the student athlete I was and person I am today,” Rolofson said. “I learned a lot in the two years I played for him. He taught me how to play soccer, understand the game and was very inviting for someone that had never played soccer before. Conley was encouraging when I was learning and encouraging when teaching other newcomers instead of just cutting someone from the team. He truly cared about each individual player no matter the skill or athletic abilities.

“Playing for Conley not only taught me a lot about soccer and athletics but he changed the person I was before playing soccer. My motivation to get better and succeed in sports went up as well as my overall confidence. Outside of sports Conley taught me how to be a leader, how to set an example for others and how to be a good person.”

Rolofson built a relationship with his coach that many other players did as well – one that became even more important after he graduated.

FAMILY

“1…2…3…Family”

That was the breakdown of every huddle – girls and boys – throughout Conley’s seven seasons and it was more than a simple gimmick. It was a mindset.

Soccer became Rolofson’s second family and they were there for him when he needed them the most.

Shortly after he graduated, his mother, Gloria, was diagnosed with cancer. It was a scary time for the Rolofson’s and for Garrett.

During his time as coach, Conley put together a cancer awareness game every season in hopes of raising money for a local family battling the terrible disease.

Little did Garrett know his family would be the ones touched by it all.

So, in the fall of 2020, Garrett found himself back at the field he played on, but this time as a spectator for the annual cancer awareness game as people came out to donate to the family in need – his family.

“My mom was battling breast cancer at the time and I will

never forget watching Conley walk across the soccer field and through the stands directly to me and giving me a big hug," Garrett said. "Not only did the hug make me cry, but seeing his tears made me cry and really shows how good of a person Coach Conley is and how big of an impact he can have on someone's life."



Kyle Conley celebrates with his boys as they won the regional title back in 2017.

Gloria is currently in full remission from her breast cancer diagnosis, and according to Garrett, "She is finally getting back to feeling normal again."

The Rolofson's were just one of several families touched by the kindness of the Louisburg soccer family and Conley made it a point to make sure all of his players – current and former – were looked after.

"Conley was the kind of coach that was always there for any of us, no matter what it was," Belcher said. "He constantly pushed all of us to strive for more and reach our greatest potential in literally everything.

"To me, he and his family were like family to me, even after I graduated. He has always made me want to do more and has shown

me there is always someone in my corner that believes in me, and no matter what it is, he has supported me. He has always been someone I can talk to when I need someone, with the most serious of things or just catching up. He is someone that I will always look up to."

It was the family atmosphere that brought his players together and a big reason for all of the Wildcats' success.

"It was an amazing environment to play for Coach Conley," said Trinity Moore, a 2020 graduate. "The impact he had on my life and for soccer was amazing. He made me more confident and put me where I was needed and it helped impact my confidence and strive to help my teammates."



The boys soccer team honored coach Kyle Conley following his 100th victory.

Treston Carlson, a 2021 graduate, believed Conley was a unique coach and got the best out of all of his players.

"The impact he had on his players lives and on our program was unmatched," Carlson said. "The way he coached was different than any coach I've been around. He wanted us to realize it took hard work to get better and that nothing is just handed to us. He always made it clear that we had to outwork the other team. The way he affected who we were helped me have a

new mindset to the game.”

It is that family aspect that Conley will miss the most.

“The thing I will remember most is the relationships, whether it is with the kids, the parents or community members,” Conley said. “Having kids invite me to their wedding, or just texting me out of the blue to check in and see how things are going. Those are what mean the most to me in the long run. I am with these kids so much that they are almost like they are my own.”

Fond Farewell

As the final seconds ticked away, Conley realized his time at Louisburg was coming to a close.

The Louisburg girls lost to Topeka-Hayden in the regional championship game – a team they had beaten twice previously in the state semifinals and both in dramatic fashion.

It was Hayden’s turn this go-round and it was time for Conley to let go of a program that grew up before his very eyes.

Despite all the successes, Conley only had one regret with his time at Louisburg.



Kyle Conley gets a hug from Braden Yows following the team's regional championship loss to Bishop Miege in 2021.

"Not beating Bishop Miege," Conley said with a smirk on his face.

Miege ended the Wildcats' season, or handed them a loss in the state semifinals, on seven different occasions – including five on the boys side.

As tough as those losses were, Conley has nothing but great memories of his time as the Wildcat leader.

"At the end of the day, when I reflect on everything, looking back on this ride, I just want people to know that me, my coaches and my family went all in for these programs," Conley said. "I wouldn't do anything different on how we started a program, or how we carried another one on.

"I have zero regrets on how we did it and I think we gave everything we had, and in turn that is when the parents gave everything they had to us. The kids gave everything they had and we fed off each other. We built a fantastic culture and

did things the right way. We talked about improving kids, not just on the field, but in life as well. We wanted to make them better people.”



Kyle Conley embraces his wife, Kelli, following his final game on the Wildcat sideline last month.

Conley seemed to do just that as the seven former players interviewed for this story, echoed each other’s statements.

He changed their life for the better.

“The impact Conley has had in our lives goes deeper than soccer,” Carlson said. “He was a great coach that helped me get a better understanding of soccer, but he also taught us good life lessons to take with us past soccer. He always told us the saying ‘hard work will beat talent when talent doesn’t want to work’ and I think that saying goes way past just the game.”

Rolofson, who had played baseball for most of his life, grew to love soccer thanks to one person.

“I think it’s hard not to say he built an amazing program at Louisburg,” Rolofson said. “I think a testament to him as a

person and coach is his ability to not only attract people that had never played soccer before, but his ability to coach them to enjoy and love the game as it is with all of their teammates.

“What I think makes Conley unique isn’t his winning nature or motivational speeches, I think it’s the fact that he, as a coach, enables his players to enjoy and love the game of soccer. You always hear about athletes that had their dreams and love for their sports crushed by bad coaches at school and club, but you never hear about a coach that can make student athletes fall in love with a game they’ve never played before.”



Now it is time to move on to a new school, with new players and different expectations. However, Conley knows Louisburg soccer has a bright future ahead of itself.

“For me, I know it is a great opportunity,” Conley said. “At the same time, I am asking kids to be loyal to me and buy in and be a part of our family. Part of me feels that I am letting people down, letting the kids down, but at the same time I feel both programs are in a really good place. The girls team was pretty good this year, but they can potentially

be really, really good next season.

“The boys program is absolutely loaded right now. We graduated a few seniors, but there are a lot of boys ready to roll. There are a lot seniors that are ready to lead that program. I am not bailing in a situation where there is talent no longer there. I think I left both programs completely stocked and ready to roll and that makes me feel better knowing that I did the job I wanted to do.”

Bobby Bovaird (boys) and Ben York (girls) will now pick up where Conley left off as they prepare to guide the Wildcats to bigger and better things. Now is a chance for him to follow from afar.

“We will still be fans,” Conley said. “We are still going to live in Louisburg and it will be easy for me to walk up, put up my lawn chair and watch some games when I’m not coaching. We are giving all our social media stuff to Ben and Bobby so that they can continue to grow the programs and we can get ourselves out of it. That way we can follow how the teams are doing and we can become a fan too. We want to support the kids and the program.”

Just like any family member would.

Johnson ready to join college ranks with Iowa Western soccer



Louisburg senior Reese Johnson is looking forward to joining the Iowa Western women's soccer team this fall.

Looking around at a room full of family and friends, Reese Johnson was a little bit awestruck.

There were people there who supported her through her high school soccer career and helped her become one of the top players in the state in Class 4-1A.

They were there to watch her dream become a reality.

In early May, Johnson signed her letter of intent to play soccer at Iowa Western Community College to continue playing the sport she loves. Just months earlier, she didn't think she was going to be in this position.

"I have been playing soccer since I was 4-years-old," Johnson said. "College soccer had always been a dream of mine until closer to the end of high school. Going into my senior season, I did not want to play. I recently decided to give it a shot since it is the only thing I have ever known and not everyone gets this opportunity. I am very excited to play at Iowa Western.

"Without the support of our friends, family and community, I would not be where I am. I was given so many opportunities by my coaches and community and I am so grateful for every person that was there and helped make it possible."



Reese Johnson signed her letter of intent in early May to play soccer at Iowa Western. Sitting next to Reese are her parents Matt and Tiffany Johnson. Standing (from left) is former Louisburg head coach Kyle Conley, Reese' sisters Baileigh and Cortney, and her club coach Tom Holmes.

Johnson wanted to find a program that featured the same values as her Louisburg High School team does. She found a lot of similarities, including a familiar face, as Jamison Parkhill, a Louisburg graduate, serves as the assistant coach.

"What stuck out the most was the family atmosphere," Johnson said. "At Louisburg we are a family and it is the team above all, when I went and visited it felt like they were the same way. They were always laughing and smiling and the atmosphere seemed fun."

The Louisburg senior had a big final year for the Wildcats. Johnson led the Wildcats to a 13-5 record and a No. 2 seed in the state playoffs.

She was selected as a first team All-Frontier League and all-state player from her midfield spot. She finished the year with nine goals and a team-high eight assists.

Last season, Iowa Western had a successful season as the Reivers won their 11th district championship and punched their ticket to the national tournament.

As far as what she hopes for in the college ranks, Johnson is ready to help in anyway she can.

“I don’t know what I am expecting out of myself when I get there, but I am gonna work hard everyday and try to become better everyday,” Johnson said. “My goal is to help the team in any way I can and become a better soccer player. I am gonna fight for a spot and see what I can bring to the table.”

Hahn excited to join Delaware Valley soccer program



Sierra Hahn loves the game of soccer. She always has, even at the tender age of 3.

Hahn really couldn’t imagine soccer not being a part of her life. She’s even willing to travel to make sure of it.

In a signing ceremony in early May, Hahn made it official as she signed with Delaware Valley University, a Division III program based in Doylestown, Penn.

“Ever since I was little I had dreamed of being a college

soccer player, but the last year I wasn’t too sure and was just going to just choose a college based off of my career path,” Hahn said. “My last club and high school season, however, made me realize that I wasn’t quite ready to give up the beautiful game. I love the sport too much to give it up just yet. When I finally signed with DelVal, I was very relieved.”

Hahn, who has been the starting goalkeeper for the Wildcat soccer program the last two years, is excited to give it a try at the college level.

After this past season, Hahn was selected as a first team All-Frontier League goalie and later earned second team all-state honors. She finished the year with 55 saves and recorded eight clean sheets.

Hahn is looking forward to learning from head coach Ben Wilson and the rest of the Aggie goalkeepers.

“There is a good amount of goalkeepers on the team, but I see myself fitting in quite nicely,” Hahn said. “Coach Wilson is really excited with me joining the team because he feels I will help push the other keepers and he loves my ability to distribute the ball well.

“He said he will be rotating his keepers evenly during regular season to decide who he believes is best for postseason. So I am guaranteed a good amount of playing time this year.”



Louisburg senior Sierra Hahn signed her letter of intent to play at Delaware Valley University in early May. Sitting next to Sierra are her parents Jeral and Darcy Hahn. Standing (from left) is former Louisburg assistant, and current activities director, Michael Pickman, former head coach Kyle Conley, her brother Vance Hahn and her club coach Tom Holmes.

However, the soccer program wasn't the only thing that drew Hahn to travel halfway across the country.

She will be majoring in zoo science and minoring in equine science and Delaware Valley was one of the few schools that offer that type of opportunity. In fact, she chose the school based on her major before deciding on playing soccer.

"I first picked Delaware Valley because of my rare major, but I think what drew me to the team was all of the playing opportunities I will be getting there," Hahn said. "Not only that, but Coach Wilson was new just as I am. He was someone who had personally worked with keepers before, which is something you rarely see with head coaches.

"I am very excited to be accepted to this program because of the amazing hands on experience and the farm that is on campus. I am also very honored to be a part of the program

because they only accept 35 people because of all the program has access to in the zoo system. I am a little nervous and sad to be going so far away but I already have a great support system there. I am super excited for my next adventure, even if it is a little far away."

Even with all the nerves that going to a new school entails, Hahn is appreciative of the family atmosphere that is awaiting her – just like the one she experienced at Louisburg with head coach Kyle Conley.

"I had always built my friends from soccer and I was worried it would be hard to find a good group of friends moving so far away," Hahn said. "The girls there have already made me feel welcome and Coach Wilson is very big on all of us being a family much like Coach Conley. I am also super excited to get this chance to challenge myself at the next level."

Wildcats put 6 on all-state team as Hampton, Edwards, Johnson named 1st team



Honors continue to come in for the Louisburg girls soccer program.

The Kansas High School Soccer Coaches Association released

their all-state teams Wednesday and the Wildcats were well-represented.

Six Louisburg players were named to the Class 4-1A all-state team after the Wildcats posted a 13-5 record and earned a No. 2 seed in the state playoffs.

Senior Reese Johnson, along with sophomores Lexi Hampton and Lola Edwards, were named to the all-state first team. Senior Sierra Hahn, junior Adyson Ross and sophomore Hailey Sword were all second team selections.

Johnson had a strong senior year for the Wildcats as she finished with nine goals and a team-high eight assists from her midfield spot.

Hampton, a forward, was Louisburg's go-to scorer for most of the season as she led the team with 16 goals on the year to go along with two assists.



Edwards was also an important piece in the Wildcats' attack from the midfield as she tallied five goals and five assists on the year.

Sword helped the team both offensively and defensively in the midfieldand ended her season with a three goals and an assist. Ross did a lot of her work on the defensive side as she was

tagged with staying with the opponents’ best players.

Hahn was named as the Frontier League’s top goalkeeper as she finished the year with 55 saves and recorded eight clean sheets.