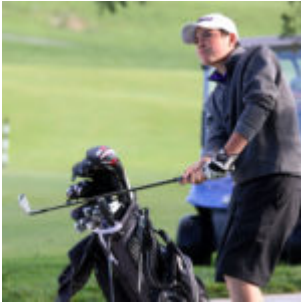


Dillon has big week to lead Louisburg golf



Louisburg freshman Calvin Dillon eyes a shot near the fairway Thursday during the Frontier League Invitational at Sycamore Ridge Golf Course in Spring Hill. Dillon placed second in the league with a 77 and earned a medal.

SPRING HILL – Calvin Dillon walked back to the clubhouse at Sycamore Ridge Golf Club and wondered where he stood among the Frontier League’s best.

The Louisburg High School freshman more than held his own.

Dillon carded a 77 on the Spring Hill course to finish second overall in the Frontier League Invitational as he was four strokes behind De Soto’s Daniel Lee, who shot a 73 for the league title.

The Frontier League tournament was combined with the Spring Hill Invitational and included other teams in the Kansas City area. Overall, Dillon’s 77 was good for fourth overall out of 92 golfers.

“I felt like I played well,” Dillon said. “The course was pretty tough and it was really windy out there. The back side of the course opens up and it gets a little easier. I still thought I played well on the front side and shot just 4-over. I really just wanted to survive back there.”

Dillon wasn't the only Wildcat to earn a league medal. Louisburg senior Ty Martin shot an 84 to finish seventh in the league tournament.

Martin, like Dillon, shot well on the back nine as he carded a 38 on the final nine holes and Dillon shot a 37. Martin used that string of good golf to put him among the top 10 golfers in the league.

"Calvin and Ty have medaled all season so far and I am not surprised," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "They are good golfers. Ty is still not quite in his complete groove even though he got there for his second nine at 2-over. He shot even par on a tournament last year and it should happen again soon."



Louisburg senior Ty Martin watches his shot sail toward the green Thursday at Sycamore Ridge. Martin medaled in three tournaments last week.

As the team, the Wildcats finished third in the league with a 361 and finished behind league champion De Soto (323) and runner-up Ottawa (348).

Senior Jake Hill and junior Kai Tinich tied for third on the team as they each shot a 100, while junior Justin Sievert shot a 101. Ignacio Huesa shot a 111 to round out the Louisburg golfers.

It was the final tournament of what was a busy week for the Wildcats as they competed in three different invitationals in a span of four days.

The Wildcats competed at the Fort Scott Invitational on April 17 and Dillon won his first tournament in just his second-ever high school meet.

Dillon shot an 81 to win the tournament by one stroke over Fort Scott's Nick King. Martin finished right behind Dillon with an 84 and finished third overall.

Those two Louisburg scores propelled the Wildcats to a second-place team finish with a 361. Fort Scott won the tournament with a 354 in what was a rainy, cool competition.

The Fort Scott course will also be the setting for the upcoming regional tournament in May, which provided the Wildcats a preview of what to expect.

"It was a tough course," Dillon said. "It played tough and it really wasn't straight at all. It had a lot of mature trees, but I feel I played well. It was a good practice for regionals and now I know what I am dealing with."

Hill was third for Louisburg with a 93, while Sievert, Tinich and Huesa shot a 103, 105 and 121, respectively, to round out the Wildcat team.



Ignacio Huesa chips his way out of the rough Thursday during the Frontier League tournament in Spring Hill.

The next day, the Wildcats were back at it again for the Osawatomie Invitational on April 18 – and again Dillon led the charge for the Wildcats as he shot a 74 on the Osawatomie Golf Course and finished second overall.

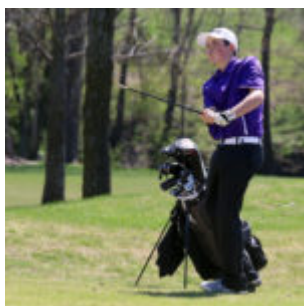
Dillon shot 3-over on the par 71 course to help the Wildcats

to a third-place team finish with a 353 in the 15-team tournament. Kansas City Christian won with a 324 and Ottawa was second with a 334.

Martin shot an 86, which was good for 12th overall and a medal. Sievert and Hill carded a 95 and 98, respectively, while Tinich and Huesa each shot a 108.

“Osawatomie was a great tournament,” Burns said. “I did not think we would place third as a team, but closer to maybe fifth. A couple of teams brought their JV golfers which helped, but we had two scores in the 90s. I have been waiting for my three through sixth spots to do this, and it came at the right time. All the varsity players are competitive and trying their best. We are starting to get rid of the nines and 10s on a hole that help them stay in the 90s. I hope this will continue the rest of the season.”

Wildcat golf starts season off right at Paola



Freshman Calvin Dillon watches as his shot lands on the green Monday during the Paola Invitational at Paola Country Club. Dillon led the Wildcats with an 84 and he, along with teammate Ty Martin, earned medals.

PAOLA – The Louisburg High School golf team got its season started a week later than normal Monday when the Wildcats took the Paola Country Club course at the Paola Invitational.

The week before, their first meet at Gardner was postponed, which gave the Wildcats a little more time to iron out the kinks.

The practice seemed to pay off as Louisburg finished runner-up in the team standings at the Paola tournament. The Wildcats recorded a 375 and finished behind champion Kansas City Christian, which tallied a 335 in the seven-team tournament.

“I was surprised that our third and fourth scores got us into second place,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “Some of the schools lost one or a few of their top players that were at this tournament. My third through fourth scores are going to have to drop 5-8 strokes by midseason. That comes with more practice and focus.”

Freshman Calvin Dillon had a good first outing in his first high school tournament. Dillon led the Wildcats as he carded an 84 and finished fourth individually to earn a medal.

Senior Ty Martin was also awarded a medal as he shot an 87 and took sixth overall. Gardner-Edgerton’s Trysten Tovkach won with a 77 and Kansas City Christian’s Parker Allen (78) and Nate Streeter (79) came in second and third, respectively.



Louisburg senior Jake Hill shoots his way out of the sand Monday in Paola.

Dillon and Martin had an opposite start to the tournament. In his first nine holes, Martin shot a 41 and didn't encounter many problems, while Dillon shot a 44.

However, Dillon shaved four strokes off that pace on the back as he recorded a 40 and Martin tallied a 46.

"Calvin had some jitters on his front nine which is understandable for his first high school tournament," Burns said. "He recovered on the back nine and I was pleased with his score. Ty played the opposite of Calvin. He had a couple of holes that he struggled with on the back nine and played great on the front. I was pleased with his score also.

"Calvin and Ty are going to be great leaders for us this year and will be able to encourage our other varsity golfers to try

to drop those five strokes by midseason.”

Senior Jake Hill and junior Justin Sievert tied for third on the Louisburg team with a 102. Junior Kai Tinich was fourth with a 104 and sophomore Noah Hill carded a 126.

The Wildcats will have busy few days in the upcoming week as they will take part in three tournaments. Louisburg will travel to Fort Scott on Monday, will compete in the Osawatomie Invitational on Tuesday and they travel to Sycamore Ridge Golf Course for the Spring Hill/Frontier League Tournament on Thursday.

Frontier League shakeup could happen soon



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

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

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

the league.

Brian Biermann, superintendent of USD 416, and Louisburg High School athletic director Darin Gagnebin attended the meeting on Louisburg's behalf and both relayed the fact that every school stated they were happy with the way the league is currently set up, but a couple schools came to the realization the Frontier League might not be able to offer what they are looking for.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

leave, but they have to do best what is for their school, and if this league isn't the best option for you, then you have to look elsewhere."

Due to the fact De Soto and Spring Hill could be moving on, the Frontier is being proactive and inviting some members of the Kaw Valley League to come make presentations at a meeting Wednesday to see if they would be a fit in the Frontier.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Martin, Dillon to lead Louisburg golf



Louisburg senior Ty Martin, a state qualifier a season ago, returns to lead the Louisburg High School golf team this season. The Wildcats open the year Monday at the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational.

The Louisburg High School golf team saw last season end on a positive note as three Wildcats punched their ticket to the state tournament.

It is an experience the Wildcats would like to repeat for the 2017 season.

Repeating that feat will be challenging for Louisburg as two of those state qualifiers –Hogan Welch and T.J. Svoboda – graduated and left some big holes to fill.

The Wildcats have a good start as senior Ty Martin returns after earning his first trip to the state tournament last season and went on to finish 74th with a 95 on the Ulysses course.

Louisburg will also look to a first-year varsity golfer to step in and fill the void. Freshman Calvin Dillon, according to head coach Brian Burns, will be one of the team's top two golfers along with Martin.

"Calvin is a great addition to the team this year and I think he will be good for Ty," Burns said. "It gives him some competition and Ty will have to play his best to beat him.

"Calvin is a straight ball hitter, but he has great touch

around the green and is a good all-around player. Ty is a strong player too, but just needs to get more consistent with his ball striking.”

Along with Dillon and Martin, senior Jake Hill returns to take one of the varsity spots along with fellow senior Kai Tinich and junior Justin Sievert. However, Burns knows some of those spots could change as golfers improve throughout the season.

With cool, rainy conditions that have hovered over the area the last two weeks, the Wildcats haven’t had a chance to practice much on their home course at Metcalf Ridge, which has hurt some of the Wildcats in preparing for the season.

“My top two golfers already have good swing memory, so the weather hasn’t affected them,” Burns said. “However, some of my golfers from last year are still a little rusty and the new golfers need more repetition.

“Outside of Ty and Calvin, the others on the varsity roster probably shoot in the mid-90s at this time. Therefore, it will be hard to place in the top four as a team, but we’ll have two individuals that should medal most of their meets. I hope to have those 90s to the high 80s by mid-season. I feel like two out of my five golfers should be able to get there to give us a chance to medal as a team.”

The Wildcats open their season Monday when they travel to Prairie Highlands Golf Course for the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational. Louisburg is set to tee off at 9 a.m.

Louisburg will also host its home invitational on April 24 at Metcalf Ridge.

Top 10 stories of 2016



Here are the Louisburg Sports Zone Top 10 Stories of the Year. In each brief explanation of the story, there will be a link to the full story of when the event actually happened. Thanks again for a successful 2016 and I am already looking forward to 2017.

10. LHS golf qualifies three for the state tournament



Hogan Welch (left), Ty Martin (middle) and T.J. Svoboda all earned a spot in the Class 4A state golf tournament in May.

Three Louisburg High School golfers put together a strong performance in less-than-ideal weather conditions during the Class 4A regional tournament in May.

Hogan Welch, T.J. Svoboda and Ty Martin all three earned qualifying scores to earn a spot in the Class 4A state

tournament in the rain at Dub's Dread Golf Course. At the state tournament, Welch led the way as he shot an 84 to finish 34th overall in his second consecutive state tournament.

9. Tappan, Conklin win state debate crown



Carson Tappan (left) and Curran Conklin (right) pose for a picture with their state championship debate trophy with coach Brian Weilert.

After 11 rounds and 17 hours of debate over two days, Carson Tappan and Curran Conklin didn't have a lot more left to give.

But all that hard work paid off for the Louisburg High School duo.

During the Class 4A 2-speaker state debate tournament at Independence High School, Tappan and Conklin were awarded their first state championship after finishing with an 11-0 record.

They weren't the only Louisburg team to come home with some hardware.

Sophomores Isabelle Holtzen and Grayson Anderson found themselves among the final four teams as well. Despite a close split-decision loss in the semifinals, Holtzen and Anderson finished third to win their first state trophy.

8. Three Wildcats win regional track titles, qualify 11 events for state



Chloe Renner (left), T.J. Dover (middle) and Isabelle Holtzen won regional titles in their respective events in May at the regional meet in Chanute.

Louisburg High School students Isabelle Holtzen, Chloe Renner and T.J. Dover were among several members of the Wildcat track teams to have big performances at the Class 4A regional meet in May at Chanute High School.

Holtzen won a regional crown in the pole vault, while Renner

won the triple jump to lead the Lady Cats as they qualified for six events total. Louisburg sent all three relay teams that consisted of Kaitlyn Gaza, Mikayla Quinn, Megan Lemke, Reilly Alexander, Jordon Leach, Hanna Becker, Lauren Becker, Shaylor Whitham, Liz Hildreth and Holtzen. Sophie McMullen also earned a spot in the discus.

Dover captured a regional crown in the discus as he recorded a personal best throw of more than 150 feet. He was one of five events to go to the state meet. Teammate Jarod Woodward also qualified in the shot put, while Chris Williams did the same in the 400 dash.

Brandon Cooper, Quinn Rigney, Ben Minster, along with Williams, helped the 4×100 relay team earn a spot, while Wyatt Reece, Ben Hupp, Tanner Belcher and Michael Minster also qualified in the 4×800 relay.

7. FFA wins three state titles, shines at national competition



Members of the LHS FFA chapter won three state titles in May

and later traveled to nationals in October and brought home several honors.

After three Louisburg High School FFA teams won state titles in their respective career development events in May at the state competition, those same students performed well at the nationals.

Louisburg sent three teams to the 89th Annual National FFA Convention in Indianapolis and all three were among the top in their respective Career Development Events (CDE). Each team received a gold emblem, while 11 of the 12 members who attended received individual gold emblems as well.

Paige Buffington, Wyatt Reece, Georgia Wilde, Justin Sievert, Hattie Harris, Hallie Hutsell, Faith Seuferling, Mariah Wrigley, Madelynn Yalowitz, Bryn O'Meara, Morgan Strumillo and Lexie Reece all came away with honors from nationals.

6. Cross country sends three to state, Moore captures medal



Freshman Trinity Moore became the first female runner in Louisburg history to capture a state cross country medal.

Louisburg High School freshman Trinity Moore didn't look like a first-year varsity runner at the Class 4A state cross country meet as she finished 19th overall with a time of 20 minutes and 54 seconds – just 10 seconds off her personal best time. That finish was good enough to earn a state medal and became the first female runner in Louisburg history to do so.

Moore joined juniors Wyatt Reece and Tim Smith as all three runners competed in the state meet in Wamego in October. Reece and Smith finished 48th and 68th, respectively, just a week after finishing in the top five at the regional meet.

5. Koechner, Keegan earn medals as Wildcat wrestling puts five to state



Louisburg's Mason Koechner was one of two medalists for the Wildcats at the Class 4A state wrestling tournament in February. Koechner finished third at 220 pounds and teammate Nathan Keegan was sixth at 120 pounds.

For the first time since 2011, a member of the Louisburg High School wrestling team left the Class 4A state tournament with a medal – in fact – two of them did.

Mason Koechner and Nathan Keegan finished in the top six of their respective weight classes at state meet in Salina.

Koechner took third overall at 220 pounds, while Keegan came in sixth at 120 pounds.

Along with the two state medalists, the Wildcats also sent three other wrestlers to state. Anders Vance (285 pounds), Thad Hendrix (113) and Hunter Bindi (106) competed for Louisburg as it qualified five for state for the second consecutive season.

4. Griffin signs with New Orleans Saints



Photo courtesy of the New Orleans Saints
Louisburg native, and Air Force Academy graduate, Garrett
Griffin, was signed to the New Orleans Saints practice squad
in August.

In early June, Garrett Griffin received his diploma from the Air Force Academy and shook hands with the President of the United States.

That event alone is enough to top most people's list of

accomplishments. Four days later, Griffin fulfilled a life-long dream.

Following his graduation from the Air Force, Griffin was signed by the New Orleans Saints and his dream of playing professional football became a reality. The Louisburg native competed in the Saints training camp and later earned a spot on the team's practice squad, where he currently resides.

3. Wildcat football rallies around coach, ends playoff drought



The Louisburg High School football team celebrates its regional championship and its first playoff win in four years.

The season didn't get off to the start members of the Louisburg High School football team were hoping for. The Wildcats dealt with the departure of head coach Kyle Littrell before the season, but instead of letting it define their season, it made them stronger.

Louisburg rallied behind its former coach and the Wildcats won their first playoff game in four years after they defeated Independence in November to win a regional title. The Wildcats lost to eventual state champion Bishop Miege in the sectional round of the playoffs and ended their season with an 8-3 record.

2. Girls soccer team wins regional crown during inaugural season



The Louisburg girls soccer team celebrates its regional championship in the Wildcats' inaugural season.

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 in May after it ousted Basehor-Linwood in a 3-1 victory during the regional championship game. The win put the Wildcats in the state quarterfinals, where their season came to an end with 3-1 loss to De Soto and finished up with a 14-4-1 record on season.

1. Boys soccer advances to state final four



The Louisburg High School boys soccer team made history this past season as the Wildcats earned their first state quarterfinal victory and a spot in the Class 4A final four.

The state quarterfinal round had been nothing but heartbreak

for the Louisburg High School boys soccer team.

In their previous six appearances, the Wildcats have seen their season come to an end and those players were left only to dream what playing in the state final four would be like.

There was no imagining this time around.

Louisburg got a goal in the 75th minute from senior Herman Knipp to give the Wildcats a 1-0 victory over Trinity Academy in the state quarterfinals in Louisburg. The Wildcats moved on to the Class 4A state final four in Topeka in November, where they took fourth – the best finish in program history.

The Wildcats (14-6-2) finished their season with losses to eventual state champion Bishop Miege and Andover Central, but doubled their number of wins from the prior year.

Welch leads Louisburg at state golf



Louisburg senior Hogan Welch watches his tee shot during a tournament earlier this season. Welch, along with senior T.J. Svoboda and junior Ty Martin, competed in the Class 4A state golf tournament in Ulysses on May 23.

ULYSSES – Hogan Welch, T.J. Svoboda and Ty Martin each put together a solid round of golf at their regional to qualify for the state tournament.

As good as that round was, all three knew they were going to have to shoot even better to earn a state medal. The Louisburg High School golfers ran up against a tough course in Ulysses on May 23 at the Class 4A state tournament and left a little shy of their goal.

Welch, who qualified for the state tournament a year ago, had the best score as the Louisburg senior carded an 84 to finish 34th overall out of 102 golfers at Bentwood Golf Course. The top 20 placers were awarded a state medal.

“I was a little disappointed with what I shot,” Welch said. “I finished in the same place as last year and I was hoping to do a little better. I played a pretty decent round, but I just lost it in the last three holes. Even though I didn’t play to the best of my ability, it was still an awesome experience.”

Svoboda, a senior, shot well through the first 15 holes, but the final three holes caused him some problems and he eventually finished with a 95 to come in 74th. As for Martin, the Louisburg junior shot a 95 as well, to finish in a tie for 74th with Svoboda.

“I think Ty had the hardest time of the three as he started off with a 45 of the front nine,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “T.J. started off slow, but was on a great roll until he blew up on 16, which hurt him in his final three holes.

“Hogan played a great round and was in about the top-third of all state golfers, which is very respectable.”

The Bentwood course caused the Louisburg golfers some problems

by how narrow it was, which didn't leave much room for error, especially when teeing off.

Still, despite some struggles, all three golfers finished with a great experience.

"Competing with Ty and T.J one last time was a blast," Welch said. "It was much better to go with them than going by myself last year. They are both awesome teammates and a big part of what made my high school golf experience so great."

Hays won the state team title with a 312 and Rose Hill finished runner-up with a 315. Chanute's Clete Carlson won the individual state crown with a 74. Paola's Jordan Bulcock earned a state medal as he took sixth with a 76.

Wildcats qualify three for state golf



Louisburg senior Hogan Welch watches his shot from the fairway during the Class 4A regional golf tournament Monday at Dub's Dread Golf Course in Kansas City. Welch, along with teammates Ty Martin and T.J. Svoboda, qualified for the state golf tournament.

KANSAS CITY, Kan. – It was rainy. It was cold. Throw in the fact it was a Monday and it made for a difficult regional golf tournament.

When all was said and done, Hogan Welch, Ty Martin and T.J. Svoboda looked past the fact that their clothes were soaked. They forgot they were cold after playing a grueling 18 holes of golf.

Yep, it was easy to forget about all that stuff because they were going to state.

All three Louisburg High School golfers earned spots in next week's state tournament following their round Monday at the Class 4A regional tournament at Dub's Dread in Kansas City, Kan. The Wildcats weren't able to finish in the top two to qualify as a team, but the three Wildcats finished in the top five individuals who didn't make it as a team.

Piper won the regional title with a 343 and De Soto was second with a 359, and both qualified for state as a team. Louisburg finished third in the team standings with a 363.

"I knew I could have three going to state, if they could eliminate having more than two bad holes," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "They achieved that and for the weather conditions I was very pleased. I let them know last Friday after practice that this is been our best chance for five years to go to state as a team and they missed it by just four strokes, but it was a great effort."

The three Louisburg golfers also earned tournament medals by finishing in the top 10. Welch finished fifth overall with an 86 and the Wildcat senior has now qualified for state in back-to-back years.

"It feels pretty awesome," Welch said. "I was happy to make it on such a cruddy day. It was hard to shoot the scores that we did, so it is really exciting to get to go again and have that

experience because it was really cool the first time.”



Louisburg junior Ty Martin tees off on hole No. 11 at Dub's Dread on Monday during the Class 4A regional tournament.

Martin, a junior, finished right behind Welch in sixth-place

with an 87 and earned his first trip to the state tournament.

"I am excited," Martin said. "I have always wanted to go. I was pretty confident coming in that I would go, which if you want to go to state, you need to be confident. It was an alright day. I had a couple bad holes in the middle that hurt, but it is exciting to go."

As for Svoboda, he had to do a little extra work for his medal. The Louisburg senior carded a 92 to finish in a tie for ninth place with Piper's Logan Wilson.

The two golfers were forced to go back out in the rain and compete in a playoff for the ninth-place medal. It took five holes, but Svoboda outlasted Wilson by sinking two long putts on back-to-back holes to keep the playoff alive before he beat Wilson on No. 5.



Senior T.J. Svoboda watches as tries to shoot the ball onto the green in the rain during one of his playoff holes Monday.

"It is a real humbling experience, especially as long as I have spent playing this game," Svoboda said. "I am looking forward to it. Hogan has told me a lot about it and it is nice that Ty is going to be joining us. It is unfortunate that we couldn't go as a team because I thought we had a decent chance at it, but at the same time I will appreciate this till the day I die.

"At the beginning, my irons were on fire and that was what was really helping me. My putting wasn't doing all the great until I got to the playoff and that is what saved me there. The round itself was frustrating and tiring and it was a mental game, really. In this game, you can't let your emotions take control. It is an amazing experience to sink that last putt,

knowing that you beat someone out.”

The weather made a difficult Dub’s Dread course even more challenging. Scores were higher than normal and the course played differently in spots.

It was something the Wildcats had to overcome and, for the most part, were able to do so.

“It probably made it three or four strokes harder because even if it is not wet it is still fast,” Welch said. “I think the rain probably took some of the speed out of the course, which made it easier in some parts, but harder on the others.”

As for the rest of the Louisburg team, senior Anders Vance finished fourth on the Wildcat squad with a 98 and junior Nick Welch shot a 100. Fellow junior Jake Hill carded a 111 to round out the Louisburg scores.

Welch, Martin and Svoboda will make the seven-hour trip to Ulysses for the Class 4A state tournament Monday morning. The top 20 participants will earn medals.

Wildcat golf takes third at Ottawa



Louisburg senior Anders Vance watches his tee shot during a

tournament earlier this season. Vance and the Wildcats finished third in the team standings Monday at the Ottawa Invitational.

OTTAWA – It was going to be hard for the Louisburg High School boys golf team to duplicate its success from a week after winning its home tournament.

The Wildcats competed in the Ottawa Invitational on Monday at the Ottawa Golf Course and did so against one of the top teams in Class 4A and an Ottawa team playing on its home course.

Despite that, Louisburg responded with a nice round as the Wildcats had four scores in the 80s and shot a 333 to finish third in the team standings. Piper won the 8-team tournament with a 303 and Ottawa was second with a 321.

“We had a tough time getting started in the cold weather and not having a range to warm up, but they started putting things together,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “I was pleased with getting third going against Piper and Ottawa at their home course. We had four scores in the 80s which I am always pleased with.”

Louisburg had three golfers who finished just outside of medal contention.

Seniors Hogan Welch and T.J. Svoboda were one stroke away from a medal as they both shot an 81 to lead the Wildcats. Welch came in 11th overall and Svoboda was 12th.

Junior Ty Martin was right behind them with an 82 and came in 13th out of 41 golfers. Senior Anders Vance was 19th with an 89 to round out the Wildcat top four scores.

Nick Welch shot a 90 to finish in the top 20, while Parker Perentis shot a 98.

The Wildcats return to action Tuesday when they travel to the Anderson County Invitational at the Garnett Golf Course. Tee time is set for 1 p.m.

JV medals at Osawatomie

The Louisburg junior varsity golf team recently brought home some hardware from Wednesday's Osawatomie Invitational at the Osawatomie Golf Course.



Louisburg's (from left) Michael Huffman, Jake Hill and Parker Perentis earned medals at Wednesday's junior varsity tournament in Osawatomie.

Jake Hill medaled fourth overall to lead the Wildcat team. Parker Perentis was fifth and Michael Huffman came in eighth to round out the Louisburg medalists.

Wildcats get over hump to win Louisburg Invite



Louisburg senior T.J. Svoboda watches his tee shot from No. 17 at Metcalf Ridge Golf Course on Monday during the Louisburg Invitational. Svoboda was one of three Wildcats to medal and Louisburg won the team title with a 332.

All season long, the Louisburg High School golf team had first place in its reach only to see another team win by just a couple strokes.

Not Monday.

The Wildcats defended their home course during the Louisburg Invitational as they captured first place with a 332, two strokes ahead of second place Paola at Metcalf Ridge Golf Course. Louisburg had finished in second place in every tournament this season until now.

“It is a big deal to defend at your home golf course and show that you know the course well,” Louisburg senior T.J. Svoboda said. “It is a very humbling experience as a team because we have been coming up just short the last couple tournaments so to take first place is nice. It will look nice hanging up on the wall.”

Individually, Louisburg also had three golfers who placed in the top 10. Senior Hogan Welch, junior Ty Martin and Svoboda

all garnered individual medals. De Soto's Daniel Lee won the individual title with a 71.

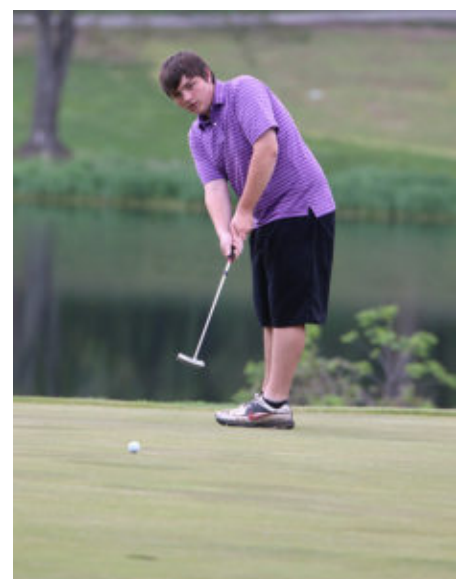
Welch had one of his best rounds of the season as he shot a 79 to finish fifth overall. His best hole of the day came on No. 13 when shot an Eagle on the par-5 hole.

The Louisburg senior hit a drive 280 yards off the tee, then hit his 3-wood just to the left of the green where he chipped in.

"I felt I shot pretty good," Welch said. "There were a couple bad holes that hurt my score, but I was able to birdie my final hole so I can't complain. I had an eagle on No. 13 which was great. I was just able to hit a nice flop shot that rolled about 10 feet and went in. It was a nice surprise."

Martin shot an 81 to finish sixth overall and was second on the Wildcat team. The Louisburg junior was having a strong outing as he shot a 39 on the front nine holes, but ran into some problems late in his round.

He finished with a quadruple bogey on No. 16 that set him back, but responded with a par on his final hole to end on a good note.



Junior Nick Welch

**watches as his putt
races toward the hold
Monday during the
Louisburg
Invitational.**

"I did really well up until I hit No. 16," Martin said. "I kind of blew up a little bit there. I started off with a birdie on my first hole and show well on the front nine. I could have had like a 36 on the back nine if I would have just parred out.

"Still I thought I did pretty well and I was happy we won on our home course. You know all the breaks on the greens and you know all the yardages so that really helps a lot."

As for Svoboda, he had one of his better rounds of the year as well as was one stroke behind Martin with an 82 and medaled seventh.

"Starting off early, I had a triple bogey on No. 8, but I started to turn around a little bit when I birdied No. 10 and put my second shot within a couple feet of the hole," Svoboda said. "I was able to par No. 11 and was able to shoot a solid round coming out of a slump. It is really nice and enjoy playing golf for once."

Louisburg also got a solid round from junior Nick Welch, who was fourth on the team, but finished with a 90 and helped the Wildcats get their team title. He finished three spots out of a medal in 13th overall.

Sophomore Justin Sievert shot a 96 and senior Anders Vance carded a 97 to round out the Wildcat team.

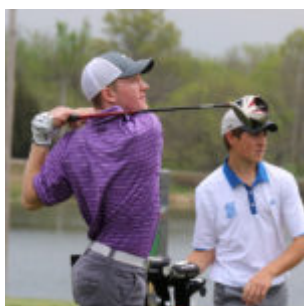
"Ty Martin has played great this year, allowing our second and third spots to be where they were last year," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "Our fourth scorer, either Nick or Anders,

have also helped us win second all year. Nick has improved by about 10 strokes this year overall.

“T.J. and Hogan have been scoring well, but are disappointed because they know they can do better. I told them not to be so hard on themselves because averaging in the 80s is great. If T.J. and Hogan could get rid of a couple of bad holes, we would not lose much, but I guess all golfers say that.”

Louisburg returns to the links again Monday when it travels to the Ottawa Invitational.

Welch, Wildcats take second at league tourney



Senior Hogan Welch watches his tee shot during the Osawatomie Invitational on Tuesday at the Osawatomie Golf Course. On Thursday, Welch shot an 81 to medal second overall at the Frontier League Tournament in Spring Hill and Louisburg finished second in the team standings with a 341.

SPRING HILL – Just like its three previous tournaments, the Louisburg High School golf team found itself in a familiar position following the Frontier League Tournament on Thursday.

For the fourth consecutive time, the Wildcats picked up a team medal as they finished second in the league with a 341 following their round at Sycamore Ridge Golf Course in Spring Hill, just two strokes behind league champion Paola.

Louisburg has finished second in the team standings in every tournament it has participated in this season.

"We're really excited with where we're at as a team right now," Louisburg senior Hogan Welch said. "We knew at the beginning of the year any one of us could go out and post a good number. The question was could we all do that on the same day consistently. So far everyone has done a good job of pulling their weight and we're hoping to get over the hump and win one soon."

Welch was the one to lead the Wildcats on Thursday as he picked up a pair of medals himself. He shot an 81 and took second in the Frontier League competition.

The league tournament also doubled as the Spring Hill Invitational and Welch finished ninth out of 80 golfers to earn another medal. Welch shot a 40 on the front nine and a 41 on the back.

"I was pretty happy with taking second at league," Welch said. "Obviously I wish I could've won and there's always going to be a few 'what ifs' in golf, but overall I can't say I'm disappointed."

"For me, Sycamore Ridge tends to be really difficult when I'm not hitting it well. Thankfully I drove the ball really well this week. It's always in great shape and one of my favorite courses to play every year."



Senior Anders Vance tees off Tuesday during the Osawatomie Invitational.

Junior Ty Martin who has been among the Wildcat leaders all season also garnered a league medal. Martin shot an 82 to finish fifth overall in the league standings and 16th in Spring Hill Invitational. He shot a 43 on the first nine holes, but responded well on the back nine with a 39.

Junior Nick Welch carded an 88 to just miss out on a medal in 12th place. Seniors Anders Vance and T.J. Svoboda both shot a 90 to come in 17th and 18th, respectively in the league tournament.

Jake Hill, a junior, rounded out the Wildcat team with a 109.

Paola's Jordan Bulcock won the individual league title with a 79 to win by two strokes over Welch and the Panthers shot a 339 to win the team title. Ottawa was third with a 342.

Piper's Eric Pahls won the individual Spring Hill Invitational crown as he shot a 67 to finish the day 5-under par.

Louisburg returns to action today when it hosts the Louisburg Invitational at Metcalf Ridge Golf Course. Tee time is set for 1 p.m.

Wildcats medal three at Osawatomie

As a precursor to the Frontier League Tournament, the Louisburg golf team hit the course at the Osawatomie Invitational last Tuesday and came away with more hardware.

Louisburg finished second in the 16-team tournament with a 339 to earn team medals. Ottawa won the tournament by 12 strokes with a 327.

Junior Ty Martin had a good round to lead the Wildcats as he shot a 79 to finish eighth overall and was one of three Wildcats to garner medals. Senior Hogan Welch carded an 82 to take 10th and fellow senior T.J. Svoboda shot an 84 to come in 13th.

Senior Anders Vance and junior Nick Welch each shot a 94 to finish fourth and fifth on the team, respectively. Junior Jake Hill rounded out the Wildcat squad with a 114.