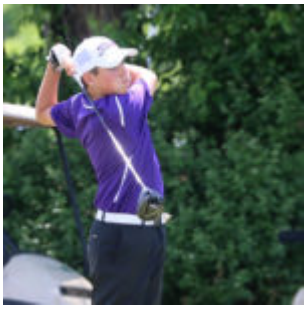
Dillon earns state medal as a freshman



Louisburg's Calvin Dillon watches his tee shot during the Class 4A regional tournament earlier this month. At the Class 4A state tournament Monday in Wamego, Dillon shot an 80 which earned him a 10th place medal.

WAMEGO – Calvin Dillon may have been a freshman in the classroom at Louisburg High School, but he certainly didn't play like one on the golf course this season.

Dillon played more like an upperclassmen on the biggest stage the state has to offer.

At the Class 4A Kansas State Golf Tournament, Dillon shot an 80 and earned a state medal as he finished in 10th place overall Monday at Wamego Country Club.

"It definitely means a lot," Dillon said of the state medal. "I worked hard throughout the season and medaling at state was an expectation for me. My goal was to finish in the top 10 at state."

Dillon finished in a three-way tie for 10th place and had to compete in a playoff for position. Dillon teed off on hole No. 5 and his ball made his way into the rough.

He then was able to put the ball on the green on his next shot

and was about eight feet from the hole, which set up a birdie opportunity. Dillon went on to par on the hole while the other two players bogeyed.

It was the end of a long day for Dillon, one that featured that lengthy delay in the middle of his round due to inclement weather

“I felt like I shot well, given the conditions and the toughness of the course,” Dillon said. “Wamego Country Club has tight fairways and fast greens. I hit a few shots that cost me, but the course was playing tough for everyone.”

Dillon was joined by Louisburg senior Ty Martin who also had a big improvement off his previous state appearance a year ago.

Martin shot an 85, which put him in a tie for 28th place, and was 10 strokes better than his state performance last season.

The Wildcats had two top 30 finishes in a tournament that featured 104 golfers from across the state.

“Calvin played a great round,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “He deserved a top 10 medal for all of his hard work this season. Ty played good also. He was in the top 27 percent in the state tournament and that is pretty darn good.”

Dillon also saw a familiar face on the course as he faced off with his cousin Chase Dillon – a junior from Wamego. What was even more unexpected was the two Dillon’s shot the same score and played in the playoff together to determine 10th place.

“Playing with my cousin was fun,” Calvin said. “He is an outstanding golfer and he had a terrific season. It was ironic that we posted the same score and Chase and I were excited to play against each other. It was a neat way to end the state tournament.

“I felt like I had a good freshman year. I met most of the goals that I set at the beginning of the season.”

Dillon, Martin qualify for state golf



Louisburg freshman Calvin Dillon watches as his shot sails toward the green Monday during the Class 4A regional tournament at Woodland Hills Golf Course in Fort Scott. Dillon shot an 82 and finished third overall.

FORT SCOTT – Louisburg senior Ty Martin walked into the clubhouse at Woodland Hills Golf Course and thoughts started to creep in that his season – and high school career – was over.

Martin had just finished one of his toughest rounds of the season during the Class 4A regional tournament last Monday in Fort Scott as he shot a 92. He knew it was going to be tough for him to get into the state tournament with that score as the top five individuals that didn't qualify as a team earn a bid.

So Martin walked up to look at the scores that had already come in and he was stunned.

"I saw a lot of scores in the 100s and the 90s," Martin said. "I was kind of relieved at the point because I didn't think I was going to make it because of how bad I was playing."

When all was said and done, Martin's score was good enough to allow him to medal seventh overall and he earned a spot at the state tournament in Wamego. He won't be the only Louisburg golfer to go either.

Freshman Calvin Dillon, who had led the Wildcats' most of the season, did so again Monday. Dillon shot an 82, which was 10-over par, and finished third individually.

"It feels exciting to qualify for state as a freshman," Dillon said. "Whenever I play, I try to focus in and play at my highest potential.



Louisburg senior Ty Martin follows through on his tee shot Monday during the Class 4A regional in Fort Scott. Martin shot a 92 to take seventh.

Martin will make his second consecutive trip to the state and is just happy he will join Dillon at the Class 4A tournament

that will be held in Wamego.

“It feels good,” Martin said. “I had a mindset going in that I was going to make it to state no matter what. It would have been embarrassing to me not being able to make it this year after qualifying last year. I just love playing golf and I wouldn’t want to end the year without going back to state.”

Dillon accomplished a rare feat himself at qualifying for the state tournament as a freshman and is happy to join his senior teammate on the Wamego course.

“Ty has been a great teammate this year and a great role model to base my game off of,” Dillon said. “With both of us going it takes a lot of pressure off since Ty has been there before. He’s able to help me know what to expect at the state level.”

Dillon did a good job navigating a tough Woodland Hills course as he stayed away from multiple bad holes. The Louisburg freshman parred nine holes and had just one double bogey.

“Under any conditions it is a tough course with tight fairways and small greens,” Dillon said “But at the end of the day, everyone has to play the course in the same conditions. With the fairways being so tight it’s hard to put the ball in play. There were a couple holes I played where I took bigger numbers than I wanted to because I didn’t put the ball in play.”

As for Martin, he had the opportunity to play some extra holes as he finished in a tie for seventh. Although he his state spot was already secured, he had to play in a 3-way playoff for medal positioning.

Martin outdueled Girard’s Cooper Brown and Cole Warner to nail down the seventh-place spot as he put his struggles behind him.

“I wasn’t out there trying to play conservative, I was just playing to see how good I could actually shoot,” Martin said.

“I wasn’t worried about the medals or anything like that. I was just glad I was going to state. I still wanted to win it though because I am competitive. I went into it knowing that I was better the other guys in the playoff because I had just played terrible earlier in the day.

“To start the tournament, surprisingly I was really nervous off the first tee box. I had a bad hole but I just told myself that it was just one hole and to move on. It just kept piling on. I just got a couple of unlucky bounces, including some that went out of bounds and it seemed nothing was going my way the whole day pretty much. It was weird.”

As a team, Louisburg finished fourth with a 383. Junior Justin Sievert was third on the Wildcat team with a 104 and senior Jake Hill had a 105. Ignacio Huesa and Kai Tinich shot a 109 and 114, respectively, to round out the team.

Burlington won the team title with a 353 and Girard was second with a 366 as both teams qualified for state. Burlington’s Jace Watkins won the tournament with a 77 and Fort Scott’s Nicholas King was second with a 78.

Dillon and Martin will hit the Wamego Country Club course this Monday for Class 4A state tournament. Martin will tee off at 8:40 a.m. and Dillon will get going at 10 a.m. in what is a staggered start.

“I played Wamego over spring break and I really enjoyed the course,” Dillon said. “I hope to medal and avoid the big number.”

Martin has the same goals.

“I would like to medal for sure,” he said. “I hope to shoot in the low 80s or 70s and try to get those nerves out of the way and not be as nervous as last time. I really don’t have anything to lose.”

Wildcats second at Garnett, Dillon and Martin finish 1-2



Louisburg High School senior Jake Hill watches his shot as he chips onto the green Tuesday during the Anderson County Invitational in Garnett. The Wildcats finished second overall with a 330, while Calvin Dillon won the tournament and Ty Martin took second.

GARNETT – In what turned out to be its final tournament before regionals, the Louisburg High School golf team couldn't have asked for a better finish to its regular season.

The Wildcats finished second overall Tuesday at the Anderson County Invitational with a 330 at the Garnett Golf Course, just seven strokes behind champion Ottawa. If that wasn't good enough, Louisburg also finished in the top two individually.

Freshman Calvin Dillon won the event by five strokes as he shot a 72 and senior Ty Martin carded a 77 to finish in second overall.

It was the second straight week the Wildcats had finished in the top two of the team standings. Last week, Louisburg finished second at the Ottawa Invitational and Martin medaled second overall and Dillon was fourth.

The difference for the Wildcats this week was the golfers behind Dillon and Martin shot one of their best rounds of the season to lower their team score.

Senior Jake Hill carded an 87 to finish third on the Wildcat team and junior Justin Sievert was fourth with a 95. Kai Tinich and Ignacio Huesa both shot a 105 to round out the Louisburg individuals.



Louisburg junior Justin Sievert watches his putt roll toward the hole Tuesday in Garnett.

“They are both playing great golf,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said of Dillon and Martin. “No matter what type of course you play, you still have to make good shots to score well. They have been working hard on their short game which has helped tremendously.

“Jake broke 90 for the first time and Justin was out of the low 100’s for the first time this season. My top two guys have been playing the course quite a bit while I have been working with the other four. This has helped work with various shots.”

The Wildcats will now prepare for their biggest tournament of the season Monday when it travels to Fort Scott for the Class 4A regional. Louisburg played on the Fort Scott course early in the year and it hopes that will help them this time around.

“The guys know that they need to hit straighter and not as long at Fort Scott and they have been practicing that,” Burns said. “We are close to being more accurate at the bottom three spots. Hopefully one of the guys can put it all together so the team might have a possibility to go to state. All four spots must play their best and avoid the big mistakes and play smart golf.”

Tee time for the regional tournament is set for 8:30 a.m.

Three schools to join Frontier League



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

Piper, Bonner Springs and Tonganoxie will be leaving their

current home – the Kaw Valley League – to join the Frontier after all three were offered spots during a meeting in early April.

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

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

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

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

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

Bonner Springs, Piper and Tonganoxie compare to other Frontier League programs. De Soto is the biggest school in the league with 854 students, followed by Ottawa (709), Spring Hill

(699), Paola (612), Louisburg (563), Eudora (471) and Baldwin (410).

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

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

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

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

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

"One of the things that I think gets overlooked is the idea

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

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

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

That situation came about in March when it was reported by the Tonganoxie Mirror that Kaw Valley League member Lansing wanted to create a larger league that would have contained all or some combinations of Lansing, Blue Valley Southwest, De Soto, Leavenworth, Bonner Springs, Basehor-Linwood, Tonganoxie, Ottawa, Piper, Spring Hill, Turner and Topeka schools Seaman, Shawnee Heights and Topeka West.

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

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

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

it has made the jump to Class 5A.

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

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

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

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

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

The league schedule will also look different beginning with

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

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

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

Dillon wins Blazer Invite, Martin medals to lead Wildcat golf



Louisburg senior Ty Martin watches his shot land on the green during a tournament earlier this season. Martin shot an 84 at the Blazer Invitational on Monday at Prairie Highlands Golf Course to medal fourth overall.

OLATHE – The Louisburg High School golf team invaded Prairie Highlands Golf Course on Monday during the Blazer Invitational and left with two of the top four spots in the tournament.

Freshman Calvin Dillon and senior Ty Martin each earned tournament medals as both finished in the top four individually. The Gardner-hosted invitational was originally scheduled to begin the season, but was postponed due to weather.

It was well worth the wait for both golfers.

Dillon dominated the field as he carded a 78 to win the tournament by three strokes on the par 72 course. Dillon shot a 38 on the front nine and a 40 on the back to earn his second tournament win of the season.

As for Martin, he finished fourth with an 84, right behind Gardner-Edgerton's Trystan Tovkach (81) and De Soto's Daniel Lee (83), who took second and third, respectively. Martin shot a 43 on the front nine, but improved his score by two strokes on the back to push him into fourth.

The golfers had to deal with gusty winds for most of the tournament, but that didn't let it affect Dillon and Martin.

"Twenty-two mile per hour winds led me to believe that mid 80's would be medals," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "Calvin is the best player I have had in 10 years. His dad, Jim, who used to be a teacher here, has done an amazing job with all aspects of his golf game. Calvin is a great addition to have to the team. Ty is also a great addition and I think

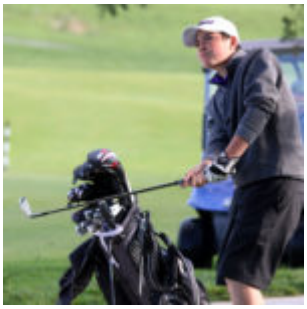
he will not be above 84 for the rest of the season. He is in his groove."

In the team standings, Louisburg finished with a 373 and took fourth overall. De Soto won the tournament with a 347, Gardner-Edgerton was second with a 365 and Ottawa shot a 369 to take third.

Senior Jake Hill was third on the Wildcat team with a 102, while juniors Justin Sievert and Kai Tinich shot a 109 and 112, respectively. Ryan Haight rounded out the Wildcats with a 124.

Louisburg continues its season Monday when it travels to the Ottawa Invitational. Tee time is set for 2 p.m.

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 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. They 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 Grffin, 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.