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.

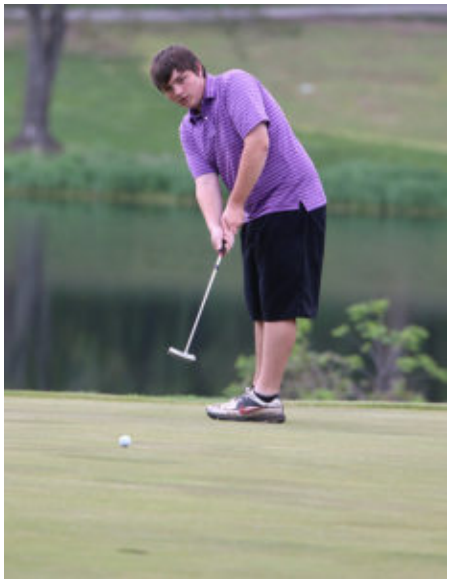
Welch had one of his best rounds of the season as he shot a 79 to finish fifth overall. His best hole of the day came on No. 13 when shot an Eagle on the par-5 hole.

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 its 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.

Wildcats take second at Paola Invitational



Louisburg junior Ty Martin watches a tee shot during the Paola Invitational on Monday at Paola Country Club. Martin shot an 87 to come in eighth overall to earn a medal and also helped the Wildcats to a second-place team finish.

PAOLA – It was a different week, but the same result for the Louisburg High School golf team.

The Wildcats battled some tough course conditions Monday at the Paola Invitational, but that didn't stop them from finishing runner-up in the team standings. Louisburg shot a 360 and finished eight strokes behind champion Paola, which shot a 352.

"I was very pleased with their final scores and staying focused after seeing how hard the greens were playing," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "They were super fast. I feel like we should have had one of our scores in the 90s be in the 80s, but we had a low 90s score that could have been in the high 90s so it balanced out."

Much like its previous meet, Louisburg was once again led by Ty Martin. The Wildcat junior shot an 87 to finish eighth overall and also garnered his second medal of the season.

"Ty stayed very consistent even though he shot 16 strokes higher than last week, but most players from all teams did the same," Burns said.



Sophomore Kai Tinich tries to chip onto the green during the Paola Invitational on Monday at the Paola Country Club.

Senior Hogan Welch was second on the team with a 90 and was able to rebound on the back nine. Welch struggled on a few holes on the front nine as he shot a 50, but shot a 40 to salvage his day.

“I know that Hogan can play low 80s golf, he just needs a few lucky bounces on the course,” Burns said. “He had some great shots that carried too long or got crazy bounces during the front nine.”

Fellow senior T.J. Svoboda was third on the team with a 91 and fellow senior Anders Vance was fourth with a 92. Junior Jake Hill shot a 107 and sophomore Kai Tinich recorded a 118.

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

JV wins Gardner tournament



Members of the Louisburg junior varsity team are (from left) Jacob Martin, Justin Sievert, Jacob Welsh, Nick Welch, Parker Parentis and Jaret Gilliland.

The Louisburg junior varsity golf team opened its season Tuesday at the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational and put up a strong performance.

The Wildcats won the team title and had four golfers pick up individual medals. Junior Nick Welch came up big as he shot a 40 to win by seven strokes.

Teammate Parker Parentis finished third, while Jacob Welsh and Justin Sievert took eighth and 10th, respectively. Jacob Martin and Jaret Gilliland also helped the Wildcats win the team crown.

Martin leads Wildcats to runner-up finish



The Louisburg High School golf team poses with their medals Monday following the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational. The Wildcats finished second overall with a 331. Members of the team are (from left) Nick Welch, Kai Tinich, Ty Martin, Hogan Welch, Anders Vance and T.J. Svoboda.

(Photo courtesy of T.J. Svoboda)

GARDNER – It didn't take long for Ty Martin to get into the full swing of things.

The Louisburg junior looked like he was in midseason form Monday when the Wildcat golf team opened its season at the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational as Martin shot the best round of his high school career.

Martin carded an even-par 71 to lead the Wildcats to a second-place team finish at the Gardner Golf Course. Individually, Martin finished one stroke behind Piper's Eric Pahls to take second as well.

"We played some good teams and I was hoping we would get third or fourth," Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. "Ty helped us tremendously to get second place as a team."

As a team, the Wildcats shot a 331 to finish seven strokes behind first place Piper, which shot a 324. De Soto took third with a 334. However, it was Martin who helped guide Louisburg to a strong opening start.

Martin connected on four birdies during the 18-hole round and made few mistakes along the way. He and the rest of the teammates were able to take advantage of a Gardner course that played to their strengths.

“The greens really helped us out,” Burns said. “They are normally cut right before the tournament and are pretty fast and you have to be careful. We were able to be aggressive.”

Louisburg also had two other medalists on the day as seniors T.J. Svoboda and Hogan Welch each shot an 83 to come in 12th and 13th, respectively.

Junior Nick Welch finished fourth on the Wildcat team with a 94, while senior Anders Vance shot a 95. Sophomore Kai Tinich shot a 122 to round out the Louisburg team.

“Hogan and T.J. shot a very good score in the low 80s,” Burns said. “At the same time, both are able to shoot in the high 70s at Gardner, but it just didn’t come all together for them as they struggled on a few holes. Nick shot his best ever and Anders, a newcomer, could easily drop five strokes or so. We are looking good for it being so early in the season.”

The Wildcats return to the links Monday when they travel to the Paola Invitational. Tee time is set for 3 p.m.

Wildcat golf returns core from season ago



Louisburg senior Hogan Welch qualified for the Class 4A state tournament last year and he his hoping for a repeat performance this season as he leads the Wildcat golf team. The Wildcats open their season Monday in Gardner.

It was toward the end of last May and Hogan Welch found himself on a golf course competing for a state medal.

Not a bad way to end his season.

Now a senior, Welch, and the rest of the Louisburg High School golf team, are hoping for the same type of finish this time around.

The Wildcat golfers have spent the last couple of weeks out at the links at Metcalf Ridge Golf Course getting the rust off in preparation of their season opener Monday at the Gardner Invitational.

“Practice has been good,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “Most of the junior varsity and varsity are making good contact with the ball at this time. We need more time working on the short game. The most problems we are having is when they come out of their spine angle to try to help the ball in the air and they hit it thin.”

Along with Welch, Louisburg returns two other varsity golfers from a year ago in senior T.J. Svoboda and junior Ty Martin. The three golfers helped put together a season in which the

Wildcats won their home tournament and finished third in the Frontier League.

Welch, who shot a 79 at the state tournament in McPherson last year, is ready for another crack at it and Burns believes he can get there again.

“Hogan will play well as long as he gets warm before each meet,” Burns said. “I have only seen him struggle when we go out and play right off the bat.”

The Wildcats also add a few newcomers to the varsity lineup. Senior Anders Vance is out for his first year of golf and will be joined by juniors Jake Hill, Nick Welch and sophomore Justin Sievert.

Right out of the gate, Burns believes his players are strong off the tee and hopes to round their game as the season goes along.

“All golfers have different strengths,” Burns said. “But right now, it is driving the ball.”

Louisburg will begin its season at 9 a.m. on Monday when it competes at the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational at the Gardner Golf Course. The Wildcats will also host their home invitational at 1 p.m. on April 25.

2016 Louisburg High School Golf Schedule

Apr. 4 at Gardner-Edgerton
9 a.m.

Apr. 11 at Paola
3 p.m.

Apr. 19 at Osawatomie 1

p.m.

Apr. 21 at Spring Hill
8 a.m.

Apr. 25 Louisburg Invitational
1 p.m.

May 2 at Ottawa
2 p.m.

May 10 at Anderson County
1 p.m.

May 12 at Prairie View
1:30 p.m.

May 16 at Regionals (Dub’s Dread KC)
8 a.m.

Paola AD proposes bill to help classification issue

Last October, Paola activities director Jeff Hines went to a Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) regional meeting to get updates on classification issues.

Six months later, Hines found himself in Topeka, in front of the Kansas Senate Education Committee to talk about a bill that could change the way schools are classified.

On Thursday, Hines sat in front of the committee to discuss Senate Bill 464 – a bill that he proposed with guidance of Sen. Caryn Tyson.

Statute 72-130 establishes specific guidelines pertaining to the organizational structure and functions of KSHSAA. Senate Bill 464 would change one part of the statute and strike the line which allows schools to be classified only by student enrollment.

“The total number of students in schools is a great starting point for classifying them,” Hines said. “It makes sense that the largest schools should play the largest schools and the smallest schools should play the smallest schools, but there are other things that need to be considered.”

For several months, KSHSAA has had a classification committee discuss different ways to have a competitive balance with its member schools. They came up with ideas of reducing the number of classifications or changing the number of schools in a division.

“There were no other factors being considered and that bothered me,” Hines said, “All that would do was reshuffle the schools just a little bit but we would have the same problem.”

The problem for the committee was its hands were tied thanks to the wording in Statute 72-130 that specifically states schools can only be classified by enrollment numbers and nothing else.

So Hines went to work and helped create Senate Bill 464, which does not give a specific solution to the problem, but rather would take wording out of the statute to allow KSHSAA to figure out how to classify schools on its own.

Hines gave a 15 minute testimony in front of the committee and then answered questions from the committee members for more than 30 minutes afterward. Before the hearing, Hines received support from every member in the Frontier League, Pioneer League and all but two schools in the Kaw Valley League, as those two didn't respond before the hearing.

Following Hines' testimony, Sen. Vicki Schmidt, R-Topeka, had concerns as to why KSHSAA did not come in front of the committee itself to ask for changes.

Hines informed the committee that it would be redundant for KSHSAA to endorse the plan, because if approved, member schools would still have to vote on it. He believes Bill 464 would let KSHSAA come up with a system and let schools improve it, instead of the legislature.

"KSHSAA wants to be neutral because this proposal would affect different schools in different ways," Hines said. "It could be very beneficial to some schools and others may not like it because they might have to move up a class. So, why should KSHSAA have to pick sides in it and pit member against member? It doesn't have to be that way in my opinion.

"Yes, a school that has to move up a classification might not like it, but is it the best thing overall for the association? They can't look themselves in the mirror and say 'No, this isn't the right thing to do?'

A major problem for some member schools in KSHSAA is they do not believe it is competitively equal the way it is currently structured.

"I am not a believer in participation medals," Hines said. "If they are kindergartners, sure, but when you start playing, part of being successful later in life is learning how to compete. We all competed for a job when you have gone in for an interview and that is good. You need to have that skillset and I am not saying that we need to give more trophies out and

give everyone a shot, but I just want a system in place that is equitable for all so that some don't have an unfair advantage at the expense of the rest and I think that is what is happening."

One of the problems is the lack of balance between championships won between public and private high schools. Hines did research and presented numbers at the hearing at the number of state championships won between private and public schools from 2004 to 2014.

Here is what he found.

- Private schools make up slightly less than 8 percent of the KSHSAA membership.
- Private schools have won slightly less than 32 percent of the state championships.
- Based on membership percentage, private schools should only win approximately 8 percent of the titles, not nearly 32 percent.
- Private schools are winning four times more state titles than should be expected based on their memberships.
- Private schools are nine times more likely to win five or more state titles than their public school peers.

"In that period of time, I looked for who has won five or more state titles," Hines said. "That is a difficult feat. You look at Paola's history and we have won like seven and Louisburg has won three in 100-plus years. During those 10 years, 37 percent of those private schools won five or more during that time and public schools had 4 percent win five or more. Private schools are nine times more likely to become a dynasty or a successful program with strong tradition. You tell me how we are all the same?"

Another problem they are facing is schools with a high percentage of low socioeconomic status (SCS) students, cannot compete against fellow schools in their own classification in

many activities, including football.

“There is a whole bunch of schools in the Kansas City, Kansas school district that are 6A or 5A that have no business competing against those really hard schools,” Hines said. “They don’t have resources, they don’t have the students, there is no interest and they have all those things working against them and I feel bad for those kids. Who wants to trot out against some of those bigger schools and know you are going to get your ears boxed in? That is not fun. Moreover, it is not challenging for the kids those schools are playing against.”

Hines believes competition is important when it comes to the growth of the student athlete and it is beneficial for the school and its community.

“Not only what it does for grades, but for what it does for the human spirit,” Hines said.
“When I was the FFA advisor in Paola, we won 10 state championships in nine years and you could tell the interest by the students and the community went through the roof. You can say the same thing about Louisburg and what Jim Morgan does with his FFA kids. People flock to success.

“Naturally, when they are there they feel better about themselves, they want to work harder in the classroom to stay eligible and kids that want to stay involved are going to be more successful in life. It is all about having the chance to be successful.”

During Hines’ testimony in front of the Senate Education Committee, not all of the legislatures seemed open to the idea. Molly Baumgardner, R-Louisburg, asked Hines if he would be willing to relinquish state funding if the legislature agrees to release oversight of how KSHSAA classifies schools.

“If we relinquished the funding behind it, (high school activities) would disappear,” Hines said at the hearing.

No action was taken following the hearing, but the committee chairman spent 15 minutes with him and Tyson to help them strategize on what to do next.

One option is to amend the bill to include more specifics that could include a multiplier or a separate division for private schools and a low SCS school de-multiplier.

Another option, Hines said, would be to have the classification committee draft a letter to the Senate Education Committee that states they would like to study these other factors as part of a proposal for revamping the classification system, but not until they feel the legislature is open to changing the law.

Whatever decision comes next, however, Hines wants it to be decided by multiple people within KSHSAA on how to proceed.

“I don’t feel comfortable making that change because I feel a committee needs to do the work,” Hines said. “I shouldn’t be doing it, nor should 11 legislators, you need more. We should let the classification committee work on it and hopefully we can get some things accomplished.

“The only way to allow this to happen is to remove the barrier in place that exists due to the state statute.”

Top 10 stories of 2015

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 2015 and I am already looking forward to 2016.



Hogan Welch (left) and Wyatt Reece each qualified for state in their respective sports.

10. Welch and Reece qualify for state

LHS students Hogan Welch and Wyatt Reece each put together strong seasons in their respective sports.

In May, Welch qualified for the Class 4A state golf tournament after he shot an 85 at the Osawatomie Golf Course to become one of five individual qualifiers for state. It was the first time Welch had qualified for the state tournament and would shoot a 79 a week later in McPherson to finish 40th overall.

As for Reece, he qualified for the state cross country meet for the first time in his career in October. The Louisburg

sophomore came in 13th overall and was also one of five individual qualifiers. A week later Reece traveled to Wamego to compete at the state meet and ran a 18:43 to come in 71st.



Louisburg's Jimmy Dolan (left) and Mya Diacono each suffered major head injuries from an accident just days apart. The Louisburg community rallied together to help the two families.

9. Accidents bring Louisburg community together

Jimmy Dolan and Mya Diacono live in the same community but were worlds apart from each other.

Jimmy, a junior at Louisburg High School, loves to wrestle, hang out with friends and live the life of a teenager.

It was a far cry from 9-year-old Mya who loves soccer, horses and spending time with her fourth-grade friends at Broadmoor Elementary. In a town of less than 5,000 people, the two had

never met.

Two tragic accidents changed all of that.

On Jan. 12, Jimmy lost control of his vehicle while driving to school and suffered a major brain injury. Just 42 days later, Mya was involved in an automobile accident just outside the Louisburg city limits that left her with the same severe brain trauma.

That was when the Louisburg community came together to help the two families cope with a burden no family should have to bear. Since then, both Jimmy and Mya are on the road to recovery thanks to the help of a lot of people.



Louisburg Soccer Club president Karin Olson (second from left), Louisburg HIgh School junior Maddie McDaniel (middle) and fundraising organizer DIana Moore (right) receive the WIN for KC Sprint Teamwork Award on Feb. 13 in Kansas City, Mo.

8. Girls soccer raises funds to start program, wins award

A fundraising committee made a big push to make sure there was a girls soccer program at Louisburg High School.

The committee raised $39,000 in almost a year’s time to fund the program for three years. Thanks to all the hard work, the group was also recognized by the WIN for KC organization. The Lady Cats’ soccer season will kickoff in late March.



Louisburg graduates Kody Cook (left) and Garrett Griffin are each winding down their careers with their respective Division I football programs.

7. Griffin, Cook wrap up college careers

Louisburg High School graduates Kody Cook and Garrett Griffin have lived the lives a lot of football fans could only hope for.

Both are wrapping up their Division I collegiate football careers and are doing it with a lot of success. Cook is living his dream with the Kansas State football team as he has made contributions at both the wide receiver and quarterback positions to help the Wildcats to the Liberty Bowl.

Griffin, on the other hand, battled through an injury-plagued senior season to help Air Force reach the Armed Forces Bowl and made several big plays at the tight end spot.



Louisburg quarterback Austin Terry was one of several players responsible for the Wildcats' turnaround this season.

6. Wildcat football has big turnaround

After finishing with just three wins a year ago, the Louisburg High School football team put together a strong season in 2015 as they finished with seven wins.

Those seven victories put the Wildcats within a game of Paola for the Frontier League title and Louisburg also earned a spot in the regional playoffs before falling to Basehor-Linwood in a tight contest.



The Louisburg High School soccer team captured its first regional crown since 2010 after a 2-0 win over Coffeyville.

5. Louisburg soccer wins regional crown

Through much of the regular season, the Louisburg High School soccer team didn’t have much to cheer about.

The Wildcats had just four wins during the regular season, but they seemed to find the right chemistry in the postseason. Louisburg rattled off three consecutive wins in the postseason, including a 2-0 victory over Coffeyville-Field Kindley in the regional championship.

It was the Wildcats’ first regional title since 2010 and their sixth in the last 10 years.



Anders Vance won a regional title in the 285-pound weight class last February as he was one of five Wildcats to earn state bids.

4. Louisburg wrestling qualifies five for state

The Louisburg wrestling team hadn’t been a part of the state tournament since 2012 – that is before last season.

The Wildcats put together a breakout season as they qualified five for the state tournament, while Anders Vance won the regional crown at 285 pounds. Brenton Wrigley (195 pounds), Mason Koechner (220), Nathan Keegan (113) and Ryan Adams (138) all made the trip to Salina for the Class 4A state tourney.



Jeff Lohse (left) and Ben York each stepped away from their head coaching posts in 2015.

3. Long-time coaches resign from post

Jeff Lohse and Ben York had been fixtures in their respective sports for Louisburg High School, but both decided to call it quits this year.

Lohse, who spent the last 17 years as the head coach for the LHS baseball team, stepped down from his spot in May, citing personal reasons. Lohse led the Wildcats to two state tournament appearances.

York, who was the head coach when the boys soccer program started, also cited personal reasons for leaving the Wildcat soccer program after 13 years. York helped the Wildcats to six regional titles in the last 10 years.



Connor McMullen won the state title in the discus back in May and became Louisburg's first track state champion since 2011.

2. McMullen wins state title in discus, Dennis medals in hurdles

Louisburg High School senior Connor McMullen finally got the state title in the discus he had been searching for.

McMullen recorded a throw of 173 feet, 1 inch on his final attempt to win the Class 4A state discus title in Wichita back in May. He would also medal eighth in the javelin with a toss of 164-02.

Fellow senior Sean Dennis also garnered a state medal as he took fourth in the 110-meter hurdles. The boys and girls team combined sent a total of 11 athletes to the state meet.



The Louisburg High School volleyball team finished third overall in 2015 after making it to state for the fifth time in the last six seasons.

1. Lady Cat volleyball takes third at state

The Louisburg High School volleyball team has made a habit of making the trip to Salina in recent years and this season was no exception.

This time, however, the Lady Cats finished with a victory.

After ending their season with a runner-up performance and two fourth-place finishes at state the last three years, Louisburg won its final match of the season in 2015 as it defeated Tonganoxie in the third-place match.

The Lady Cats qualified for the state tournament for the fifth time in the last six years.