Wildcat golf season comes to a close at regionals



Louisburg senior Carter Stuteville watches a tee shot during a tournament earlier this season.

COFFEYVILLE – The Louisburg golf team was already competing in one of its tougher tournaments on the season last week at the Class 4A regional.

The weather just made it even more difficult.

The tournament was delayed due to storms, and when they finally got the all clear to play, the golfers were still trying to dodge rain showers.

Not much seemed to go right for the Wildcats, who saw their season come to an end at the Coffeyville Country Club course.

Louisburg finished seventh in the team standings with a 392 and none of the Wildcats were able to qualify individually. It broke a streak of three straight years of qualifying as a team.

Independence won the regional title with a 324, while Chanute and Coffeyville-Field Kindley also qualified for state with a 364.

Three Wildcat seniors played their last tournament for the team and all three led Louisburg on the day.

Nick Lancaster finished 20th overall with a 95, which included four pars. Carter



Stutevillewas24thwitha97andfourpars,whileJacksonOlsonshota98.

Sophomore Sam Frederick and junior Cole Mysnted each carded a

102, which was good for 28th overall. Sophomore Josh Holtzen had a 114 and took 41st.

Field Kindley's Zachary Becker won the regional title with a 78 on his home course.

Wildcats win Prairie View title as Olson leads team with runner-up finish



Louisburg senior Jackson Olson watches his tee shot during a tournament earlier in the season. Olson finished second Thursday at the Prairie View Invitational.

LINN VALLEY – It has been a tough spring for the Louisburg golf team, but it all finally came together for the Wildcats on Thursday.

Louisburg traveled to the Prairie View Invitational and came home with some hardware. The Wildcats won the team title with a season-best score of 355 and edged out runner-up Iola by four strokes at the six team meet at Deer Trace Golf Course.

With all the team success, the Wildcats also earned several individual honors and it started with Jackson Olson. The Louisburg senior took second overall the tournament with a

season-best 83.



Louisburg senior Nick Lancaster finished seventh overall with an 87 at Deer Trace Golf Course at Prairie View.

Olson tied with Iola's Brennon Coffield and Eudora's Ty Deterding with the top score, but Deterding took home top honors on a scorecard tiebreaker.

Senior Nick Lancaster had one of his best rounds of the season as he carded an 87 and finished seventh overall. Sophomore Sam Frederick finished in 10th with a 91.

Louisburg senior Carter Stuteville was fourth on the team, and took 14th overall,



with a 94. Junior Cole Mynsted (98) and sophomore Josh Holtzen (109) finished 19

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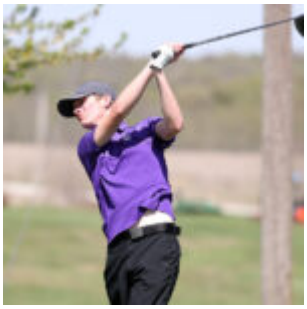


Louisburg sophomore Sam Frederick finished 10th Thursday at Prairie View.

The Wildcats are back on the course today for postseason play. Louisburg is taking part in the Class 4A regional tournament at Coffeyville Country Club.

The top three teams qualify for the state tournament next week, along with the top five other individuals from non-qualifying teams.

Louisburg golf sees improvement following Ottawa Invite



Louisburg senior Jackson Olson watches his tee shot during a tournament earlier this season. Olson and the Wildcats shot a season best 363 on Monday in Ottawa.

OTTAWA – It might not have left with any hardware Monday, but the Louisburg golf team saw its fair share of improvements.

Louisburg competed in the Ottawa Invitational at the Great Life Golf and Fitness course and put together its best team performance of the season. The Wildcats recorded a 363 to finish in seventh overall – which surpassed their previous best by 12 strokes.

“We finally got two golfers in the 80s, which was good to see,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “We worked hard on the short game and pitch shot distances and I think it probably helped each golfer drop a couple strokes.”

Wildcat senior Nick Lancaster recorded his best round of the season as he finished with an 85, just three spots out of a medal and took 13th overall.

Senior Carter Stuteville also finished below 90 for the first

time this season. Stuteville carded an 88 to finish 20th out of 53 golfers.

Another senior, Jackson Olson, was next on the team with a 92 and finished 29th. Sophomore Josh Holtzen scored a 98 and was 35th.

Seniors Brock Varns (100) and Layne Ryals (123) finished 39th



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Louisburg’s schedule picks up next week as the Wildcats compete in two tournaments. They will travel to the Anderson County Invitational on Tuesday at Garnett Country Club.

Then in their final meet of the regular season, Louisburg will travel to the Prairie View Invitational at Deer Trace Golf Course at Linn Valley Lakes.

The Wildcats will then wrap up their season at the Class 4A regional tournament on May 15 at Coffeyville Country Club.

Louisburg golf competes at Paola Invitational



Louisburg senior Nick Lancaster watches a tee shot Monday during the Paola Invitational at Paola Country Club. Lancaster was second on the Wildcat team with a 93.

PAOLA – The Louisburg golf team took part in its third meet in a seven-day span Monday when the Wildcats traveled to compete in the Paola Invitational.

The event, which was rescheduled from earlier in the season, had its fair share of challenges for the Wildcats, but they saw some improvements on the Paola Country Club course.

Louisburg finished seventh in the team standings with a 375 as some Wildcats came close to cracking the 80s they were hoping for.

“The team shot their lowest score of the year and I had four guys in the 90s,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “I can’t wait for a couple of them to be in the 80’s, which should happen soon. We were also missing one of our best golfers, who is now back on track.”

Senior Carter Stuteville led the Wildcat team with a 90 and took 22nd overall. Another senior Nick Lancaster, also fared well with a 93, and finished 25th out of 52 golfers.

Sophomore Sam Frederick

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Shawnee 913-962-8297
Overland Park 913-962-8297

and junior Cole Mynsted each carded a 96 to tie for 28th overall. Sophomores Garris

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Heritage Christian won the tournament by 34 strokes with a

309. Spring Hill was second with a 345. Heritage's Owen Evans won the individual crown with a 74 and Anderson County's Eli Martin was second with a 76.

The Wildcats will look to continue to improve Monday when they compete at the Ottawa Invitational. Tee time is set for 2 p.m. at the Great Life Golf and Fitness Course.

Wildcat golf kicks off season with pair of tournaments



Louisburg senior Carter Stuteville watches a tee shot last Tuesday during the Osawatomie Invitational.

SPRING HILL – It has been tough start to the season for the Louisburg golf team.

The Wildcats, who already started their 2023 campaign a little later than normal, saw their first tournament of the season rained out.

Louisburg was finally able to hit the links last week with a pair of tournaments, including the Frontier League Invitational at Sycamore Ridge Golf Course on Thursday in Spring Hill.

The Wildcats finished sixth in the Frontier League tournament

with a 390. Tonganoxie won the league crown with a 357.

Sophomore Sam Frederick led Louisburg as he carded a 94 and finished in a tie for 14th. Senior Nick Lancaster was right behind him in 16th with a 95.

Senior Carter Stuteville was third on the Louisburg team with a 97 and was 22nd overall. Josh Holtzen (104), Garrison Bloustine (110) and Cole Mynsted (112) took 29th, 33rd and 37th, respectively.



Louisburg sophomore Sam Frederick chips onto the green last Tuesday in Osawatomie.

“I think having three of our top four scores in the 90s was good for what was a windy day at Sycamore,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “Many of the players are striking the ball well, but their short games need some work. That will be the main concentration for the weeks to come.”

That was the second tournament on the week for Louisburg as it opened its season Tuesday at the Osawatomie Invitational.

The Wildcats use Osawatomie Golf Course for practice, but it wasn’t as kind to them this time around. Louisburg shot a 376

and took 14th overall.

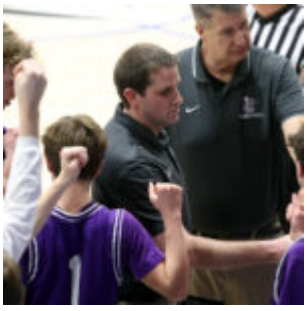
“Osawatomie always plays tough due to the small fast greens,” Burns said. “I was hoping for our team score to be in the 360s and not 370s.”

Lancaster led the Wildcats with an 89, while Stuteville was second on the team a 91. Frederick carded a 97 and Mynsted tallied a 99.

Bloustine and Jackson Olson rounded out the Wildcat team with a 109 and 119, respectively.

Louisburg will try and bounce back this Monday as it competes in the rescheduled Paola Invitational. Tee time is set for 2 p.m. at Paola Country Club.

Pfannenstiel named new LHS AD; resigns boys basketball post



Louisburg boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel will take over the school’s activities director role next school year. He also resigned his basketball position after coaching the Wildcats for the last six years.

Beginning next school year, Louisburg High School activities

will have a little different look to it – especially at the top.

Ty Pfannenstiel will serve as the school's new activities director and will take over for current AD, Michael Pickman, who will focus on his assistant principal duties and curriculum.

Pfannenstiel, who has been the boys basketball coach for the last six years, resigned his post to take on the activities director position. He also stepped down as an assistant football coach.

Currently the weight room instructor, Pfannenstiel will spend half his day teaching and the other half in the AD role.

All of the moves were approved during Monday's meeting of the USD 416 Board of Education.

"This is very exciting for me," Pfannenstiel said. "It's definitely going to be a change. I have been a teacher and a coach for 18 years. I still get to be a teacher half-time, and now I get to step into a new role as an administrator. It is going to be all sports and activities and I am looking forward to the new direction."

As for Pickman, he gets the opportunity to focus more on the academic side as a full-time assistant principal. He was hired as an assistant principal/ activities director in April of 2020.

"I am very excited to commit more fully to the assistant principal role as education and curriculum have always been my true passion," Pickman said. "Being able to support the teachers, students, and administrative staff by providing data, feedback, and assessing teaching and learning goals and initiatives in the building and district aligns with that passion and the opportunity arose to allow for that. I hope to enable and promote continued growth in the various curriculums

and initiatives and structures that make Louisburg a fantastic district in a supportive community.

“Ty has experience and is passionate about athletics and activities. As it is where his passion is, I have every confidence he will do a fantastic job in his new role and look forward to witnessing where he takes our programs moving forward.”

Pickman took over LHS activities at a difficult time as the school was coming back from COVID-19 and the all challenges it presented. As tough as that situation was, he appreciated the relationships he built.

“I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as activities director and was presented a fantastic growth opportunity and am grateful for being given it,” Pickman said. “I had a goal of being present for athletes and coaches and for the patrons, so I hope people saw that presence. I was blessed to have great leadership in place in our coaches and sponsors, and tried to support them best by advocating for their needs and supporting them to do their job of being great role models and passing on their passion and knowledge to students.

“Ultimately, I am most proud of our student athletes and activity participants and being part of their journey. I believe that sports are an extension of the classroom and I wanted to help ensure that character and sportsmanship were just as important and success, and I am overjoyed to have a wealth of memories where our fans, students, participants, and coaches and sponsors proved that to be true of LHS.”

While taking on the challenge of being a new administrator is one he is looking forward to, leaving his coaching roots behind was a difficult decision for Pfannenstiel.

In 2021, Pfannenstiel led the Wildcat boys basketball team to the Class 4A state championship game and finished as the state runner-up.

“That was definitely the biggest thing that was holding me back,” Pfannenstiel said. “I love basketball and the kids that I have worked with. There is a group coming up that I really enjoy coaching, and leaving that behind was one of the biggest challenges for me. Whoever takes over the program, I think it will be good transition for them because they will have a great group of kids to work with.

“Originally, I was going to be allowed to coach a sport and they didn’t want to take coaching away from me. The more I thought about it, if I want to do a good job at this, I need to focus on being the AD and that will be something that will benefit me and all the other activities.”

Pfannenstiel believes the move is a good one for the school in general as it will allow Pickman and principal Amy VanRheen to focus more on the academic side of things.

“This is something that is definitely needed,” Pfannenstiel said. “Our administrators are so busy with all the stuff they do during the school day, but they are also going to all the activities as well. Hopefully this will be a big help for Mrs. VanRheen and Mr. Pickman.”

Although he won’t official start his new position till next school year, Pfannenstiel is already starting to transition into his new role – one that is looking forward to.

“My job in the weight room and coaching has all been about sports,” he said. “That is what entices me about this job is that I am still going to be all about sports and activities. I just want to be a support for our coaches and our athletes and be advocate for our students.”

Wildcat golf hoping to earn another trip to state tournament



Louisburg senior Jackson Olson returns to lead the Wildcat golf team after competing in the last two state tournaments.

Last season, the Louisburg golf team snuck into the state tournament for the third straight year and a pair of Wildcat golfers are back from that team to help lead the way as they try and make it a fourth.

Seniors Jackson Olson and Nick Lancaster return to lead the Wildcats after both players played big roles in helping Louisburg get back to state last season. A year ago, Olson was the regional runner-up and has gone to state the last two seasons.

Along with sophomore newcomer Sam Frederick, Olson and Lancaster will provide the Wildcats with a strong part of the varsity lineup as they head into the season.

“Jackson is definitely the leader and best on the team,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “Sam Frederick should be my second best and Nick Lancaster will have to work hard to beat him out for that spot. I would say that right now, those should be my set three for the varsity tournaments most of the time.”

As for what the rest of the varsity roster holds, Burns knows

it could be revolving door of different players throughout the season.



Louisburg senior Nick Lancaster is one of two returning golfers from last season's state tournament team.

Seniors Brock Varns, Layne Ryals and Carter Stuteville could all see varsity time at one point in the season, along with a number of underclassmen.

"As far as the other three spots, the new JV golfers have learned fast and are making adjustments needed to compete for a varsity spot," Burns said. "However, some bad habits come back, and I am always reminding them of what is needed in their swing to be better. When tournaments come around, they will need to be more consistent and confident in the swing they are building."

The Wildcats will have a late start to their season this year as they open the 2023 campaign today when they compete at the Paola Invitational. Normally, the Wildcats have a tournament or two before now, but they have been working hard at practice to get ready for the upcoming season.

“Practice has been good so far, but the thing that is hard about golf is that you can be off with one thing in the swing and it can affect your whole day,” Burns said. “We still have tons of work to do on all aspects of the game.”

As far as making another state tournament, that is the goal for the Wildcats, but they know they will need to keep improving to have a shot come next month.

“I have three golfers that should shoot in the 80s by the end of the season and most of the others in the 90s,” Burns said. “Whatever we do, we have already started a successful season and I hope to get four guys in the 80s.”

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2022

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

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

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

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

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



10. Louisburg golf qualifies for state

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

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

Chanute and Independence had already assured themselves of a spot, but the third place team was up in the air as the top three teams automatically qualify for state.

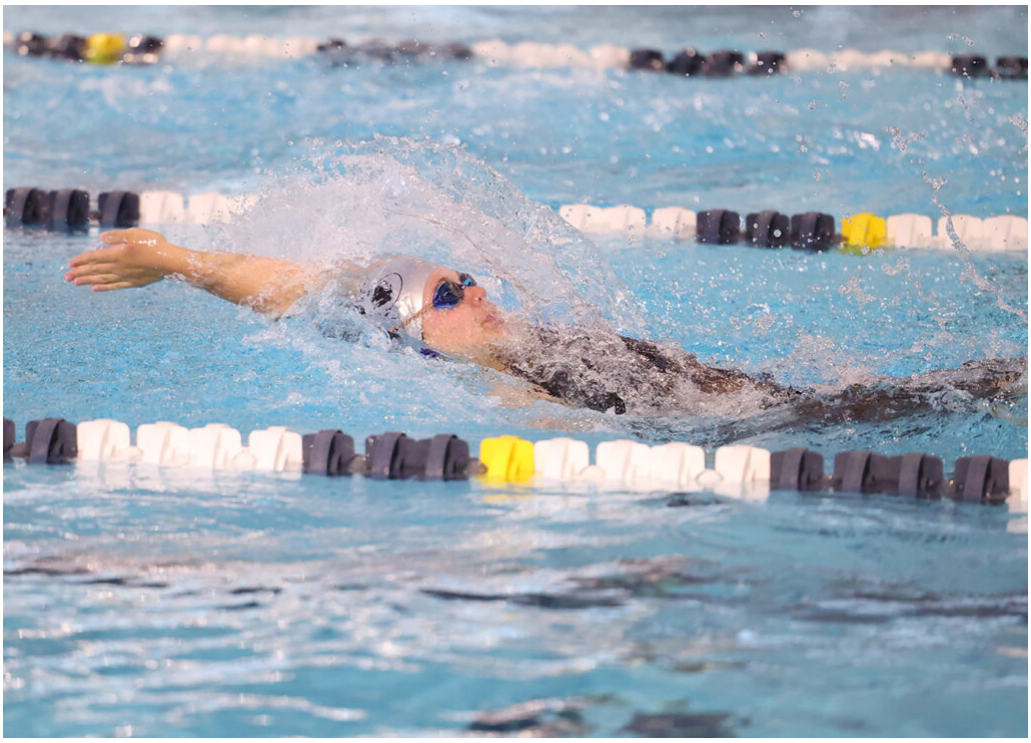
As it turned out, the Wildcats had nothing to worry about as they edged Paola by four strokes to finish in third with a 357 to secure their third consecutive spot in the 4A state tournament.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



8. Harding takes over as Wildcat football coach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



5. Wildcat wrestling medals 3 at state

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

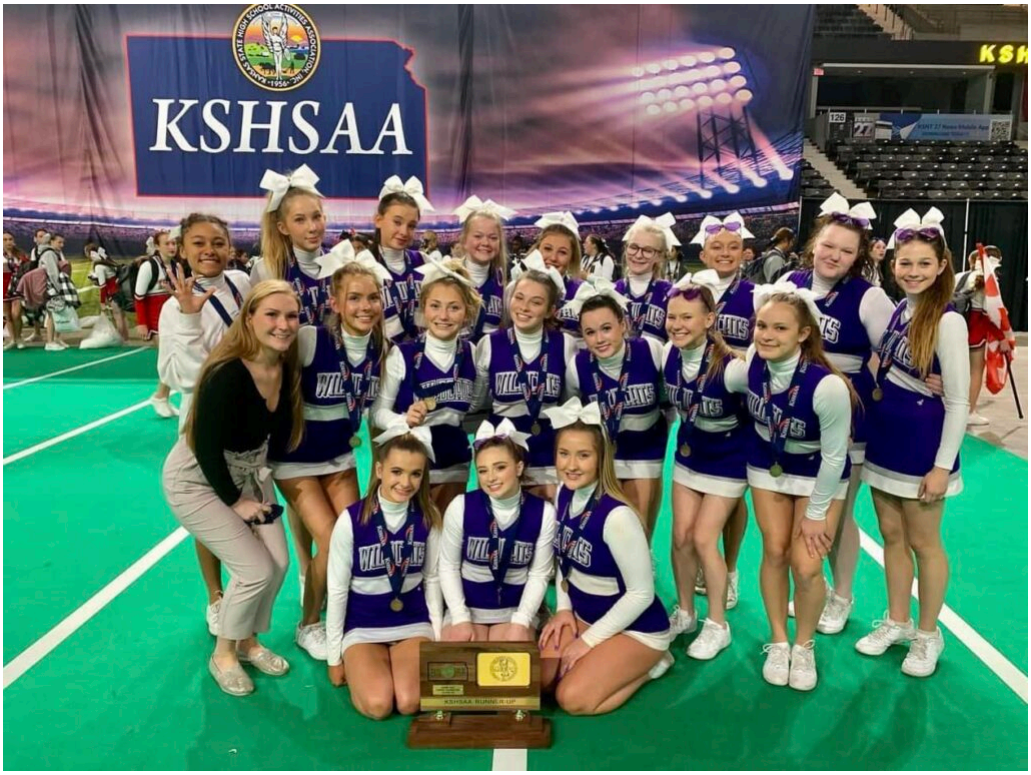
The Wildcats left the Class 4A state tournament with three state medalists, the most for one year in program history.

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

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

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

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



4. Louisburg cheer earns state runner-up performance

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



3. LHS football secures Frontier League title

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

watching an outright Frontier League title slip away.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



2. Wildcat volleyball finishes fourth at state

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



1. Wildcat boys take third at state

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Wildcat golf concludes season at state tournament



Members of the Louisburg state golf team (from left) are Ian Kirkpatrick, Nick Lancaster, A.J. Arriola, Sam Wheeler and Jackson Olson.

NEWTON – It wasn’t the ending the Louisburg boys golf team had hoped for, but the Wildcats had a chance to end their season as team.

Five Wildcats competed in the Class 4A state tournament on May 23 at Sand Creek Station in Newton, but they couldn’t build on the momentum that had created the week before at regionals.

Louisburg was shut out of the medals and none of the Wildcats were able to earn a spot in the second day of competition.

That second day was eventually cancelled due to inclement weather, so all the scores from day one became the final results.

A pair of seniors led the Wildcats as A.J. Arriola and Sam Wheeler finished as the team’s top two golfers. Arriola carded a 97 to take 59th overall, while Wheeler finished with a 98 and came in 66th.

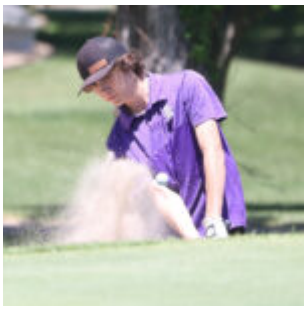
Junior Jackson Olson was one stroke behind Wheeler with a 99. Senior Ian Kirkpatrick carded a 103 and junior Nick Lancaster rounded out the Wildcat team with a 105.

The week prior, the Wildcats qualified for the state tournament for the third consecutive season and Arriola and Olson both recorded top five finishes.

Chanute’s Drayton Cleaver won the individual state title with a 74. Bishop Miege won the team crown with a 324 and Wellington was second with a 328.

Arriola, Olson spark Wildcat golf to third straight state

tourney



Louisburg senior A.J. Arriola chips out of the sand and onto the green last Monday at the Class 4A regional in Fort Scott. Arriola finished as the regional runner-up with a 78.

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

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

Chanute and Independence had already assured themselves of a spot, but the third place team was up in the air as the top three teams automatically qualify for state.

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

Seniors A.J. Arriola, Sam Wheeler, Ian Kirkpatrick, Johnny Thompson, along with juniors Jackson Olson and Nick Lancaster, will get to continue their season for another week and do it against the state's best golfers.



Members of the Louisburg state qualifying team are (from left) Ian Kirkpatrick, Jackson Olson, A.J. Arriola, Johnny Thompson, Nick Lancaster and Sam Wheeler.

“This meant everything to me,” Arriola said. “Everyone on the team works so hard almost every day and I’m so happy that we all get to experience going to state together.”

The Wildcats can thank both Arriola and Olson that they were able to keep their state streak alive. Both golfers set personal bests and did so in impressive fashion.

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

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

“A.J. and Jackson went and played Woodland Hills before the tournament,” Louisburg coach Brian Burns said. “A.J. took awesome notes and the team and I went over them in practice. I believe this was the key to their final score even though some

said they still got bad bounces.”



Louisburg’s Jackson Olson watches his tee shot last Monday in Fort Scott.

Arriola, who has now medaled in seven tournaments this season for the Wildcats, recorded two birdies on the day in the middle of his round.

“I felt I was playing some of my best golf,” Arriola said. “I made a few mistakes towards the end of my round, but overall am very happy with how I played. The course was difficult in certain places, but the preparation me and my team did before our round helped us tremendously.”

Birdies also helped guide Olson to a good score and give him some confidence as his round went on. He had two birdies on the front nine and limited his bad holes.

“For the first 9 I was all over the place, and I started to feel nervous but I was able to get two birdies to help my score,” Olson said. “After the turn the coaches told me I would need to do good in order to make state, so I was able to

lock in and finish the round strong.

“To have the whole team qualify meant a lot especially since most of them are seniors. They have guided me to the person and golfer that I am today.”



Louisburg junior Nick Lancaster chips onto the green Monday in Fort Scott.

Lancaster also shot a solid round as he recorded the team’s third best score as he carded a 96, including four straight pars to begin his day.

Kirkpatrick and Wheeler each finished with a 102, while Thompson rounded out the Wildcat scores with a 114.

Now the Wildcats will focus on the Class 4A state tournament that will be held at Sand Creek Station Golf Course in Newton.

The two-day tournament begins at 8:30 a.m. this Monday. The Wildcats hope to have a good showing and possibly earn a medal or two, especially for Arriola after a tough ending to his season a year ago.

“My only expectation for myself is make it to the second day,” Arriola said. “Last year I missed the cut by one stroke and it definitely will motivate me to playing in the best of my ability come Monday.”

Wheeler will be the first Wildcat to tee off at 9:20, followed by Lancaster at 9:30, Kirkpatrick at 9:40, Thompson at 9:50, Olson at 10 and Arriola at 10:10.