2020 Senior Spotlight: Lauren Cutshaw



Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.

Softball was a way of life for Lauren Cutshaw, and it has been ever since she was a little kid.

Starting in T-Ball, and working her way up through the softball ranks, it has provided her with a getaway and her passion for the sport only grew as she got older.

“Softball has always been a huge part of my life, and my family’s life for years and years,” Cutshaw said. “I played competitive softball year-round and summer it was softball every, and all weekend. I would practice during the week, along with catching and hitting lessons with former Royals catcher Mike Macfarlane.

“Softball was a life commitment for me. In the fall and spring it was the same thing, but I loved it. I had some great relationships with my teammates spending so much time together and we all had so much fun. I sure am going to miss this sport. It really was a piece of me for so long and my family was always there with me.”

Fast forward to her junior year in high school and Cutshaw had one of the best moments in her young life. Cutshaw and the

Louisburg softball team upset their way to a regional championship in Ottawa and earned a spot in the state tournament for the first time since 2014.

The Lady Cats defeated Ottawa and then rallied for a win against Chanute in the championship to advance to state.

“My favorite memory would have to be regionals junior year because in high school that is the best we have ever played as a team,” Cutshaw said. To come out and beat the odds of winning was just so amazing. (Coach John) Ozier was so proud of us, and what a way to go with that being his last season as our coach. I was so happy to be a part of our team going to state and it made it even more special for me that I caught all the regional games. It was so much fun and I am glad I have those memories.”

For her senior season, the Lady Cats welcomed former JV coach Nick Chapman as the team’s new varsity coach and Cutshaw was excited to see what her final year had in store.

“I was looking forward to my senior season way more than any other season,” Cutshaw said. “I knew that Chapman had been working ever since the end of last season as soon as he found out he was going to be head coach. He worked so hard for this season to be different than any other one. We were all so lucky to have a coach this dedicated. We were working hard toward another chance at state this season, and Chapman never let us forget that we were playing for a purpose and together as a team.”

Cutshaw was slated to play a vital role on the team as she would split time at catcher with fellow senior Reilly Ratliff-Becher and would also see time in the outfield. It was a role that she accepted and embraced and she was one of seven seniors on this year’s Lady Cat team.

“Lauren was another great senior leader for us,” Chapman said. “She dedicated herself to getting better each and every day.

She played a role in helping start to change the culture of this program. Lauren led with actions every day, on and off the field, and she brought humor and cheerfulness that made practices fun.”



Louisburg senior Lauren Cutshaw was one of seven returning seniors to the program this year.

After a couple weeks of practices, many of the players realized this season was never going to happen. Over spring break, the players were informed by Chapman that their season was canceled due to the spread of COVID-19.

It was difficult news to take, especially for Cutshaw, as the sport she loved growing up would be prematurely taken from her. There will be no more softball in her future, but despite the heartache, she is learning and growing from this experience.

“Pretty much the only way to deal with the cancellation of the season is to know that this is all God’s plan,” Cutshaw said. “He has greater things in store and bigger plans than we can imagine and he is in control. Senior year is just a little glimpse of life and all that will happen and you can’t let one hardship set you back from what all you can do. I have been praying and just trying to make the best out of this terrible situation.”

Other than softball, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Lauren on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

LSZ: What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

LC: I miss all my friends and the time together as a team. I miss the coaches because they were so impactful to us. Practices were so fun this year, we listened to music while getting a lot of practice in. I looked forward to all the new drills and things we did and Chapman was such a fun coach. I could already tell that this season was going to be my favorite. Chapman had put so much heart into this season for us girls, so it makes me sad knowing I will never get to know the outcome.

LSZ: What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

LC: Going to football games and dressing up for the different themes.

LSZ: What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

LC: I love shopping and hanging out with my friends, I love being social and in the summer I enjoy going swimming and occasionally go fishing.

LSZ: What are your plans for after graduation?

LC: I plan to attend Missouri State University and work towards my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Although I will not be playing softball in college, it was one of the hardest and drawn out decisions I've ever made. I had to come to the realization that my career and education is what is more important and I did not want the hassle of trying to do both, especially with nursing. I had multiple people, even college coaches, tell me that wasn't a good idea.

LSZ: What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

LC: I am proud to say that I have my CNA license and I've had it since junior year and I am in the process now to get my CMA. I really enjoy working in healthcare and cannot wait to become a nurse and learn so much to be able to help people.

LSZ: What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

LC: Most people only think i'm a girly girl, but i love catching craw dads in the creek and snakes don't bother me.

Lauren's Favorites

Pro athlete: Salvador Perez

Pro team: N/A

College team: N/A

Movie: Grown Ups

TV Show: Grey's Anatomy

Song: Blessings by Florida Georgia Line

Band/Musician: Jason Aldean

Pregame meal/snack: Spicy Italian Subway sandwich with Cheetos

Class/subject: Allied Health Program that I took at FSCC through the high school.

Teacher and why: Mrs. Quinn, she has been an amazing advisory teacher all four years and she always made class fun, too.

Previous Senior Spotlights

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

Allie Boles – Softball

Michael Waldron – Track and Field

Avery O'Meara – Soccer

Ryan Haight – Golf

Andie Masten – Soccer

2020 Senior Spotlight: Allie

Boles



Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an effort to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.

Softball holds a special place in the heart of Allie Boles.

Boles has been playing the sport for as long as she could remember and she grew up always with a bat in her hand. Her father, Dave, brought her up in the sport and coached her till she was 17.

It has been a big part of her life and gave her things that will remain with her forever.

“Softball isn’t just a sport, it’s a way of living life in my opinion,” Boles said. “It brings a lot of life lessons to you. You meet a lot of people. The game of softball to me is unexplainable – you have to love it and know who you want to be on that field for. Softball is and will always be a part of my life. I have big goals and dreams that I look forward to accomplishing.”

After not playing for the Louisburg program since her freshman year, Boles was excited to join her friends and go on one final run her senior season.

“I was super excited and I really wanted to make some memories with some of the girls I used to play with,” Boles said. “I was excited to be coached by coach (Nick) Chapman because he

knows a lot about the game and how it goes. I thought we could have been really good this year, not only because of the skill we improved on, but the team's chemistry was built strong over those few weeks."

Boles was slated to be a starter and one of the Lady Cats' biggest bats in their lineup this season, but when she got word that their season was over due to the spread of COVID-19, her heart sank.

"When I first found out I was with my friends," Boles said. "We found out over a phone call from one of our moms. Hearing her cry and the news that our senior year, and all that we have been looking forward to, had been ripped away from us made us pretty emotional. There were a lot of tears shed.

"Driving by the school, football field and softball fields gives me a pain in my chest every time. I think when you play ball with anyone they automatically become your family and having that ripped away from you hurts. We've all been in touch and getting through it together."

The Lady Cats were on a mission in 2020 to try and earn another trip to state after winning a regional championship a year ago. Boles figured to be a big part of that run, along with the six other seniors on the team.

"She has a bright future in softball," Chapman said. "She has raw talent that I am excited to see grow at the next level. I think she would have had a huge year and helped our team take the next step along with the rest of these seniors. She committed to this team from the very beginning and demonstrated what it means to play with passion. I am very grateful for her leadership and excited to see what her softball future holds."



Louisburg senior Allie Boles was excited to return to the Lady Cat program.

Softball still figures to be a fixture in Boles' life moving forward as she has signed to play in college and is looking forward to growing even more in the sport. Still, she has several fond memories of her short time with the Lady Cat program.

"One of my favorite moments was one of the last moments I was with them," Boles said. "We had a team dinner on what we didn't know would be our last day, and during that time we grew together. It felt like a family that had known each other forever, even though it had been a couple short hours. We were playing games all night and laughing, throwing hot dogs at each other and just being goofy."

Other than softball, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance

to catch up with Allie on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

LSZ: What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

AB: Honestly, I have been missing the people more than anything. I wish I could be walking down those hallways one more time, or riding to the games on the bus jamming out with the girls. I wish I could have the anxiety of getting ready for finals again, knowing my class is having that same feeling. I would go through all the hard times if it means we could go back to school again. It's really just shocking that the true meaning of high school is over.

LSZ: What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

AB: I think my freshman year of basketball was the most fun time of my life. That group of girls are some of my closest friends and playing with them was super fun.

LSZ: What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

AB: I really like to explore, or be with my friends outside or just driving around with the sunroof open. As long as I'm with the people that I love, then I'll be having a good time.

LSZ: What are your plans after graduation?

AB: After graduation, I will be attending Temple College in Texas to continue my academic and softball career. My goal is to transfer to Oklahoma State after that. I am still undecided on a major at this time.

LSZ: What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

AB: I think my greatest accomplishment was finishing with a B in College Algebra. When it comes to math I’m not the best, so I was pretty proud.

LSZ: What do you think would be something that a lot of people don’t know about you?

AB: I would say people don’t know about my eye. One pupil is larger than the other because I had surgery when I was a baby and they accidentally cut it making it larger and a darker shade.

Allie’s Favorites

Pro athlete: Sydney Romero

Pro team: Pride Softball

College team: Oklahoma State or University of Oklahoma

Movie: Any Marvel movie

TV Show: The 100

Song: Better Off Gone or Homemade

Band/Musician: Cody Johnson

Pregame meal/snack: Fruit Roll-Up, orange and a granola bar

Class/subject: Biology

Teacher and why: I like too many to pick a favorite

Previous Senior Spotlights

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Girls Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Kayla Willey – Softball

Anthony Davis – Track and Field

Garrett Rolofson – Golf

Shayla Aye – Swimming

2020 Senior Spotlight: Kayla Willey



Louisburg Sports Zone will be running senior spotlights through April and May everyday (Monday through Friday) in an efforts to honor seniors who had their seasons taken away due to the spread of COVID-19.

Earning a spot and playing in a state tournament gave Kayla Willey memories that will last a lifetime.

Willey and the Lady Cats upset their way to a regional championship last season after entering the tournament with a 6-14 record. A pair of wins over Ottawa and Chanute put the Lady Cats in the state tournament for the first time since 2014.

Louisburg would end up losing to No. 1 seed Andale in the first round of state a week later, but the experience was something Willey won't soon forget.

"I think the best moment for me was last year at state and how

we got there," Willey said. "We finally came together as a team and played our hearts out. When we got to the hotel for state, we just had so much fun. Even though we lost, we had an experience of a lifetime and made bonds and memories to last us forever."

As much fun as that was, Willey was looking forward to another shot at a state tournament. Louisburg was going to do it with a new coach as Nick Chapman moved from junior varsity to varsity head coach and replaced John Ozier.

"I was so excited to play with coach Chap this season," Willey said. "We had all put in so much work and in those first weeks and I had already been seeing so many improvements in the team. I think we could have really pulled together our wins this year and done great things."

The worst part is the Lady Cats will never know what could have been as spring sports across the state of Kansas was shelved due to the spread of COVID-19 back in March.

It was difficult news to hear for Willey as she will likely never play softball again – a sport that has been a staple in her life.

"I have played softball since about T-ball age," Willey said. "My dad played baseball and our parents always let their kids try every sport we wanted. I tried softball and just instantly fell in love with the sport. I just picked up everything about the sport so fast. It has been a huge part of my life. It has run my life from start to finish. I have lived and breathed softball. It has helped me make friendships that I will have for the rest of my life. It has made me who I am."



Louisburg senior Kayla Willey was a returning starter off of last season's regional championship team.

Willey has been a big part of the Lady Cat team the last two seasons. She earned All-Frontier League honorable mention honors as a sophomore as she split time between second base and the outfield, and was a key contributor on their regional championship team.

"Willey would have been our starting centerfielder this year," Chapman said. "She had a lot of speed to chase down a fly-ball and is very quick on the basepaths. Kayla always brought a great attitude and brought cheerfulness that lightened up practice, which was much needed. She really accepted the role of senior leader. When I couldn't get to the younger players to help them with something, she was all over it; whether it be helping them with their swing or outfield technique."

Those are the memories Willey will try to hold on to when

times get tough as the final two months of her high school career come to a close.

“It has been really hard,” Willey said. “I had planned to play college ball, but I just recently decided that I was not going to play in college. So this last high school season was my last chance to leave behind my legacy and step onto that field knowing this was the sport that changed my life. I have been really sad that I won’t get to finish my senior year as planned. I wanted to have my last prom, walk across the stage for graduation and have my last memories with my class.”

Other than softball, Louisburg Sports Zone also had a chance to catch up with Kayla on how she has been coping with an early end to her senior year and some of her other interests. Here are her responses from the rest of our Q&A.

LSZ: What have you been missing the most during this time away from everyone?

KW: I miss the softball team. I just miss practices and getting to be with all of them.

LSZ: What is your most memorable moment as an athlete or in school, and why?

KW: It has to be getting to go to Indiana for FFA nationals. I loved getting to spend a week away from home, with friends. It was such an experience and I’m glad I got to have it during my senior year.

LSZ: What is your favorite activity/hobby outside of sports and why?

KW: I like to ride horses. I love the relaxation of going on trail rides, but the real fun is getting to an open field and going as fast as the horse can go. I just like the freedom.

LSZ: What are your plans after graduation?

KW: I plan to go to Johnson County Community College for the first two years and then maybe go to the University of Central Missouri to study criminal psychology.

LSZ: What accomplishments that don't involve athletics are you most proud of and why?

KW: I would have to say getting the opportunity to be Mr. Holloway's assistant for TA was the best accomplishment I achieved, at least recently.

LSZ: What do you think would be something that a lot of people don't know about you?

KW: I don't think a lot of people know that I love Spiderman. I have seen all the Spiderman movies and love them all.

Kayla's Favorites

Pro athlete: Patrick Mahomes

Pro team: Kansas City Chiefs

College team: K-State

Movie: A Quiet Place

TV Show: Criminal Minds or Vampire Diaries

Song: What She Wants Tonight by Luke Bryan

Band/Musician: Trace Adkins

Pregame meal/snack: Pickles

Class/subject: Ag

Teacher and why: Mr. Morgan – he always makes me laugh. He's pretty crazy and it just makes class that much more fun.

Previous Senior Spotlights

Drake Varns – Golf

Trinity Moore – Girls Soccer

Andrew Krause – Baseball

Players, coaches mourn loss of spring sports season



Louisburg softball, along with the rest of the Wildcat spring sports teams, saw their season come to a close with the spread of COVID-19.

It has been almost a week since Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly closed all schools for the rest of the 2019-20 school year due to the spread of COVID-19.

When most students hear school has been closed, especially in the winter, cheers erupt. In this case, however, the tone was much more somber – especially among the senior class.

Proms were canceled. Any plans they had for a graduation ceremony were put on hold, and for more than 30 seniors, their last opportunity at playing a sport at Louisburg High School was taken away.

In fact, close to 200 students were planning on participating in an activity in the spring, but with no school, the Kansas State High School Activities Association followed suit and canceled the spring season the day after Gov. Kelly's declaration.

Students, parents and coaches alike have had to come to grips that a season they had been looking forward to all year, was never going to happen. Tears flowed, walls were punched in frustration and some were left speechless.

There would be no game days, no Senior Nights and no postseason runs. Athletes had to figure out how to cope with this fact – and in many cases – are still trying to do so.

GIRLS SOCCER

Mackenzie Scholtz didn't spend as much of her Spring Break relaxing with family and friends as she wanted.

Instead, she found herself focused on social media, constantly checking updates on what was going to happen with the rest of her senior year. She was scared that her final soccer season was going to be taken away from her.

Turns out, those fears became a reality.

"When I read it for the first time, I just couldn't believe it," Scholtz said. "I immediately broke down in tears. I think I cried for about four hours non-stop just thinking that I would never get to step on that field with my best friends

ever again. I had such high hopes for this season too and had been so excited all year.”

Before this all came about, none of the 12 Louisburg seniors had any idea they had already played their last match as a Wildcat.

The senior class of Scholtz, Avery O’Meara, Erin Lemke, Lily McDaniel, Ashley Moore, Trinity Moore, Skylar Bowman, Haley Cain, Hannah Straub, Olivia Chase, Andie Masten and Morgan Messer provided Wildcat coach Kyle Conley with a lot of good memories, which left the news even harder to stomach.

Louisburg was looking for its fourth consecutive state final four appearance after earning second place finishes the last two seasons.

“The decision absolutely broke my heart,” Conley said. “I couldn’t in a million years fathom something like this could happen. I honestly felt the cancellation was harsh this early, but would have rather like to have seen a postponement and then reevaluate at a later date.
This group of 12 seniors was going to be very special. If they would have returned to the state final four this season, they would have been one of only two 4A-1A teams to do this improbable feat. This group was 44-18-1 in their three years. I would be willing to bet this is the most successful program over

those three years in regards to win percentage. Obviously, winning state
championships would trump that, but we were extremely successful.”

The one thing that has helped players get
past this disappointment is that there are so many seniors to lean on and they
have done a lot of that this past week.

“The amount of support from this team has
helped me so much,” Scholtz said. “As soon as we found out that we would no
longer play, all of us seniors were sending nothing but love to one another as
well as to the whole team. Individually, there were many messages sent showing
how much we love each other and that this would get better. Coach Conley and
the younger girls also shared a lot of great messages as well. Hearing positive
words is really helping me get through this whole thing.”



The 2020 Louisburg High School girls soccer team

Many of the 12 seniors and their parents were a part of the group that helped raise money to start the Louisburg program nearly five years ago. They had always dreamed of winning a state title, but the wondering what could have happened is the worst part for a lot of them.

"This group had three goals: they wanted to win a league title, to win a regional championship and finally win a state championship," Conley said. "This would have been our program's fifth year and everything was built for this season. I believed in this group and I felt we were going to compete for that league title and we were going to go back to the state final four. We wanted three banners: league title, regional championship, and a state championship. It's so sad that we will never get the opportunity to show the state what this team is capable of accomplishing."

BASEBALL

Kade Larson was all set to begin his first season as the head baseball coach at Louisburg High School.

Larson, who was hired late last spring, was looking forward to leading his alma mater and had high expectations for a group that was young, but returned experience from the year before.

Then came the news from KSHSAA to cancel spring activities, which left Larson, and the rest of the Wildcat program, speechless – including seniors Madden Rutherford, Andrew Krause and Kaden Oehlert.

“To say I am disappointed is an understatement,” Larson said. “I was very excited for this upcoming year. Being my first year as head coach I was more than ready to get the season underway and see what kind of team we had. I thought we could do some great things this year with the group that we were working with. For the short time we were able to practice, they had a great chemistry and worked super hard.

“I feel terrible for all the players having to lose a season like this, especially the seniors. Madden Rutherford and Andrew Krause were showing great leadership skills and I hate that they had their final season taken away. They are unprecedented times that I never thought would happen.”

Rutherford, who is a two-time All-Frontier League player himself, was ready to make one final run with the Wildcats. Even though he has signed to play baseball for Washington University in St. Louis, he regrets not being able to have one final run in high school.

“Personally I was just ready to just play ball again,” Rutherford said. “My football season ended with an injury, and two surgeries later I was just starting to get back into the swing of things. I was excited for the baseball team this season; we had a different looking coaching staff and a different mentality which was

evident at practice. I'll always be left wondering what could have happened."



Senior Madden Rutherford, along with fellow seniors Andrew Krause and Kaden Oehlert, all saw their high school careers come to a close with the spread of COVID-19.

As difficult as it was for the seniors, the junior class will also have some obstacles to overcome – especially for those who are wanting to play at the college level.

"To go with the seniors, this is also horrible for the juniors," Larson said. "Junior year is a big recruiting time and a lot of these guys are missing that. So all around this just is a bad time for an athlete, but I know they will

work through it
and come back next year ready to go.”

Even
with all the hardships athletes are facing, including the loss of a season,
several are trying to find the silver lining in it all.

“The
whole COVID-19 situation has made me appreciate what I have,” Rutherford said. “It’s
hard to truly recognize how nice you have things until they’re taken away. I
just hope and pray that things don’t escalate further.”

TRACK AND FIELD

Carlee
Gassman and Sydni Keagle were ready for the seasons of their lives on the track
this season.

Gassman,
who is a returning a state medalist in the hurdles, was considered one of the
best returning 300-meter hurdlers in Class 4A. As for Keagle, she finished one
spot away from a state medal last year in the 100 hurdles.

Both
Louisburg seniors had high hopes, as did the rest of the Lady Cat track team
that was ranked high in Class 4A in the preseason. That made the news of
canceling spring sports all the more crushing.

“I honestly couldn’t believe it,” Keagle said. “At first I
was in shock and then I was just incredibly sad at this loss of opportunity and

it’s taken a while to come to terms with the fact that I won’t be able to
compete in my favorite sport one last time.”

Gassman felt much the same way as she earned three state
medals as season ago. Along with sophomore Delaney Wright, who garnered four
state medals, the two athletes figured to score a lot of points for the Lady
Cats this season.

“When I heard the last quarter of my senior year was cancelled and knowing track would be over as well, I found myself crying about not having school,” Gassman said. “I never thought I’d find myself crying over school. I am just trying to keep my head high – there are better things to come.”

Girls coach John Reece said there were 34 out for track
before the team departed for Spring Break, which was one of the bigger groups
the Lady Cats have had in several years.



The Louisburg 4×400 relay of (from left) Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh, Sydni Keagle and Delaney Wright were some of several returning Lady Cats trying for a big state performance.

“It is a huge bummer that everything got nixed,” Reece said. “We had a chance to do some great things this track season on the girls side. We could have been a top three team at state with a handful of very talented girls. My heart goes out to the girls and the missed opportunity for them.”

The same could be said for the boys as the Wildcats featured a big roster of 74 athletes and Louisburg would have been competitive in most events throughout the season.

“I am just extremely disappointed,” boys coach Andy Wright said. “We had 74 boys out, which is the biggest number we have had in several years. We had multiple state qualifiers returning as well as some newcomers that could have helped contribute to a successful year.”

One of those qualifiers was javelin thrower Michael Waldron. The Louisburg senior finished just a few feet away from earning a state medal a season ago, and now his attempt at getting there has been dashed.

“It’s really hard to describe the disappointment I had when I heard that I wouldn’t be able to throw javelin this year,” Waldron said. “It was tough and very hard to wrap my mind around, it’s tough knowing that I had about a week of practice under my belt and a lot of preparation for the first meet of the year. Just finding out I wouldn’t be competing at all was crushing.”

The season was an important one, not only to Waldron, but to the rest of the track seniors as well. Anthony Davis (distance), Trent Martin (pole vault), Charlie Koontz (sprints, relays), Carter Anglin (discus), Garrett Harding (shot put) and Indy Strumillo (jumps) were all in their final year and were excited with what lied ahead. A few of them had already made plans to work out together over Spring Break to get some extra work in.

“I texted Carter Anglin and Garrett Harding about the fact

that our season was over, since we all threw together," Waldron said. "It was tough for Carter because I knew he was thinking about a possible state appearance this year. For Garrett, it was his first year but he had some good success in the first few weeks with throwing shot put, so I know he was excited. It's just a bummer and we have texted each other, and comforted one another. We are just still in shock – it was like a slap in the face."

GOLF

Calvin Dillon has already had the best career in Louisburg High School golf history, and he accomplished that after his junior season.

Still, he wanted a lot more.

Dillon, who is a three-time state medalist, was looking for that elusive state championship this year and was considered one of the favorites going into the season. With the cancellation of spring sports it left Dillon, like many others, wondering 'What if?'

"It was definitely hard to hear that the regular season, as well as postseason were canceled," Dillon said. "It seemed like it happened all of a sudden. When you hear of professional and collegiate seasons being cancelled, you feel some remorse and disappointment for them, but when your own season gets cancelled, it becomes real."

The remorse for his own season wasn't what Dillon was feeling. It was the fact that he had hoped to lead a team – full of

seniors – to its second consecutive state tournament appearance.

Seniors Drake Varns, Garrett Rolofson, Ryan Haight and Colin Cook all returned from that team, while other seniors like David Perentis,
Deven Wieland and Luke Wickersham were also trying to vie for the final spots.



Five of the six golfers from Louisburg's state team returned in 2020 to try and make another trip to the state tournament. (From left) Colin Cook, Drake Varns, Calvin Dillon, Ryan Haight and Garrett Rolofson.

"We definitely had high expectations for this season," Dillon said. "With the heavy amount of seniors on the team, as well as our regional
and state experience last year, we were really excited. I think the most
disappointing thing for all of us is going to be the lack of

closure. We were all looking forward to one last go-around, and to have our season disappear in a matter of days is devastating.”

Like with every other conflict in life, the Wildcats are trying to make sense of it all and find a positive side to what has been a forgetful week.

“One positive that comes from this situation is the gratitude we will now have for our everyday lives,” Dillon said. “You never know when something catastrophic like this can happen, and we need to be thankful for the life we do have.
Although this situation is disappointing for us, it was ultimately God’s plan.
He is the one that is in control, and if we seek him in this time of discomfort, we will find the closure and satisfaction that we lost along with our senior season.”

GIRLS SWIMMING

It was an historic season before it even started as Louisburg would join the Osawatomie-Paola girls swim team for the first time this year.

Unfortunately, thanks to the pandemic spreading across the country, history will have to take a back seat for another year.

Head coach Maddie Carrigan was in her first year with the program

after assisting with the boys team last winter, so finding out the news with everyone else was a little tough to take.

“It was really upset when I heard the news,” Carrigan said. “Obviously, I understand the reason for the cancellation of school and sports season, so I completely back the decision. It was still a huge bummer for me because this was my first time having a high school head coaching role. It was a pretty big honor since I’m only 23 and I was super excited to try some fun new things I came up with for the girls. The first two weeks were already so much fun and the girls improved so much, so I can’t imagine how great the whole season would have been.”

Osawatomie-Paola-Louisburg had three seniors swimmers this season, including Shayla Aye from Louisburg and Brayden Hanf and Grace Shore from Paola.

In all, Louisburg had eight swimmers on the team including Aye, Claire Brown, Bailey Hallas, Sydney Keaton, Dana Mattison, Anna Morrison, Dagen Page and Reese Reitz.

“Everyone is really bummed, especially the seniors,” Carrigan said. “We had a lot of first time swimmers, as well, so I hope this doesn’t deter

them from joining
the team again next year.”

SOFTBALL

Last year was a special season for the Louisburg softball team as the Lady Cats made a run to a regional championship and a state
tournament appearance.

It was a great last part of the season for several of the Lady Cats.

Unfortunately, with the news of COVID-19, this year’s version of Louisburg softball team will never get another chance at a magical season.

“When
I found out my season was canceled, I was devastated,” senior Reilly
Ratliff-Becher said. “It would be the last time I ever played softball and it’s
just taken away from me.”

The
seven Lady Cat seniors were excited to begin this season, as was their coach,
Nick Chapman. Chapman was in his first year as head coach with the program
after spending last season at the junior varsity level.

After a couple weeks of practices, Chapman had barely gotten a chance to get to know his new team. Then he had to deliver the news that no one wanted to hear.

“This was not easy news to get,” Chapman
said. “It was even harder to have to tell the girls and even worse that I had
to do it over the phone. It’s still not real. Next week, we

were going to get
back to work and prepare for a special season. The girls had bought into what
we were trying to accomplish. Just in two weeks, the culture was changing and
girls were understanding what it meant to play team softball and do what is
best for the team. The end of last week we had our first team bonding night.
The seniors set their team expectations and goals for the year. I listened to
each of them say how excited they were for this specific year and to make one
last run at it.

“I was crushed to have to tell them they
weren’t going to get that chance. All seven of them helped mold this team into
something special and set the tone for what Louisburg softball should be. I was
excited for the product we were going to put on the field game one. I thought
this year was going to be a season full of success.”

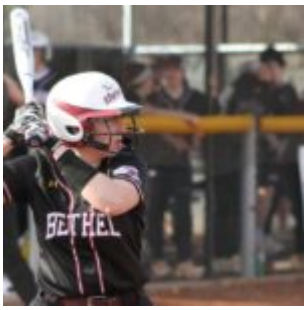
The seven seniors consisted of
Ratliff-Becher, Allie Boles, Lauren Cutshaw, Kayla Willey, Kat Coolidge, Gabby
Duggar and August Daniels. Some of those seniors were a big part of the Lady
Cats’ state run a year ago, while others were looking to make an impact on the
varsity level this year.

“I had
very good expectations for this year,” Ratliff-Becher said. “As much as I feel
bad for myself, teammates and my fellow seniors, I feel especially bad for

Chapman. He worked so hard once he found out he got this job. I was so ready to
learn and make him proud this season.

“I
tell myself is that I have to think of other people in this situation. This
could all be much worse. We are just containing this virus and protecting the
ones at the most risk, although it’s going to be hard on everyone for a while.”

Local college athletes watch as seasons canceled due to COVID-19



Bethel College junior Emalee Overbay was off to a great start to her softball season with the Threshers before she saw her season canceled thanks to the COVID-19 virus.

Before the Kansas High School
Activities Association announced it would be canceling the spring sports season
Wednesday, colleges and their athletes were already days in to a horrible
realization.

Both the NCAA and NAIA canceled all spring sports and their postseasons last week due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus that has left the entire country scrambling for an ounce of normalcy.

Louisburg High School graduates Emalee Overbay and Isabelle Holtzen are still trying to find it.

Overbay, Holtzen and college athletes across the country were shocked when they were informed their seasons that they had prepared for months for, was taken away in the matter of minutes.

Although Holtzen and Overbay are considered underclassmen, and still have the opportunity to compete next season, the loss of the next two months of competition has been hard to swallow.

It was a life no one saw coming.

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All was going well for Holtzen, who is a sophomore pole vaulter at the University of Northern Iowa. She competed in the indoor season over the winter and achieved some personal bests in the process.

Holtzen finished her indoor campaign on top as she took third at the Missouri Valley Conference meet with clearance of 3.63 meters (close to 12 feet). That placing earned her all-conference honors for the first time in her career.

“Indoor season this year was
honestly a bit of a challenge for me,” Holtzen said. “Early on in the year, I
was able to PR, but then kinda fell into a slump about halfway through. It was extraordinarily
frustrating as I was dealing with a bit of an injury and wasn’t performing as
well as I wanted. Luckily, I have amazing teammates, coaches and family that
helped me figure it out. I was very excited to be able to receive
all-conference honors, especially since it ended up being my last meet of the
year.”



Northern Iowa sophomore Isabelle Holtzen had just competed her indoor track season with all-conference honors before she found out her outdoor campaign was shut down.

The thought of canceling the season hadn’t even crossed

Holtzen’s mind as she found herself at practice just days later getting ready for a team meeting to talk about the upcoming outdoor season. It was there where she heard the news.

“It truly was a surreal moment, looking around at my fellow athletes and seeing the disbelief, disappointment and sadness in everyone’s eyes,” she said. “No one could believe that it was real. It was so sad to see the seniors realize that they would never get to put their uniform on and compete for UNI again.”

The same could be said for Overbay.

She had already kicked off her softball season for the Bethel Threshers and was off to a promising start herself. Overbay had put up some good numbers and was recently named as the Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference Player of the Week.

All that optimism quickly went away when the team was informed on a Friday morning that their season was over.

“None of it felt real, it still doesn’t,” Overbay said. “I never would have guessed that my season would have been cut short, or soon evaporated completely. When the news came out there other schools/colleges were shutting down, I was confused. I guess I didn’t understand how serious the issue was. I was still very disconnected from the problem, assuming that nothing like that would happen to us.

“The news flooded me with emotion as there goes the possibility of playing my junior year. What was I going to do with softball, something that has been so consistent in my life, confusion as to why all this was happening, why are people canceling our sports, and I couldn’t help but to think what was going to happen to my seniors. I met up with the three seniors after the announcement and we all cried together.”

To help athletes try to get through the difficult time, the NCAA approved an extra year of eligibility for those spring sports athletes that are affected.

As nice of an option as that was, going back for an extra year of school to compete in a sport that doesn’t provide a full scholarship in many cases might not makes sense for those involved.

“A lot of seniors already have jobs lined up and cannot afford to go to school for another year,” Holtzen said. “While for some this extra year offers some relief, with my current plan I will not be able to utilize that year because I plan to graduate in four years.”

The NAIA did much of the same the NCAA did, but like those athletes, it doesn’t make much sense for them to attend college for another year when it isn’t in their plans.

“This is great for the people who didn’t have plans for the following year,” Overbay said. “Looking at it through a

seniors’ perspective,
it is hard to put one’s life on hold, to put money towards another year of
tuition when they could be finding a job, and starting a new chapter of their
lives.

“A lot of this is just so inconvenient. I’m not sure what
the girls are going to do, I’m not sure of what I myself will do. It’s all such
a confusing time. All I can do is have faith that God has a plan.”

It has been difficult adjustment for athletes all across
the country and is something no one could have planned for.

Instead, they find themselves trying to make the best of a
bad, unfortunate situation.

“My teammates and I have definitely been leaning on each
other to get through this,” Holtzen said. “Our blood, sweat and tears go into
competing and hopefully getting a PR to earn a spot on the podium. To have that
goal ripped away from us this year was heartbreaking.

“It really brought into focus to never take a minute for
granted because you never know when it will be the last time you compete. Life
is like a track meet – full of obstacles. This is just another bar to get over.”

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2019

It was a successful, and eventful, 2019 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 several programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2019, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation 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. There were stories that I had to leave off that normally would easily make it. 2019 was that successful of a year for Wildcat athletics.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can’t wait for 2020 to begin. Looking forward to it!



10. Tucker, Ratliff-Becher win powerlifting titles, Tucker breaks state record.

Two Louisburg High
School weightlifters made their way to the top of the podium in March during
the Class 4A State Powerlifting Meet at Basehor-Linwood High School.

Louisburg senior Kiefer Tucker and junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher both earned state championships in their respective weight class. Senior Jonathan DePriest finished third overall and several other Wildcats also earned individual medals.

Not only did Tucker win a state title in the 220-pound division, he also broke a 24-year state bench press record as he recorded a bench of 375 pounds to surpass the old mark of 365. He also won the squat competition at 505 pounds and had a total of 1,165 pounds to run away with the crown.

Tucker's total was the highest three-lift mark at the entire state meet in all weight classes.

"I had messed around with 375 and 385 before on bench, so I was confident that I could lift it if I had the chance," Tucker said. "I was more worried about my first lifts on bench at 345 and 365 because if I messed up on those attempts then I would not have had the change to even attempt 375. It was definitely a sigh of relief when I finally locked it out.

"It was a great feeling to beat the state record. To put Louisburg up on the record chart definitely brought a smile to my face."

Ratliff-Becher had a big day in the women's division as she won a state crown in the 180-pound weight class. She finished with a three-lift total of 575 pounds.



The Louisburg junior took first in bench press with 155 pounds,
first in clean at 150 pounds and second in squat with a 270-pound lift.

“Winning the state title
meant a lot to me,” Ratliff-Becher said. “I have put in a lot of time and

effort in weights class, so it’s nice to see it has paid off. But, also because
I feel as if I put out a message to girls that it’s cool to be strong
physically. I know that being sometimes the only girls in a class with a lot of
strong guys is intimidating. Weightlifting is all about your own personal
growth and seeing how far you can push yourself.

“I was honestly surprised I won because there are lots of very strong girls there and it’s good competition. It’s also fun to meet new people
that have the same interests and motivation as you.”



9. Golf qualifies for state, Dillon medals for third straight season

As the scores trickled

in to the clubhouse at Paola Country Club, the Louisburg golf team could hardly stand it.

The Wildcats were nervously waiting to hear if they had qualified for state, but they knew it was going to be close. Louisburg had to be in the top three of the team standings to earn a spot and the Wildcats had some tough competition amongst them.

As it turned out, the Wildcats had nothing to worry about.

Louisburg recorded a team score of 352 during the Class 4A regional tournament in May and finished third overall by nine strokes over fourth-place Ottawa. The Wildcat team of Calvin Dillon, Drake Varns, Garrett Rolofson, Ryan Haight, Noah Hill and Colin Cook all competed in the state tournament

Topeka-Hayden won the regional title going away with a 332 and Louisburg was just three strokes behind runner-up Tonganoxie, which had a 349.

“It feels great, especially with all the hard work we have put in the offseason and last few months,” Dillon said. “It was our goal coming in and we did it. I felt like we had a good chance. It was borderline with those four teams being as close as we are. I knew we had a chance, but it was nice to actually qualify. It was definitely a little nerve-racking waiting for the scores to come in.”

As impressive as that

feat was for the Wildcats, Dillon’s performance blew away the rest of the
competition.

The Louisburg junior
won his first individual regional title as he carded a 1-over 73 to win the
tournament by six strokes. Dillon’s 73 was his best score on the season and he
has now won all but one tournament on the year.

Dillon went on to record his third consecutive state medal and finished 11th overall in Dodge City after the tournament was postponed several times, and eventually moved due to weather.



8. Wildcat wrestling sends six to state, Moore earns first state medal

Back in early November of 2018, Austin Moore was in a sling with a broken collarbone and he wondered why all this was happening.

Moore suffered the injury during the regional football playoffs and he didn’t get to finish his final high school season. Not only that, his hopes of getting his first state wrestling medal was in serious jeopardy.

A little more than four months later, Moore was on the medal stand with some of the state’s best wrestlers in his weight class.

The Louisburg senior earned a fourth-place medal at 220 pounds during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships in February at the Tony’s Pizza Events Center in Salina. It was his first high school state medal and it marked the end of a long journey for Moore.

“It was pretty special for me to get a state medal, especially because it has been a goal of mine ever since I started wrestling,” Moore said. “Overall, I felt like I wrestled pretty well, but I just wish I could’ve ended it on a win.”

The Wildcats qualified six wrestlers for state, had three regional champions and took third place in the team standings during the regional tournament in Paola – all while not being able to field a full team.

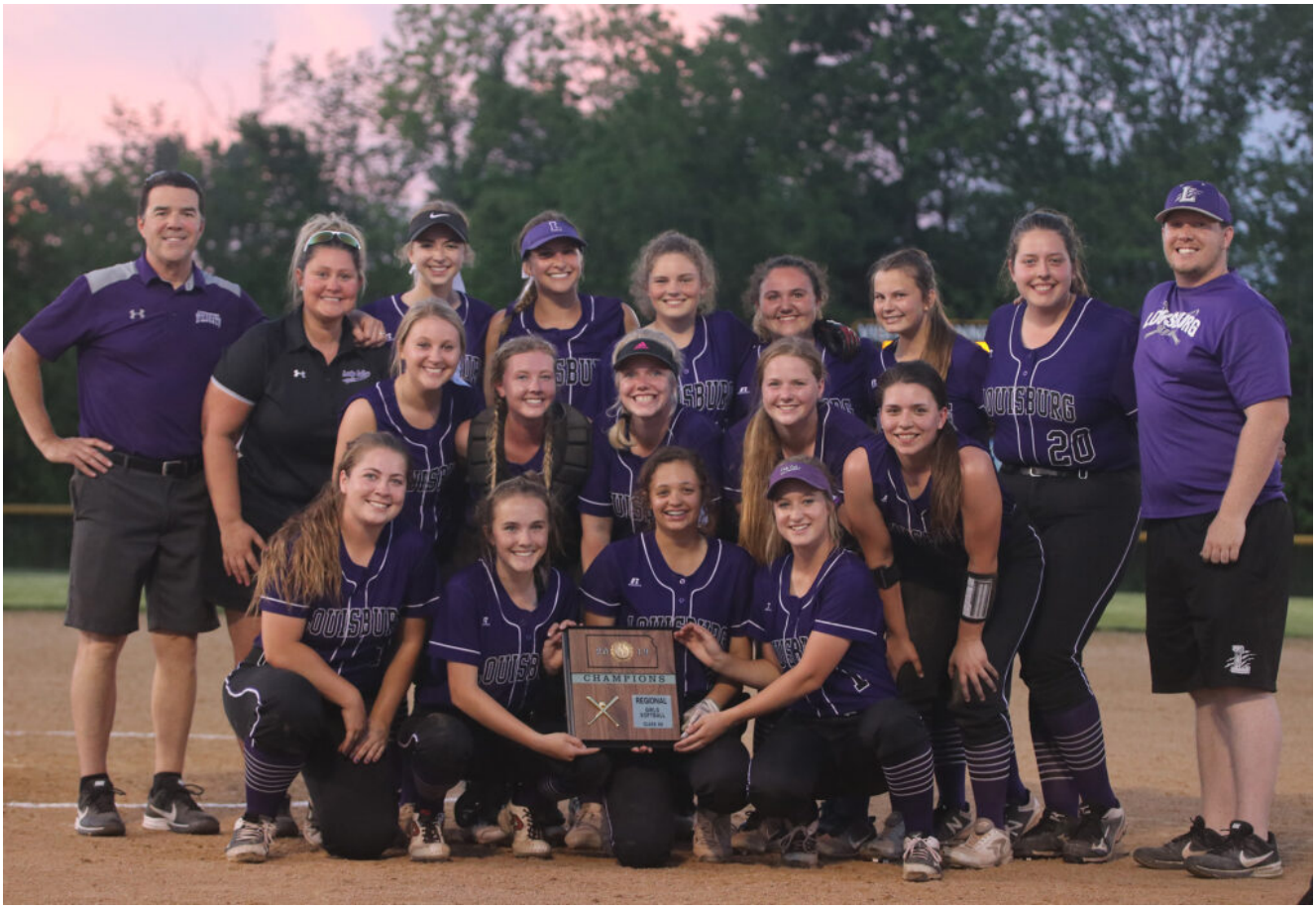
Louisburg’s talent was

certainly on full display during the two-day tournament. Brandon Doles, Blue Caplinger and Austin Moore won regional crowns, Cade Holtzen was a regional runner-up, while Gabe Bonham and Ryan Owens also qualified for state by placing third and fourth, respectively.

As a team, the Wildcats ended up with 138.5 points and was just 2.5 points out of second place. Ottawa won the regional with 149.5 points and Eudora was second at 141. It was the highest regional team finish for Louisburg since 1998.

“The way these guys wrestled this weekend shows that the program has been doing so many things right this season,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We’ve had the obstacle of low numbers, which hurt us in our duals, but when it comes to tournament time, we have a bunch of guys who are placing high and that gives us a lot of team points. Taking six to state feels pretty encouraging, and finishing third at regionals is an awesome statement for this team.

“If a few things had gone the other way, we would have been in second as a team. On paper, we weren’t supposed to be in the race for a regional plaque. Almost all of our guys stepped up and scored huge team points for us.”



7. Louisburg softball captures regional title

OTTAWA – Madison
Svoboda could feel her heart starting to come out of her chest.

Karson Griggs was a
feeling a little nauseous.

Those are some of the
same feelings that were flooding the Louisburg softball's team dugout during the
final inning of the Class 4A regional championship game against Chanute on
Tuesday in Ottawa.

Louisburg held a one
run lead, but Chanute had the tying run on third, two outs, and a trip to the
state tournament was on the line. On the mound was sophomore

Brooklyn Diederich, and with two strikes, the Chanute batter fouled five straight pitches.

The tension was mounting.

Finally, on the 10th pitch of the at-bat, Diederich got what she was looking for – a swing and miss.

The strikeout sealed the Lady Cats' trip to state with a 6-5 victory over No. 7 seed Chanute and sent shockwaves throughout Class 4A softball.

"I want to cry, but at the same time I am just really happy," Griggs said. "It is exciting because I never thought something like this could happen, especially this year. It feels really nice and now maybe people will actually start taking us seriously."

Not many gave people gave the Lady Cats a chance as they entered the Class 4A regional tournament with just five wins and were forced to begin tournament action in the play-in game.

After a 17-2 win over Parsons last Monday in the play-in game, No. 15 Louisburg advanced to the regional semifinals and upset No. 2 seed Ottawa, 9-7, which helped set up the Lady Cats' first state tournament appearance since 2014.

"I think a lot of

other teams underestimated us," Diederich said. "The fact that we came out and
played our hardest ball showed what type of team we actually are. It is just
crazy."

At the state tournament in Salina a week later, the Lady Cats faced off against Andale and lost to the eventual state champion in the first round, 10-0.



6. Cross Country qualifies for state, Moore breaks school record and takes third at state

BALDWIN CITY – One by one,
members of the Louisburg girls cross country team crossed the finish line and
coach John Reece was unsure whether or not his team did enough

to qualify for
state.

The Lady Cats had made
school history by qualifying the last two seasons, but the third time was a
little bit in jeopardy – that was until the results were released.

As it turned out,
Reece didn’t need to be so worried.

Louisburg finished third overall with 96 points in October at the Class 4A regional meet at the Baldwin Golf Course, and beat out Bishop Miege by six points to earn a spot at the state meet this weekend in Wamego.

The team of Trinity
Moore, Carlee Gassman, Reese Johnson, Claire Brown, Ruth Minster, Kennady
Wilkerson and Bree Gassman competed for the Lady Cats at state.

“This group of girls runs
well, they race well and they train well together,” coach Reece said. “They are
a good group and this is just as exciting as the other two times. The
competition was a lot tougher than the previous two times. We had to run our
races and we did. From our third to fifth runners was about an eight point
spread.”

Trinity Moore has left a
lasting impression on the Louisburg cross country program over the last four
years, but she saved the best moment for her final act.

Moore broke her own school record with a time of 19 minutes and 39 seconds to finish third overall at the Kansas Class 4A State Cross Country Championships at the Wamego Country Club a week later.

The Louisburg senior recorded the program's best ever state finish as she eclipsed her fourth-place state medal from a season ago.

"It meant so much to me to finish with such a great race for my high school career," Moore said. "Going into the race, I didn't know how well I would finish. This race had the best competition that I have ran against all year and I think that is what really pushed me.

"When I saw my time crossing the finish line, I was ecstatic. I felt great the entire race and was able to control everything I did. Finishing third was icing on the cake. I was surprised but so incredibly happy to be able to place in such a great spot, but I also knew that this what I had worked for all year."

This made the fourth state medal for Moore in her high school career and she improved on her state finish every year. Last season, she took fourth overall and bested her state time from a year ago by more than 30 seconds.



5. Boys Soccer wins league, regional titles to earn No. 1 seed in playoffs.

For more than 70
minutes, the goals for Louisburg were hard to come by and it started to leave
an eerie feeling on Halloween night.

However, the Wildcats
got their treat when it was all over.

Louisburg scored two goals in the final seven minutes of the match to earn a 2-0 victory over Kansas City Christian in the Class 4-1A regional championship game Thursday. The Wildcats (16-2-1) earned their third regional title in the last four years and advanced to the state quarterfinals.

“This group is
special,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “It is going to be tough when it is

all over. This group has changed our culture. They came back to what this program believes and they have bought in to what we are teaching them. They have worked so hard since June. For these seniors, this is their third title in four years and I think it is a lot of fun for them.

A school record 16 wins, a Frontier League championship and a regional title are all something worth celebrating, but following the state quarterfinal match with Bishop Miege, all Louisburg could think about was the finality of it all.

Despite all those accomplishments, the Wildcats fell one win short of their main goal – a spot in the state final four.

Louisburg saw its season come to a close with a 3-0 loss to Bishop Miege at the Wildcat Sports Complex. The Wildcats lost to the eventual state champion, as Miege went on to defeat Wichita-Trinity on Saturday, 3-1, for the Class 4-1A state championship – the Stags' fourth in a row.

As difficult as the loss was for Louisburg, there was no forgetting how big of a jump the Wildcats made from the season before as they went from a 6-win team to one that earned the East's No. 1 seed in the state playoffs.

"Going 6-11 last year and seeing this Miege team almost mercy-ruling us in the regional championship last year in the rain, was a program changer," Louisburg coach

Kyle Conley
said. “After that was over, we talked about how things needed to change and it
starts now. For our first practice in June, I told them that they are the ones
that has to change them. Since day one, they have played for each other, played
hard in practice and it was a total mindset change. When someone got hurt, it
was the next guy up. We missed two starters for half of the year and it was
always the next guy up taking advantage of his opportunity to fill in. The
freshmen stepped up huge for us.

“This team is special.
16 wins is a school record and only two losses is probably a school record.
This team is incredible, played so hard and did everything I asked them to do.
They were always there to pick each other up and that is what this soccer
family is all about. It will be tough to say goodbye to these kids.”



4. Volleyball knocks off Miege to win regional title, takes fourth at state

ATCHISON – The
sub-state semifinal game between Louisburg and Bishop Miege had all the feels
of a state tournament match.

Partially because a
year ago, it was.

Louisburg met Miege in
the state championship match only to see the Stags send the Lady Cats to a
runner-up finish in two sets. Then three weeks ago the two teams met again, and
like before, Miege dispatched of Louisburg in two sets.

However, Bishop Miege
saw a different Louisburg team during the sub-state tournament at Atchison High

School – one they didn’t expect.

The Lady Cats came out on fire and never let up in a 25-18 and 25-22 win over Miege to end the Stags’ season. It marks the first time in at least 12 years, if not longer, that Miege will not be at the state tournament.

Since the state tournament began in 1971, Bishop Miege has made 39 state appearances during that time in either Class 5A or 4A and is the most in Kansas history.

“Our energy was going to be the difference in that match, so we knew we had to bring it,” Louisburg senior Erin Lemke said. “We knew we had the same skill set as Miege, but our energy was what was going to pull us through there in the end. To get there, we just had to believe in ourselves and work hard this past week to give us the confidence that we needed.”

However, even after pulling off a big revenge win that expended a lot of energy, the Lady Cats still had a sub-state championship match to play against No. 2 seed Atchison.
The No. 7 seed Lady Cats took care of business as they won in straight sets, 25-12 and 25-15, at Atchison High School.

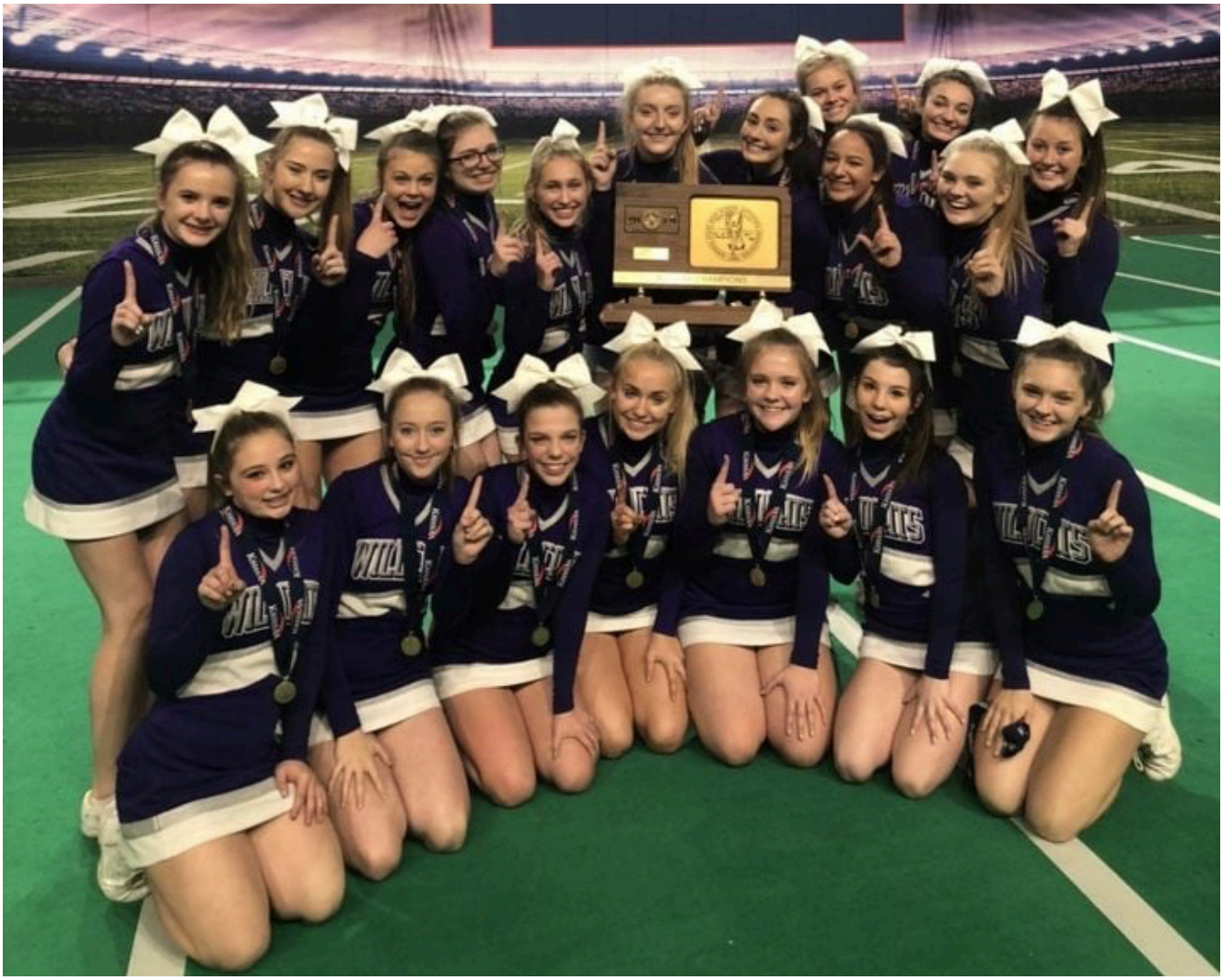
Louisburg lost its final two matches of the season, but those setbacks didn’t take away from what the Lady Cats accomplished during the Kansas Class 4A State Championships.

For the third straight season, the Lady Cats were among the last four teams playing

and brought home a
little hardware for their efforts. Louisburg took fourth overall after losing
its third place match to Towanda-Circle, 2-1, in October at Hutchinson Sports
Arena.

“Every season our goal
is to put ourselves in the best position to qualify for state and then to
hopefully advance to bracket play on Saturday,” Louisburg coach Jessica
Compliment said. “Leading up to state, we talked about how nothing is
guaranteed and in order to make it to bracket play, we have to show up and play
our best from the first whistle to the last whistle. If we play our game, then
hopefully the winning will take care of itself and we’d advance.

“The eight teams at
state this year were all very talented. I was happy that we qualified for the
semifinals because that put us one step closer to the championship. Even though
we didn’t reach the championship match and finished fourth, I was still very
proud of how the team played throughout the tournament.”



3. Louisburg cheer wins first state championship

The Wildcat
cheerleaders competed at the Class 4A KSHSAA Game Day Spirit Showcase
Competition on Nov. 23 at the Stormont Vail Events Center in Topeka and came
back home with a big trophy in tow.

Louisburg edged out runner-up Augusta with a point total of 82.25 to 81 in the finals to secure what is just the third athletic team state title in school history.

“I was so nervous at
the awards,” Louisburg senior Lauren Vincent said. “We were all holding hands
and had our heads down. We thought that we would get second

place at best, most likely third. We were content because we put everything out on the mat and did the best we could. But when they called out second place and it was Augusta, we screamed, cried, and hugged each other because we knew that we had just won.

“When our name was called for first, we jumped up and hugged each other. Then I ran out onto the mat and grabbed the trophy and we held it up and jumped around victoriously. It was the best feeling in the entire world. Knowing that all of our hard work had finally paid off was indescribable feeling of joy.”

The Louisburg cheerleaders that competed are Lexi Pena, Lauren Vincent, Ashlyn McManigal, Brooklyn Mitchell, Gabby Tappan, Andrea Gaza, Eleanor Willming, Jayden Trester, Lacie Kallevig, Sammy McDaniel, Mable Graham, Anna Morrison, Bella Feikert, Audrey Anderson, Sydney Dudzik, Kaitlyn Vest, Jolie Hendrickson, Abby Bradley and Zoe Cutshaw. Louisburg’s head coach is Jayna Guerra.

Not only were the Wildcats the third team to win a state title in school history, they were also the first female squad to win a team crown as well. All the history just added to what was a special day for the program.

“It means so much to me and all my teammates,” Tappan said. “As someone who’s been a part of a variety

of sports my entire life, I know how hard each of our teams work to do their
very best in whatever sport they’re a part of. We are so thankful that we got
to make history for Louisburg and it is something that I can guarantee that
each and every one of us will remember it for the rest of our lives.”



**2. Girls soccer
takes second at state, Conley named coach of year and Scholtz, Buffington awarded
players of year.**

When it was all said and done, the Louisburg girls soccer team held its trophy high in front of the Wildcat faithful and the tears were easy to spot.

After nearly 200
minutes of soccer in a nine-hour time period, including one

match that ended in penalty kicks, the Wildcats were spent. They gave everything they had.

For the second consecutive season, Louisburg earned the Class 4-3-2-1A state runner-up trophy after a wild victory over Topeka-Hayden in the semifinals and then were shutout by Bishop Miege in the championship game, 4-0. It was the third consecutive state final four appearance for Louisburg.

Frustration and sadness was easy to see following the Wildcats' loss to the defending state champion, but the team realizes what they have accomplished in just four years of existence is to be celebrated.

"Being in this situation two years in a row is something that doesn't happen very often," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "There are a bunch of teams that haven't been to a state final four and we have been to three in three years. It is pretty cool and it is special."

It was a wild 24 hours for the Wildcats. Louisburg was supposed to play Hayden on Friday in the semifinals, but severe weather forced the postponement to early Saturday morning.

The Wildcats battled Hayden through four overtimes and eventually led to penalty kicks. After an intense first five penalty kicks that left the match still tied, senior goalie

Carson Buffington recorded a big save and then senior Hallie Hutsell converted the sixth penalty kick to break the tie and give Louisburg a 2-1 win over Hayden.

“We usually play 80 minutes, but this time we had to play 110 minutes and we were gassed,” Conley said. “We were holding on and had some chances at the end to win it, but then we went to overtime and then to penalty kicks. It was all about to see if we could survive. Emotionally it was just a high for us and an unbelievable response and a great finish. Carson making a big save, Hallie putting it in for the win – it was just a great game.”

In the championship match, the Stags were just too much for the Wildcats and junior Sophia Stram provided a big spark. Stram scored all four goals for Miege in the title game, all of which came in the first half, and the Wildcats didn’t have an answer.

“They are just so freaking good,” Conley said. “I think the girls were mentally ready, but I don’t think their legs were quite ready, but we lost to one of best teams in the state of Kansas. They have great players, they are well-coached, but our girls played their butts off.

Coming off its second consecutive state runner-up appearance, Louisburg had some positive repercussions from its historic season.

However, none bigger came when the all-state teams were released by the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association. Not only did six Wildcats earn all-state selections, but they were honored with some of the highest awards out there.

Junior Mackenzie Scholtz was named as the Co-Offensive Player of the Year in Class 4-1A with Bishop Miege's Sophia Stram after she led the Wildcats in scoring.

Louisburg was also recognized on the other side of the ball as senior Carson Buffington was named the Class 4-1A Goalkeeper of the Year.

"Seeing Mackenzie and Carson recognized for their positional player of the years was fantastic," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "They both had incredible years."

The Wildcats weren't done, as for the second consecutive season, Conley was named as the Class 4-1A Coach of the Year as he guided Louisburg to a 17-4 record. He also led the Wildcats to three consecutive final four appearances.



1.4×400 boys wins state championship, Wright wins four state medals and team breaks six school records at regional meet.

Three days after
arriving in Wichita for the Kansas State Track and Field Championships, Justin
Collins, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Chris Williams finally got the chance
to get on the Cessna Stadium track.

The four Wildcat
runners had the top time in Class 4A going into the 4×400-meter relay, but
weather threw a little wrench into their plans. The meet, which was supposed to
end on a Saturday, was postponed to Sunday morning and all

races were judged by
times with no preliminaries.

It wasn’t the ideal
situation, but they made it work – and it worked well.

Collins, Caplinger, Wiedenmann and Williams won the state championship in a time of 3 minutes and 25.39 seconds as they edged Chapman at the finish line, which ran a 3:25.61. It was the first state track championship for Louisburg since 2015 when Connor McMullen won the discus.

That was just one
event in what was an historic week for Louisburg track.

Louisburg freshman Delaney Wright earned four state medals, while junior teammate Carlee Gassman finished with three as the Lady Cats went on to finish 10th in the team standings. The Lady Cats earned several other medals at the state meet coming off an impressive performance at regionals.

During the Class 4A
regional meet at Paola High School, Wright qualified for state in four events,
broke two school records and earned a regional title in her first postseason
track meet.



Wright won a regional title in the long jump and finished second in the 200 and 400-meter dashes. She also helped Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh and Sydni Keagle to a second place finish in the 4×400-meter relay.

“I am so grateful for everything,” Wright said. “I had been having trouble with my hip this week and I just wanted to come out and make state in at least one event. I didn’t realize I would make it in four. It is an unbelieveable feeling.”

Wright’s day was just one of the many positives for the Lady Cats as they broke four school records, had four regional

champions and qualified for state in 10 events.

As a team, the Lady Cats nearly earned the regional runner-up trophy as they racked up 86.5 points and finished a half a point behind second place Baldwin and Bishop Miege, who tied for second. Paola won the regional title with 107 points.

The Wildcat boys also broke two school records and would end up qualifying for nine spots at the state meet.

KSHSAA releases classifications for 2019-20 school year

The Kansas State High School Activities Association released its classifications for the 2019-20 school year, along with the football classifications for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 seasons.

There were a few changes in both areas, but more so on the football side.

Football classifications are determined based on enrollment figures in ninth, 10th and 11th grade. Louisburg is still in 4A with 432 students and is toward the lower half of the classification.

Entering Class 4A beginning in the 2020 school year will be St. James Academy, Lansing and Great Bend, who have all moved down from Class 5A. Wamego also made the jump back in from Class 3A.

Kansas State High School Activities Association

Football Classifications and Enrollments-Descending Order 2020 & 2021

Enrollment figures are based on ninth, tenth and eleventh grades only.
Enrollment figures are as of September 20, 2019.

6A

Member Schools - 32
Range: 1854 - 1092

Wichita-East	1854
Wichita-North	1691
Wichita-Southeast	1662
Derby	1638
Garden City	1560
Dodge City	1533
Olathe South	1503
Olathe East	1477
Olathe North	1469
Topeka-Washburn Rural	1449
Wichita-South	1438
Lawrence-Free State	1411
Manhattan	1402
Topeka	1364
Olathe Northwest	1356
Kansas City-Wyandotte	1355
SM East	1353
Gardner-Edgerton	1325
Haysville Campus	1297
SM West	1277
SM Northwest	1266
Olathe West	1256
OP-Blue Valley Northwest	1233
SM North	1226
Lawrence	1221
OP-Blue Valley	1182
OP-Blue Valley West	1182
Junction City	1136
Wichita-West	1129
Kansas City-JC Harmon	1110
SM South	1106
OP-Blue Valley North	1092

5A

Member Schools - 32
Range: 1083 - 655

Liberal	1083
Hutchinson	1049
Wichita-Heights	1045
Shawnee-Mill Valley	982
Leavenworth	977
Wichita-Northwest	970
Emporia	949
Kansas City-Turner	902
Wichita-Bishop Carroll	890
Topeka West	882
Topeka-Seaman	881
Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights	876
Maize	871
Kansas City-Washington	850
Maize South	842
OP-Blue Valley Southwest	811
Salina-South	800
Newton	788
De Soto	758
Salina-Central	758
Topeka-Highland Park	757
Andover	733
Goddard-Eisenhower	725
Valley Center	699
Kansas City-Sumner Acad.	698
OP-St. Thomas Aquinas	693
Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel	693
Pittsburg	691
Hays	687
Kansas City-FL Schlagle	687
Spring Hill	668
Goddard	655

4A

Member Schools - 32
Range: 654 - 340

Lansing	654
Great Bend	651
Lenexa-St. James Academy	649
Bonner Springs	640
Arkansas City	620
Andover Central	608
Basehor-Linwood	587
McPherson	535
Kansas City-Piper	518
Ottawa	507
Buhler	497
SM-Bishop Miege	493
Augusta	491
Winfield	472
Tonganoxie	471
Independence	461
Chanute	452
Paola	447
Fort Scott	434
Louisburg	432
Towanda-Circle	429
Coffeyville-Field Kindley	409
El Dorado	400
Eudora	391
Rose Hill	381
Altamont-Labette County	377
Mulvane	375
Atchison	355
Abilene	352
Wamego	351
Wellington	345
Ulysses	340

3A

Member Schools - 48
Range: 324 - 168

Baldwin	324
Topeka-Hayden	314
Parsons	286
Andale	279
Pratt	275
Clearwater	266
Iola	256
Girard	252
Nickerson	252
Clay Center Community	247
Holton	242
Concordia	241
Kansas City-Bishop Ward	240
Garnett-Anderson County	234
Chapman	224
St. George-Rock Creek	224
Baxter Springs	223
Osawatomie	221
Columbus	220
Carbondale-Santa Fe Trail	217
Wichita-Trinity Academy	217
Hoyt-Royal Valley	216
Hugoton	216
LaCygne-Prairie View	214
Hiawatha	213
Frontenac	211
Meriden-Jefferson West	211
Holcomb	210
Burlington	203
Hesston	202
Colby	201
Wichita Collegiate	201
Lindsborg-Smoky Valley	200
Galena	199
Scott Community	198
Caney Valley	192
Perry-Lecompton	192
Larned	188
Cherryvale	186
Marysville	183
Cheney	182
Goodland	182
Riley County	182
Russell	181
Council Grove	180
Sabetha	173
Gypsum-Southeast of Saline	171
Halstead	168

* ***Note: Per classification Rule 5-2-2, enrollment ties are broken by using the previous classification cycle count.***

2A

Schools - 48
Range: 168 - 112

Cimarron	168
Lyons	168
Wellsville	167
Haven	166
Hoisington	162
Osage City	161
Seneca-Nemaha Central	161
Fredonia	159
Silver Lake	158
Easton-Pleasant Ridge	156
Riverton	155
Neodesha	153
Norton Community	153
Beloit	150
Anthony/Harper-Chaparral	148
Kingman	148
Eureka	147
Pomona-West Franklin	144
Douglass	142
Kismet-Southwestern Hts.	141
Lakin	141
St. Marys	141
Hays-TMP-Marian	140
Oskaloosa	140
Minneapolis	139
Ellsworth	137
Atchison-Maur Hill-Mt Acad.	135
Rossville	135
Effingham-Atchinson Co Comm.	130
Erie	130
Hillsboro	129
Humboldt	129
Mound City-Jayhawk Linn	128
Phillipsburg	128
Wathena-Riverside	127
Belle Plaine	124
Syracuse	121
Garden Plain	120
Ellis	119
Cherokee-Southeast	118
Belleville-Republic County	117
McLouth	117
Eskridge-Mission Valley	116
Hutchinson-Trinity Catholic	116
Leon-Bluestem	112
Marion	112
Pittsburg-St. Mary's Colgan	112
Sterling	112

1A

Schools - 28
Range: 111 - 62

Whitewater-Remington	111
Conway Springs	110
Horton	110
Sedgwick	108
Arma-Northeast	106
Brookville-Ell-Saline	106
Richmond-Central Heights	106
Wabaunsee	105
Wichita-The Independent	102
Lyndon	99
Sublette	99
Ellinwood	98
Oakley	98
Salina-Sacred Heart	98
Uniontown	98
Johnson-Stanton County	96
Winchester-Jefferson Co. North	94
Inman	93
Elkhart	90
Plainville	89
Pleasanton	86
Allen-Northern Heights	85
Blue Rapids-Valley Heights	82
Smith Center	82
Holton-Jackson Heights	78
Troy	70
Olpe	69
Centralia	62

8-Player Division I

Schools - 48
Range: 98 - 66

Herington	98
Bennington	97
Hoxie	97
Yates Center	96
Medicine Lodge	95
Hill City	94
Howard-West Elk	93
Pratt-Skyline	93
Leoti-Wichita County	90
Spearville	90
WaKeeney-Trego Community	89
Moundridge	88
Sedan	88
Cottonwood Falls-Chase Co.	84
Stockton	84
Attica/Argonia	82
Valley Falls	82
Burlingame	80
Canton-Galva	79
Goessel	79
Meade	79
Ness City	79
Washington County	79
Little River	78
Shawnee-Maranatha Christian Academy	77
Cedar Vale/ Dexter	76
Burden-Central	75
Langdon-Fairfield	75
Madison/Hamilton	75
Solomon	75
Udall	74
Atwood-Rawlins County	72
Highland-Doniphan West	72
La Crosse	72
Oswego	72
Kinsley	71
Clyde-Clifton Clyde	70
Oberlin-Decatur Community	70
Rosalia-Flinthills	70
Jetmore-Hodgeman County	69
Lincoln	69
Macksville	69
Oxford	69
Moran-Marmaton Valley	68
Greensburg-Kiowa County	67
St. John-Hudson	67
Montezuma-South Gray	66
Pretty Prairie	66

8-Player Division II

Schools - 52
Range: 66 - 29

Sylvan-Lucas Unified	66
Rural Vista *(White City / Hope)*	65
Peabody-Burns	64
Bucklin	61
Minneola	61
Victoria	61
Caldwell	60
Satanta	60
Kensington-Thunder Ridge	59
Onaga	59
Downs-Lakeside	58
Mankato-Rock Hills	58
Coldwater-South Central	57
Lebo	57
Quinter	57
Beloit-St. John's/Tipton	54
Osborne	54
South Haven	53
Wakefield	52
Hutchinson-Central Christian	51
Ingalls	51
Sharon Springs-Wallace Co.	51
St. Francis	51
St. Paul	51
Claflin-Central Plains	50
Hartford	50
Norwich	50
Scandia-Pike Valley	50
Colony-Crest	49
Frankfort	49
Melvern-MDCV	49
Buffalo-Altoona Midway	48
Dighton	48
Hanover	47
Leroy-Southern Coffey Co.	47
Chetopa	46
Logan/Palco	46
Lost Springs-Centre	46
Otis-Bison	46
Linn	43
Waverly	42
Southern Cloud *(Miltonvale / Glasco)*	40
Stafford	40
Wetmore	39
Grainfield-Wheatland/Grinnell	38
Randolph-Blue Valley	38
Kiowa-South Barber	37
Winona-Triplains/Brewster	36
Chase	33
Axtell	30
Tescott	30
Wilson	29

Printing Department

Goddard, Pittsburg and Spring Hill all saw their enrollment grow and will be moving up from 4A to 5A next year. Baldwin

saw their enrollment decline and will move down to Class 3A in football the next two years.

In the rest of the sports, not much changed with regards to Class 4A for this year.

Enrollment figures for all grades in Louisburg this year is 573, which puts the school in the upper half of Class 4A. The biggest school is Buhler with 661 and Bishop Miege is the second biggest at 656 and Ottawa is third at 653.



2019-2020 Classifications and Enrollments

Enrollment figures as of September 20, 2019 based on ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades.

Note: Schools are listed in descending order

↑School Moved Up in Class
↓School Moved Down in Class

Printable View Sort By School

6A		5A		4A	
Member Schools: 36		**Member Schools: 36**		**Member Schools: 36**	
Range: 2431-1312		**Range: 1305-710**		**Range: 661-312**	
Wichita-East HS	2431	↓Leavenworth HS	1305	Buhler HS	661
Wichita-North HS	2190	Wichita-Northwest HS	1260	Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS	656
Wichita-Southeast HS	2164	Emporia HS	1245	Ottawa HS	653
Derby HS	2105	Maize HS	1194	Winfield HS	642
Dodge City HS	2010	Wichita-Bishop Carroll HS	1153	Kansas City-Piper HS	638
Olathe South HS	2005	Topeka-Seaman HS	1150	Augusta HS	632
Garden City HS	1985	Topeka West HS	1146	Paola HS	603
Olathe North HS	1976	Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights HS	1131	Tonganoxie HS	599
Topeka-Washburn Rural HS	1933	Overland Park-Blue Valley Southwest HS	1089	Fort Scott HS	592
Olathe East HS	1927	Kansas City-Washington HS	1084	Chanute HS	584
Olathe Northwest HS	1880	Kansas City-Turner HS	1076	Independence HS	581
Lawrence-Free State HS	1855	Maize South HS	1060	Louisburg HS	573
Wichita-South HS	1852	Salina-South HS	1046	Towanda-Circle HS	562
Manhattan HS	1823	Newton HS	1044	Coffeyville-Field Kindley HS	531
Shawnee Mission East HS	1758	Salina-Central HS	1001	El Dorado HS	528
Gardner-Edgerton HS	1729	De Soto HS	992	Mulvane HS	520
Topeka HS	1728	Andover HS	959	Eudora HS	493
Wichita-Haysville Campus HS	1712	Topeka-Highland Park HS	959	Altamont-Labette County HS	490
Shawnee Mission West HS	1638	Goddard-Eisenhower HS	952	Rose Hill HS	485
Kansas City-Wyandotte HS	1637	Overland Park-St. Thomas Aquinas HS	925	Atchison HS	472
Shawnee Mission Northwest HS	1624	Kansas City-FL Schlagle HS	909	Wellington HS	465
Overland Park-Blue Valley Northwest HS	1619	Valley Center HS	904	Abilene HS	460
Lawrence HS	1601	Lenexa-St. James Academy	902	Wamego HS	446
Overland Park-Blue Valley HS	1600	Great Bend HS	884	Ulysses HS	433
Overland Park-Blue Valley West HS	1582	Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel HS	880	Baldwin HS	421
Shawnee Mission North HS	1557	Kansas City-Sumner Academy	871	Topeka-Hayden HS	408
Olathe West HS	1535	Pittsburg HS	867	Andale HS	375
Overland Park-Blue Valley North HS	1498	Hays HS	863	Clearwater HS	367
Shawnee Mission South HS	1469	Lansing HS	859	Parsons HS	363
Junction City HS	1440	Goddard HS	848	Pratt HS	355
Wichita-West HS	1421	Spring Hill HS	825	Iola HS	339
Kansas City-JC Harmon HS	1399	Andover Central HS	810	Nickerson HS	323
Hutchinson HS	1386	Bonner Springs HS	793	↑Holton HS	322
Liberal HS	1371	Basehor-Linwood HS	791	↑Girard HS	315
↑Wichita-Heights HS	1357	Arkansas City HS	765	Chapman HS	314
Shawnee-Mill Valley HS	1312	McPherson HS	710	↑Clay Center Community HS	312

3A

Member Schools: 64

Range: 305-172

↓Garnett-Anderson County HS	305
Concordia HS	303
↓Wichita-Trinity Academy	303
Kansas City-Bishop Ward HS	300
Columbus HS	296
↓Osawatomie HS	296
St. George-Rock Creek HS	294
Baxter Springs HS	286
Carbondale-Santa Fe Trail HS	286
Hoyt-Royal Valley HS	283
Hugoton HS	280
Hesston HS	279
Frontenac HS	276
Meriden-Jefferson West HS	275
Hiawatha HS	273
Galena HS	270
LaCygne-Prairie View HS	270
Holcomb HS	266
Marysville HS	266
Wichita Collegiate HS	266
Scott Community HS	265
Caney Valley HS	263
Lindsborg-Smoky Valley HS	263
Colby HS	262
Burlington HS	260
Perry-Lecompton HS	252
Goodland HS	246
Wellsville HS	243
Larned HS	242
Russell HS	239
Cheney HS	238
Sabetha HS	237
Riley County HS	231
Council Grove HS	229
Cherryvale HS	225
Gypsum-Southeast of Saline HS	223
Halstead HS	221
Haven HS	220
Riverton HS	214
Fredonia HS	213
Lyons HS	213
Silver Lake HS	213
Beloit HS	212
Seneca-Nemaha Central HS	210
Cimarron HS	207
Hoisington HS	205
Norton Community HS	204
Osage City HS	204
Easton-Pleasant Ridge HS	203
Kingman HS	202
Neodesha HS	200
Anthony/Harper-Chaparral HS	199
Pomona-West Franklin HS	192
Kismet-Southwestern Heights HS	190
Eureka HS	188
↑Lakin HS	185
Atchison-Maur Hill-Mount Academy	184
Minneapolis HS	184
Hays-Thomas More Prep-Marian HS	182
St. Marys HS	182
Douglass HS	178
↑Effingham-Atchison Co Community HS	174
↑Humboldt HS	174
Phillipsburg HS	172

2A

Member Schools: 64

Range: 171-109

Mound City-Jayhawk Linn HS	171
Oskaloosa HS	171
↓Belle Plaine HS	170
Rossville HS	169
Ellsworth HS	168
↓Erie HS	166
↓Wathena-Riverside HS	164
Conway Springs HS	160
Belleville-Republic County HS	158
Garden Plain HS	158
Hutchinson-Trinity Catholic HS	158
Cherokee-Southeast HS	157
Eskridge-Mission Valley HS	156
Arma-Northeast HS	155
Hillsboro HS	155
Olathe-Heritage Christian Academy	155
Ellis HS	154
Syracuse HS	153
McLouth HS	152
Whitewater-Remington HS	152
Horton HS	150
Sterling HS	147
Marion HS	146
Leon-Bluestem HS	144
Wichita-The Independent HS	142
Richmond-Central Heights HS	141
Sedgwick HS	140
Alma-Wabaunsee HS	139
Brookville-Ell-Saline HS	139
Pittsburg-St. Mary's Colgan HS	139
Prairie Village-Kansas City Christian HS	136
Medicine Lodge HS	134
Lawrence-Bishop Seabury Academy	132
Salina-Sacred Heart HS	131
Winchester-Jefferson County North HS	130
Bennington HS	128
Johnson-Stanton County HS	128
Lyndon HS	127
Oakley HS	127
Plainville HS	127
Sublette HS	127
Inman HS	126
Yates Center HS	126
Ellinwood HS	124
Pratt-Skyline HS	123
WaKeeney-Trego Community HS	122
Uniontown HS	120
Herington HS	119
Smith Center HS	119
Pleasanton HS	118
Elkhart HS	117
↑Hill City HS	117
Hoxie HS	116
Allen-Northern Heights HS	115
Howard-West Elk HS	115
↑Sedan HS	114
↑Cottonwood Falls-Chase County HS	113
Holton-Jackson Heights HS	113
Canton-Galva HS	112
Blue Rapids-Valley Heights HS	110
↑Moundridge HS	110
Shawnee-Maranatha Christian Academy	110
Leoti-Wichita County HS	109
↑Spearville HS	109

1A

Member Schools: 117

Range: 108-14

Stockton HS	108
Elbing-Berean Academy	105
Little River HS	105
↓Meade HS	103
↓Ness City HS	103
Washington County HS	103
Udall HS	102
↓Goessel HS	101
Valley Falls HS	101
↓Oswego HS	98
Burden-Central HS	97
Troy HS	97
Macksville HS	96
Atwood-Rawlins County HS	95
Rosalia-Flinthills HS	95
La Crosse HS	94
Solomon HS	93
Burlingame HS	92
Lincoln HS	92
↓Oberlin-Decatur Community HS	91
Oxford HS	91
St. John-Hudson HS	91
Clyde-Clifton Clyde HS	90
Jetmore-Hodgeman County HS	90
Peabody-Burns HS	90
Kinsley HS	89
Langdon-Fairfield HS	89
Highland-Doniphan West HS	87
Olpe HS	87
Centralia HS	86
Montezuma-South Gray HS	86
Moran-Marmaton Valley HS	86
Greensburg-Kiowa County HS	85
Wichita-Classical School Of Wichita	83
Onaga HS	82
Caldwell HS	80
Lebo HS	79
Minneola HS	79
Bucklin HS	78
Pretty Prairie HS	78
Sylvan-Lucas Unified HS	78
Norwich HS	77
Victoria HS	77
Coldwater-South Central HS	76
Mankato-Rock Hills HS	76
Satanta HS	76
Kensington-Thunder Ridge HS	75
Osborne HS	75
Madison HS	74
Dexter HS	72
Hanover HS	71
Burrton HS	70
Hutchinson-Central Christian HS	69
St. Francis HS	69
Ingalls HS	68
McPherson-Elyria Christian HS	68
Downs-Lakeside HS	67
Wakefield HS	67
Hartford HS	66
Quinter HS	66
Dighton HS	65
Frankfort HS	65
Melvern-Marais Des Cygnes Valley HS	65
St. Paul HS	65
Claflin-Central Plains HS	64
Colony-Crest HS	63
Randolph-Blue Valley HS	63
Scandia-Pike Valley HS	63
Lost Springs-Centre HS	62
South Haven HS	62
Rexford-Golden Plains HS	61
Chetopa HS	60
Sharon Springs-Wallace County HS	60
Buffalo-Altoona Midway HS	59
Leroy-Southern Coffey County HS	58
Otis-Bison HS	58
Grainfield-Wheatland/Grinnell HS	57
Stafford HS	57
Ashland HS	56
Linn HS	56
Tribune-Greeley County HS	55
Beloit-St. John's HS	54
Waverly HS	54
Wetmore HS	51
Attica HS	50
Deerfield HS	49
Argonia HS	48
Cunningham HS	48
Kiowa-South Barber HS	48
Rolla HS	46
Moscow HS	45
Axtell HS	42
Bird City-Cheylin HS	42
Chase HS	42
Hope HS	42
Cedar Vale HS	40
Rozel-Pawnee Heights HS	40
Tescott HS	40
Wichita-Central Christian Academy	40
Almena-Northern Valley HS	39
White City HS	39
Logan HS	38
Wilson HS	35
Fowler HS	32
Natoma HS	30
Ransom-Western Plains HS	29
Weskan HS	29
Brewster HS	28
Palco HS	28
Glasco HS	27
Longton-Elk Valley HS	26
Hamilton HS	25
Miltonvale HS	22

Three schools will make the move up to Class 4A this year. Clay Center, Girard and Holton all saw their enrollment increase and will come back to 4A, while Osawatomie, Anderson County and Wichita-Trinity Academy will move out of 4A to 3A this year.

Chapman takes over Louisburg softball program



After spending a year as an assistant, Nick Chapman has been hired to be the new Louisburg High School head softball coach. Chapman takes over for John Ozier, who spent the last four years guiding the Lady Cats.

Before the end of the 2019 season,
Louisburg head softball coach John Ozier informed his team that this year would
be the end of his tenure with the Lady Cats.

Ozier, who spent four seasons as the Lady Cats' coach, certainly got a nice send-off from his team as they won a regional championship for the first time since 2014 and earned a trip to the state tournament.

"My goal was to get these kids to
maximize their talents for them to believe in themselves," Ozier said. "I

really didn’t want it to come down to my last season and final three games of regionals for that to happen, but I will take it. That was a run I will never forget. I have been around sports my entire life and this is one memorable part that will always stick with me. I told the girls that whenever they go back to high school, to make sure they go find their regional plaque. It is not for bragging rights, it is to represent what we have put into this season and walk away with the pride of what we did.

“For some, reaching state may not be that big of a deal, but when you are a program that is scratching and clawing to make every opportunity count, it just meant so much to me. I had great support from people at the school and I wouldn’t have traded it for anything.”

Now that the Lady Cats have some momentum going into the 2020 season, they needed to find a new leader and they didn’t have to look far.

Nick Chapman, who served as the Louisburg assistant and junior varsity coach last season, will take over Ozier’s post as he was officially hired as head coach following the USD 416 school board meeting earlier this month.

“I am extremely grateful and excited to be the next head coach of Lady Cat softball program,” Chapman said. “Going into

last spring, I was originally going to be volunteering on the baseball team. (LHS
AD Scott) Hinkle and Ozier came to me to a couple weeks before the season
started about coaching softball and I decided to go that route. It’s a decision
I would make every time, if I had to go back and do it again.

“John did a great job getting this
program started in the right direction. The pieces just fell in place for me to
take the reins. I have had two really awesome mentors this last year in Shawn
Lowry (girls basketball) and John in terms of what it takes to coach at a high
level. It’s summertime and I am already looking forward to spring.”



John Ozier stepped down as the Louisburg softball head coach after four years with the program.

Chapman, a Louisburg High School

graduate, played baseball for the Wildcats and continued his passion for the game in college when he played for MidAmerica Nazarene University.

Coaching softball hadn't even entered Chapman's mind until last spring, but he enjoyed getting to know the game more and is looking forward to leading the Lady Cats in the future.

"Playing baseball all of my life at a high level, it was a little bit of an adjustment at first, but to me it's all the same," Chapman said. "I have the baseball/softball mindset so it was a pretty easy transition for me into softball. There are some small strategic differences and softball is a little bit faster game. Softball pitching is something that I will have to learn as we go, but I am lucky enough to have an amazing pitching coach on staff (Megan Balke) who also played in college and I trust her to prepare our pitchers. At the end of the day, it's the team who scores the most runs wins and that's the same for both sports."

Although wins and losses are important to any high school team, Chapman wants his players to be able to come away with invaluable experiences as the Lady Cats hope to take that next step forward in their development.

"My main goal, first and foremost, is to create a program where the female athletes who leave the program, leave with valuable life skills that they will use in the next phase of their life," Chapman said. "Sports is such an amazing platform to instill life-long lessons that athletes carry with them for

the rest of their lives. I don’t think I would be where I am at today without the guidance of my coaches.

“Softball-wise it’s time for this program to take the next step.
We are coming off a regional championship and state appearance. We got there
because we put the team first and expected to win. From the first day, it’s all
going to be about what’s best for the team and putting in the work to compete in
a tough Frontier League. I have already talked to some of the girls about the
kind of legacy they want to leave on this program. There’s a lot of new things
happening in this program right now and we can really start to build something
special where we expect to be in the state tourney year after year. We are
going to be well prepared physically and mentally when we step on the field for
the first time next season and expect to win when we step between the white
lines.”

Chapman will begin his head coaching duties in July when he hosts his first high school camp in an effort to create excitement around the program and to have girls interested in playing softball.

“I am excited for this whole journey to start,” Chapman said. “We
have a great group of girls coming back next year and I am ready to get after
it. It just stinks that we have to wait until February/March to do it.”

Rison, Griggs selected to all-league softball team



Louisburg senior Molly Rison (15) earned second team All-Frontier League honors recently after she batted . 453 on the season with just four strikeouts.

The Louisburg softball team
finished the 2019 season as the one of the top eight teams in Class 4A and the
Lady Cats were well-prepped for a run in the postseason thanks to a tough
Frontier League schedule.

Louisburg, along with league schools Paola and Eudora, qualified for the state tournament and lended itself as one of the toughest leagues in 4A.

So, when the league coaches sat
down to discuss the all-league teams, it wasn't a surprise to see a pair of
Louisburg players honored.

Senior Molly Rison was selected as a second team All-Frontier League player in the infield, while fellow senior Karson Griggs was an honorable mention selection in the infield.

"I was disappointed a few more of our players did not receive

league recognition this season," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "However, with that said, I have always been a coach that places more value on the contributions of each player to the overall team goals. During this season, and especially during our postseason run, we had so many kids figure out the importance of the philosophy of 'what can I do to help the team.' It took some time, but this approach paid some incredible dividends."



Karson Griggs led the Lady Cats with five home runs and seven doubles on the season. She was named as an all-Frontier League honorable mention.

Rison and Griggs were big parts of that approach as they drove in a lot of runs from the heart of the Lady Cat order.

As the Louisburg first baseman, Rison was a key fixture in the Lady Cat lineup as she batted .453 on the season with a .539 on-base percentage, a .594 slug and a 1.133 OPS. In 76 plate appearances, Rison recorded 10 walks and struck out just four times. She

also recorded six
doubles, a home run and 21 RBIs.

Griggs had the most power on the Lady Cat
team as she recorded a team-high five home runs to go along with a .397
average, 21 RBIs and a team-high seven doubles.

“I was proud to see Molly and Karson get recognition in a very talented league,” Ozier said. “I would have liked to have seen Maddie (Svoboda)
get honored, along with some of our underclassmen that were nominated. I look
for some of our younger players to receive league recognition in seasons to
come.”

ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE SOFTBALL

FIRST TEAM

INFIELD – Lindsey Toot, Baldwin,
junior; Megan Kennedy, Eudora, senior; Hannah Menefee, Paola, senior; Grace
Barnes, Piper, junior

OUTFIELD – Audrey Flowers,
Baldwin, senior; Aubrey Weatherbie, Paola, junior; Alexis Chapman, Paola,
sophomore

PITCHER – Kyla Etter, Eudora,
senior; Kierstan Weitze, Paola, junior

CATCHER – Lauren Pappert, Piper,
junior

DH/UTILITY – Layney Steging,
Spring Hill, senior

SECOND TEAM

INFIELD – Rian Gere, Baldwin, senior; Sierra Smith, Eudora, junior; **Molly Rison, Louisburg**, senior; Erin Gallagher, Tonganoxie, junior

OUTFIELD – Harper Schreiner, Eudora, freshman; Alli Kerns, Ottawa, senior; Emma Martin, Piper, junior

PITCHER – Sam Reynolds, Tonganoxie, junior; Emily Ashford, Bonner Springs, sophomore

CATCHER – Justine Kennington, Ottawa, senior

DH/UTILITY – Lacey Coffman, Bonner Springs, junior

HONORABLE MENTION

INFIELD – **Karson Griggs, Louisburg, senior**; Riley Titus, Ottawa, sophomore; Lauren Curtis, Ottawa, sophomore; Bella Gravatt, Piper, junior; Macey Nigh, Piper, senior; Chloe Roberts, Spring Hill, senior

OUTFIELD – Holland Harvat, Eudora, senior; Kaitlyn Bradbury, Piper, sophomore; Avery Anderson, Spring Hill, junior

PITCHER – Sadie Walker, Eudora, freshman; Alex Powell, Ottawa, freshman

CATCHER – Kelsie Klamm, Baldwin, senior; Lauren Gray, Tonganoxie, junior

DH/UTILITY – Emma Stottlemire, Ottawa, freshman

2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Year nominees



For the past three years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements and to highlight the athletes.

For the second straight year, Louisburg Sports Zone will be handing out an Athlete of the Year honor to a male and female athlete at Louisburg High School. I wanted the opportunity to recognize those who exemplify what it means to be an "athlete."

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to be subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female athletes and then I will tabulate the results and determine the winner. In the next week, I will announce this year's recipients.

Below are the nominees for this year's award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!

FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



CARSON BUFFINGTON – SENIOR – BASKETBALL, SOCCER, VOLLEYBALL

Carson was a 3-time letter winner in her senior season and was named as a team captain in volleyball, basketball and soccer.

In volleyball, Buffington earned second team All-Frontier League honors as she helped lead the Lady Cats to a Class 4A state runner-up performance. She also moved from her starting setter position to the outside hitter spot and had a lot of success for the Lady Cats as she tallied 130 kills in her new position. With all that success, Buffington was also selected to the Greater Kansas City Volleyball Coaches Association Senior All-Star Match.

Buffington also wrapped up a strong career for the Louisburg basketball team as she averaged eight points and seven rebounds to go along
with three steals a contest. She was named as a Frontier League honorable
mention this past season, and she also was selected as an all-state honorable
mention.

In girls soccer, Buffington was the starting goalie for Louisburg in all 20 games. She posted 13 shutouts, which is a school record and had a .952 goals against average, which is also a school record. Buffington had 90 saves on the season that ended as a Class 4-1A state runner up for the second consecutive year. For her efforts, she was also selected second team All-Frontier League. Buffington was also named first team all-state goalie and was named Goalkeeper of the Year.



ANNA DIXON – SENIOR – VOLLEYBALL

Anna wrapped up her fourth volleyball season as a varsity starter for the Lady Cats and guided Louisburg to its second consecutive Class 4A-state runner-up finish.

Dixon, who is currently with the Kansas State volleyball team, ended her senior season with 584 kills and had a hitting percentage of .260. She also added 325 digs, 50 aces and 42 blocks as she played all six rotations. With those lofty numbers, Dixon earned several big time honors in her final season.

She was selected as an All-Frontier League first team player and was also named to the 4A State All-Tournament Team. Those honors continued as she was named the Kansas Volleyball Coaches Association Class 4A Player of the Year and earned a spot on KVA All-State First Team.

Following the season, Dixon was also named as an Under-Armour All-American also earned MaxPreps/American Volleyball Coaches Association Player of the Week honors.



ALYSE MOORE – SOPHOMORE – BASKETBALL, SOFTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD

Alyse is a 3-sport varsity letter-winner this past year as she earned letters for the basketball, softball and track and field teams. This past spring season, Moore went to state in two different sports and became the first Wildcat athlete in recent memory to do so.

In her first season in track and field, Moore threw the javelin for the Lady Cats and went on to become regional champion as she eclipsed her personal best throw by almost 25 feet in just her third competition of the season. The following week, she medaled fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a personal best throw of 131 feet and

9 inches.

Moore was also the starting shortstop for the Lady Cats as she helped Louisburg to its first regional championship since 2014.

During the basketball season, Moore was a starter for the Lady Cats and averaged six points, five rebounds and three steals a game.



TRINITY MOORE – JUNIOR – CROSS COUNTRY, SOCCER

Trinity is 2-sport letter-winner for Louisburg this past year as she had state performances in both cross country and soccer.

During the fall, Moore was the top runner on the Louisburg girls cross country team as she helped the Lady Cats to a regional runner-up finish and qualified for state as a team for the first time in school history. Moore medaled fourth at the Class 4A state meet in Wamego and currently holds the school record for the fastest time in program history. She

also earned first-team All-Frontier League honors for her third place finish at the league meet.

In soccer, Moore was a starter on the Wildcat team that recently finished as the Class 4-1A state runner-up for the second consecutive year. At the midfield spot, she finished the season with 12 goals and six assists and was also named to the All-Frontier League first team.



DELANEY WRIGHT – FRESHMAN – BASKETBALL, CROSS COUNTRY, TRACK AND FIELD

Delaney is a 3-sport letter-winner as she took part in cross country, basketball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of those.

Wright found most of her success in track and field as she

earned four medals at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita this past month. She medaled in the long jump, 400-meter-dash, 200-meter dash and as a member of the 4×400-relay.

During the regional meet, Wright broke two school records (long jump, 400 dash) and earned a regional and Frontier League title in the long jump. She also earned a medal in the long jump at the Kansas Relays earlier in the season.

In cross country, Wright was a member of the Louisburg team that finished as a Class 4A regional runner-up and qualified for the state meet as a team for the first time in school history. In basketball, Wright saw playing time at the varsity level as a freshman at different points throughout the season.

MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR NOMINEES



BLUE CAPLINGER – SENIOR – BASEBALL, FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING

Blue is a 4-sport letter-winner in football, wrestling, baseball and track and field and competed at the state level in two of the sports.

In football, Caplinger was an All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball as he was named to the first team defense as a defensive back and second team offense as a multi-purpose player. On defense, Caplinger, who helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship, had 31 tackles from the safety spot and also had two tackles for a loss, two fumble

recoveries and an interception. Offensively, he had 544 total yards and six touchdowns.

On the wrestling mat, Caplinger was a regional champion at 170 pounds and finished his season with a 33-5 record. The Louisburg senior fell one match short of state medal with a 2-2 record at the Class 4A state tournament. He currently holds the school record for most career reversals (72) and most career escapes (86). Following the season, he was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

Caplinger split time between baseball and track and field in the spring. Although he spent time as a reserve and pinch-runner on the baseball team, Caplinger found a lot of success on the track.

He qualified for state as a member of two relays. Caplinger was a member of the 4×400 relay team that won the Class 4A state championship in 3 minutes and 25 seconds. Caplinger also helped the 4×100 relay to a fifth place finish and went on to garner two state medals.

Caplinger will join the Benedictine football team this fall.



AUSTIN MOORE – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WRESTLING

Austin is a 3-sport letter winner in football, wrestling and track and field and was among the state's best in two of the sports.

Moore thrived on the football field for the Wildcats as he helped Louisburg to a 10-1 record and a regional championship. Moore was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and was the league's leading vote-getter. He went on to rack up all-state awards as the Louisburg senior earned Class 4A first team all-state honors as a running back from the Topeka Capital-Journal and the Kansas Football Coaches Association. Moore was also named as a Class 4A first team all-state linebacker from the Wichita Eagle.

When the season was all said and done, Moore tallied 1,554 total yards from the running back spot, including 1,428 yards on the ground,
and had 21 touchdowns before he broke his collarbone during the regional
championship game.

With those numbers, he was named the Kansas Small Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity and was All-Purpose Player of the Year by Kpreps.com. Earlier this year, Moore was also named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl roster.

On the wrestling mat, Moore missed more than half of the season with his broken collarbone, but came back in a big way. Moore won his first 14 matches when coming back at 220 pounds, which included a regional championship. He went on to earn his first state medal as he finished fourth at the Class 4A state tournament with a 3-2 record. He was also named to the KWCA Academic All-State first team.

During the spring, he was a member of the Louisburg track and field team and threw the javelin for the Wildcats. He was also on the throwers relay that ranked Top 5 nationally at one point in the season.

Moore will join the Kansas State football team this fall.



KIEFER TUCKER – SENIOR – FOOTBALL, TRACK AND FIELD, WEIGHTLIFTING

Kiefer is a 2-sport letter winner in football and track and field and also went to state competition in two activities.

Tucker was a presence on the line of scrimmage for the Louisburg football team as he was a first team All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball and helped the Wildcats to a 10-1 record and a regional championship.

The Louisburg senior was among on the leaders on the offensive line as he helped pave the way for more than 3,500 yards of total offense. On defense, Tucker recorded 55 tackles from the defensive end spot, including three tackles for a loss, three forced fumbles, a fumble recovery and a sack. Those numbers helped earn him honorable mention all-

state honors and was
also named to the all-state team by the Kansas Football Coaches Association.
The honors kept coming for Tucker as he was recently selected to participate in
the Kansas Shrine Bowl.

During the winter, Tucker was a member of the Louisburg powerlifting team and certainly made his mark there as well. Tucker won the Class
4A state championship in the 220-pound class and broke a 24-year-old record in
the bench press with a lift of 375 pounds.

In track and field, Tucker qualified for state for the first time in the discus. He finished as a regional runner-up and went on to take ninth at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita, just one spot away from earning a state medal.

Tucker will join the Emporia State football team this fall.