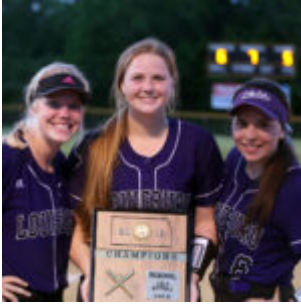


OPINION: Difficult years molded Lady Cat seniors into regional champions



Louisburg seniors (from left) Molly Rison, Karson Griggs and Madison Svoboda pose with the regional championship trophy following the Lady Cats' Cinderella run through Class 4A regional tournament last week in Ottawa.

In 2015, the Louisburg softball team had hit rock bottom just one year after its best finish in school history.

There was no gradual decline. It went from one of the best in the state to one of the worst in less than a year's time.

The Lady Cats finished the 2015 campaign with an 0-21 record after finishing fourth at state the previous year, and there wasn't a lot of momentum going with the program.

Playing softball at Louisburg High School wasn't something a lot of athletes had aspirations of doing, especially following a winless season. The losing streak reached 33 games halfway into 2016 and things looked bleak.

Louisburg did manage to get five

wins out of the year and then had a nice bounce back year in 2017 as the Lady Cats picked up 10 victories and nearly finished with a .500 record. Things appeared to be looking up.

Instead, things took a dive once again and Louisburg managed just three wins in 2018. It wasn't the easiest time to be a Louisburg softball player and then-juniors Madison Svoboda, Karson Griggs and Molly Rison knew it.

They watched as teammates came and went. Some graduated, others figured it wasn't for them and didn't come back out.

Having a winning season, much less a regional championship, seemed out of reach for all three players. What would they have to gain by going out for their senior season?

"Honestly, going into my sophomore year, I wasn't sure that we would ever get to state," Svoboda said. "We had just come off a 0-21 season and it was hard to come back from that. I just wanted to come out and have fun and see what happens."



Madison Svoboda shows the umpire the ball after getting an out against Chanute in the regional title game.

It wasn't a lot of fun early for any of the Lady Cats as they lost their first six games to start the season.

Louisburg totaled five wins going into its Senior Night matchup with Paola, and on what was supposed to be a special evening, the Lady Cats fell to their rival in two games by a combined score of 31-1.

"Our lowest point came against Paola," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "I felt like we were too caught up in all of the emotional events that go on that night, and completely lost focus. Paola delivered a wake-up call, early and often that night."

"It turns out that it was just what we needed. We re-committed our efforts in practices leading up to the playoffs, approaching each game with

a 'we're not ready to be done' mentality."

It could have been easy for the three seniors and the rest of the Lady Cats to just hang it up for the rest of the year.

They were matched up with Parsons in the play-in game of the Class 4A regional tournament, and with No. 2 seed Ottawa looming, the road to a regional title was a difficult one.

The Lady Cats, though, flipped a switch and became a different team. Louisburg went on to rout Parsons, 17-2, and set up a matchup with Ottawa the next day.

Ottawa had swept Louisburg earlier in the season and it was going to be a tough task to advance to the regional championship. Fate had other ideas.

The Cyclones took a 7-4 lead into the top of the seventh and the Lady Cats had two outs with the bases loaded. They were one out away from elimination.

Instead, the Lady Cats went on to reach on an Ottawa error to score a run, drew a walk for another and then Lauren Cutshaw gave Louisburg the lead with a 2-run single.



Karson Griggs was all smiles after she hit the go-ahead double in the regional championship against Chanute.

Louisburg knocked Ottawa on its heels and the Lady Cats delivered the knockout blow when pitcher Brooklyn Diederich silenced the Cyclone bats in the bottom of the seventh to secure one of the biggest upsets in the last five years.

“We knew we could do it, but we just had to believe in ourselves,” Svoboda said. “Ottawa was a pretty high seed, but it also gives us an advantage because they were looking down at us and we had nothing to lose.”

If there were any doubters in the Lady Cats’ dugout when the tournament started, they all became believers when they

advanced to the title game against Chanute. This was not the same team that managed just five wins in the regular season.

“From the Parsons game on, these girls just had a different look in their eyes,” Ozier said. “They had a fire that I hadn’t seen before and you could tell that they believed they could win.”

Chanute was the last team standing in Louisburg’s way of a regional title and the Blue Comets had every intention of spoiling Louisburg’s Cinderella run.

The game was tied at 3-all going into the seventh inning and Chanute had all the momentum after a rally in the last frame. Again, fate stepped in when the Lady Cats needed it most.

Svoboda hit a routine fly ball to centerfield to open the inning, and it appeared to be an easy play. However, before the Chanute centerfielder could make a play on the ball, she tripped and fell and allowed Svoboda to reach on a single.

The rest as they say – is history.

Griggs doubled to scored Svoboda, while Paige Eccher and Diederich each had RBI singles to give Louisburg a 3-run lead. It was just enough as Chanute rallied to score two in the seventh, but Diederich came in for relief and struck out the final Blue Comet batter to secure their first trip to state since 2014.

The three Louisburg seniors, who had suffered through three straight losing seasons (technically four if you count 2019), have now found themselves in the state tournament after a memorable run through regionals.

“Especially with the last three years that we have had, just to be able to get this far is just an unbelievable feeling,” Rison said.

It allowed the three seniors to be able to suit up one final time with each other. Once it is all said and done, all three will be moving in different directions.



First baseman Molly Rison looks in a throw from teammate Karson Griggs last week during regionals.

Griggs will continue her softball career at Highland Community College, while Svoboda is leaving the sport behind

as she focuses on academics at Kansas State. As for Rison, she enlisted in the U.S. Navy and will be shipping out in less than a week.

"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.

"This means a lot to all three of us, especially because Molly is going to be leaving really soon for the Navy.

Maddie is going to K-State and I am going my separate way to Highland. It will be an amazing experience out at state to be able to play with those girls one last time."

The Lady Cats had its two best days of softball in half a decade, and all of sudden, those years of losing records were gone. They didn't matter anymore.

For the three Louisburg seniors, the difficult times and run-rule losses were a thing of the past. They, and the rest of the Lady Cats, got a chance to celebrate for a change.

"It means everything," Rison said.

"I think I have played ball with Karson since we were like four and Maddie plays next to me on the diamond all the time and I wouldn't be half the ball player I am without those two. They are my best friends and I can't believe I get to play one more week with them."

It all begins today when No. 8

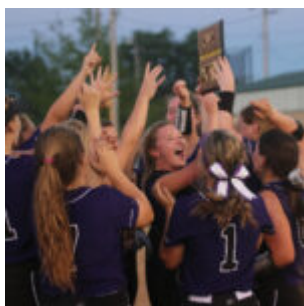
Louisburg will face off with No. 1 seed Andale/Garden Plain in the first round of the Class 4A state tournament – a game where Louisburg will once again be a big underdog.

It's nothing the Lady Cats aren't used to and they hope to use some of that momentum from regionals into a special run at state.

"Winning is fun," Griggs said with a smile.

And Louisburg hopes to have a lot of fun in Salina this weekend.

UPSET SPECIAL: Lady Cats win regional title to advance to state



Members of the Louisburg softball team hold up the Class 4A regional championship trophy Tuesday in Ottawa following the Lady Cats' 6-5 win over Chanute in the regional title game.

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.



Sophomore Brooklyn Diederich celebrates after she recorded a strike out to get the final out of the regional championship game against Chanute.

"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."

The Lady Cats (8-14) weren't without their obstacles in both games.

Louisburg needed seventh inning rallies in both games to get the victories. Against Ottawa, the Lady Cats trailed 7-4 going into their final at-bat and they answered that call with five runs in the seventh.

With the bases loaded, Diederich reached on an Ottawa error to score Griggs and then Kayla Willey worked a walk to force in another run. Junior Lauren Cutshaw delivered the biggest hit of the inning with a 2-run single that scored Paige Eccher and Diederich.

Svoboda added another insurance run as she singled home Willey and the Lady Cats took a 9-7 lead into the bottom of the seventh.



Paige Eccher slides safely into third against Chanute on Tuesday.

Diederich then worked around a two-out single from Ottawa and picked up her second win in as many games as she was also the winning pitcher against Parsons.

"We knew we could do it, but we just had to believe in ourselves," Svoboda said. "Ottawa was a pretty high seed, but it also gives us an advantage because they were looking down at us and we had nothing to lose."

As big as that rally was, it was the second time in the game where the Lady Cats had to stop Ottawa's momentum.

The Cyclones scored three runs in the fourth inning to tie the game and

Louisburg didn't waste any time to respond.

Griggs cranked a solo home run to

centerfield that hit the top of the fence and bounced over and gave the Lady Cats the lead right back.

Ottawa answered with two runs in the fifth and two more in the sixth to take the 3-run lead and set up the big seventh-inning rally from Louisburg.

“We just have guts,” senior Molly Rison said. “We showed a lot of resiliency in both games. When we were down in both games, I don’t think any of us ever thought the game was over. Even in the first game when we were down by three runs, it just shows that when we come together then we can get it done.”



Kayla Willey makes contact with a pitch against Ottawa to reach on a single.

Against Chanute, the Lady Cats got off to a good start again as they led 3-0 going into the

bottom of the fourth,
but the Comets took advantage of two Louisburg errors to score two in the
bottom of the fourth and another in the fifth to tie the game.

Defense kept the game close for Louisburg as Svoboda caught a line drive at second base that turned into a double play and shortstop Alyse Moore had a couple leaping catches to halt a Chanute rally.

The game remained tied going into the top of the seventh when Svoboda opened the inning with a routine fly ball to center. The Chanute center fielder slipped and fell while trying to make the catch, allowing Svoboda to reach with a single.

That play opened the flood gates for the Lady Cats. Griggs followed with a double that scored Svoboda and Eccher singled home pinch-runner Jordan Mynsted to put Louisburg up two. Diederich singled home Eccher with two outs to give the Wildcats an insurance run that they ultimately needed.



Alyse Moore lets out a big scream as the rest of her Lady Cat

teammates come together to celebrate their regional championship.

Freshman Mia Wilson started the game for Louisburg and held the Comet bats in check as she gave up just one earned run through five innings. August Daniels came in for relief and went into the seventh inning and gave up just one run in her inning of work.

Diederich then entered the game with one on and no one out in the seventh to close out the game. She gave up a hit and a run in the inning of relief – but her biggest stat was her one strikeout to end the game. Diederich finished the regional tournaments with a pair of wins and a save.

“Our pitching staff did a fantastic job in both games,” Louisburg coach John Ozier said. “Coach (Megan) Balke has done a fantastic job with them all season. Brooklyn was really hitting her spots, and forcing Ottawa to hit a lot of ground balls to locations we were able to handle. My message to her is always think about the great defenders around her, and don’t feel like she has to strike anyone out.

“I can’t say enough about the job that Mia and August put forth in the second game. Both were chomping at the bit to get into game one, but the time had not yet arrived for them to contribute. Mia gave her team a strong performance before she gave way to August. When August entered the game, she really threw some quality pitches before she gave way to Brooklyn.”



Louisburg coach John Ozier talks with his team following the Lady Cats' win regional title win.

The end of the game dramatics was a special way for the Lady Cats to end their run as Diederich's final strikeout emptied the Louisburg dugout as the player ran to the middle of the diamond for their regional championship celebration.

"Honestly I was just in shock at that moment," Diederich said. "I was thinking to myself, 'Are we really state bound?' There were just so many thoughts going through my head – it is crazy."

Ozier loved the determination he saw from his team throughout the tournament and their ability to make big plays when they needed them most.

"The battle at the end of the game between Brooklyn and the Chanute hitter was epic," Ozier said. "It had everyone from both sides on the edge of their seats. When she finally won the battle, a flood of emotions hit our players and coaching staff hard. It was the ending that I was hoping for."

“The girls all deserved this moment. We have worked so hard over the past four years to give this program respect and credibility. I am so proud of each and every one of them.”



The Louisburg softball team poses with their regional championship trophy following their 6-5 win over Chanute. Members of the team (from row, from left) are: Reilly Ratliff-Becher, Brooklyn Diederich, Mia Wilson, Kayla Willey; (second row, from left) Paige Eccher, Lauren Cutshaw, Molly Rison, Karson Griggs, Madison Svoboda; (back row, from left) head coach John Ozier, assistant Megan Balke, Jordan Mynsted, Alyse Moore, Jada Frazier, August Daniels, Jenna Terry, Kat Coolidge and assistant coach Nick Chapman.

Louisburg will try and keep that momentum going Thursday when the Lady Cats begin play in the Class 4A Kansas State Softball Championships in Salina. Louisburg, the No. 8 seed, will open with No. 1 Andale/Garden Plain (21-1) at 5 p.m. at the Bill Burke Complex.

No matter what happens, the Lady Cat players are excited for their first state experience.

"I am super excited, but I am know that we are all going to have to put in a lot of work and show everyone what we are actually made of and it is going to be a lot of fun," Diederich said.

Lady Cats lose two to Paola on Senior Night



Louisburg catcher Reilly Ratliff-Becher receives a throw home Thursday against Paola. Ratliff-Becher hit her first home run, but the Lady Cats lost both games on Senior Night.

It wasn't the Senior Night the Louisburg softball team was hoping for when it hosted rival Paola last Thursday at Lewis-Young Park.

Paola dominated both games in a pair of 15-0 and 16-1 victories over Louisburg. Despite the outcomes, the Lady Cats still had something to celebrate as they honored their three seniors for their commitment to the program.

Karson Griggs, Molly Rison and Madison Svoboda were all recognized with their parents in-between

games and have been a big part of the Wildcat team the last four seasons.

All three have been All-Frontier League players for the Lady Cats, while Rison was a first-team all-state selection a year ago.



Louisburg seniors (from left) Molly Rison, Karson Griggs and Madison Svoboda were honored in-between games Thursday on Senior Night.

Paola's offense was just too much for the Lady Cats as the Panthers got a pair of home runs from Halle Schindler and Hannah Menefee to lead the way in the opener.

In the nightcap, Schindler again caused more problems for Louisburg as she hit two more home runs and Jenna Collier added another for Paola as the Panthers jumped out to another big lead.

Louisburg got a run

of its own late in the second game as junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher hit her first career home run to left field that gave the Lady Cats their lone score.

EUDORA DOWNS LOUISBURG IN MAKE-UP GAME

On May 6, the Louisburg softball team traveled to Eudora for a make-up contest and the Lady Cats couldn't keep up with the Cardinals in a 10-1 loss.

Alyse Moore and Reilly Ratliff-Becher each recorded two hits each to lead the Lady Cats, while Karson Griggs added a double. Moore also had the team's lone RBI.

Madison Svoboda, Paige Eccher and Brooklyn Diederich also had hits for Louisburg.

Lady Cats get road sweep of Osawatomie



Louisburg shortstop Alyse Moore stretches out to get a ground ball last week at home against Ottawa. On Thursday, the Lady

Cats beat Osawatomie in two games on the road.

OSAWATOMIE – It wasn't always easy for the Louisburg softball team on the road Thursday in Osawatomie, but when the Lady Cats needed runs, a pair of Louisburg seniors came to the rescue.

Molly Rison collected seven hits in the two games, including three doubles, as she helped the Lady Cats to a 6-5 win in the opener and later came through again as Louisburg took the nightcap, 6-4.

Karson Griggs, along with Rison provided a lot of the spark offensively in the second game as she tallied three hits, including a double and a solo home run.

"Offensively, our seniors were able to ignite their younger teammates with great at-bats," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "We stranded runners all night, but were able to get just enough run support to pull off two much-needed wins. Karson broke out of a mini-slump with a towering home run in game two that got us going. Molly was consistent all night with her great hitting."

Louisburg jumped out on top in the opener as it scored two runs in the third inning on an RBI single from Rison that scored Madison Svoboda and Brooklyn Diederich followed that up with an RBI single that scored Rison.

Osawatomie answered with three runs of its own in the bottom of the third to take the lead, but it wouldn't stay that way for long.

The Lady Cats tied the game in the top of the fourth on an RBI double from Rison that scored Laruen Cutshaw and then took the lead in the top of the fifth. With Kayla Willey on third, Reilly Ratliff-Becher bunted on a squeeze play to score Willey and then Alyse Moore scored on a fielder's choice a batter later to give Louisburg a 5-3 advantage.

"There is no more exciting play in softball and the girls executed it to perfection," Ozier said of the squeeze play.



Louisburg senior Molly Rison makes contact with a pitch last week at home against Ottawa.

Eight of the nine Lady Cat players

recorded a hit in the opener. Rison finished with three hits, while Cutshaw and Svoboda each had two hits.

Diederich kept the Lady Cats in the game on the mound as she pitched a complete game and gave up just two earned runs on seven hits and struck out three.

Pitching was strong again in the second game as freshman Mia Wilson started and allowed one earned run in five innings. Diederich came on to pitch the final two innings as she gave up two unearned runs on three hits.

"I thought Coach (Megan) Balke did a nice job calling pitches all night long," Ozier said. "Brooklyn had a great night locating her pitches in game one. She really battled when Osawatomie made a few runs at us.

"In game two, Mia came out firing and had great stuff, keeping their hitters off balance through five innings. When she wavered late, Brooklyn picked up where she left off in game one. She was able to get their hitters to hit her pitches to certain locations that gave our defense a chance."

Louisburg (5-10) got out to a great start in the nightcap as it scored four runs in the top of the first inning and added another in the third to go up 5-0.

Rison had a two-run double, Diederich had an RBI double and Willey had an RBI single to account for the runs in the first

inning. Griggs hit a solo home run in the third to keep the momentum going.

The Trojans tried to rally as it scored two runs in the fourth and two more in the seventh, but the Lady Cats were able to hold off the Osawatomie charge.

“Overall, our defense was outstanding,” Ozier said. “There were so many great plays turned in by our infielders, outfielders, and catchers that it would take all day to recognize each one of them. We did have to battle to the final out in both games. Osawatomie had runners in scoring position at the end of both games that could have won it for them. Our defense and pitching dug in and finished strong.”

Along with Rison’s and Griggs’ performance at the plate, Paige Eccher and Alyse Moore each had two hits to help the cause and Eccher added a double.

Louisburg will try and keep its winning streak going Thursday when it travels to Garnett for a doubleheader with Anderson County. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

OTTAWA SWEEPS LOUISBURG

The Louisburg softball team had its hands full with a power-hitting Ottawa program when the Lady Cats hosted the Cyclones on April 16.

Ottawa scored nine runs to begin the opener, and the Cyclones got out to an early lead in the nightcap, as they handed the Lady Cats a 13-8 and 7-4 defeat.

In the opener, the Cyclones scored four runs in the first and five in the second to take a 9-0 lead, but the Lady Cats didn't back down as they scored three in the bottom of the third to try and get back in it.

Ottawa answered with three more in the fourth to all but seal the win for the Cyclones despite a four-run fourth inning from Louisburg.

Louisburg senior Madison Svoboda led the Lady Cat offense with a pair of hits and an RBI, while Molly Rison and Karson Griggs both finished with a hit and 2 RBIs. Griggs and Kayla Willey had the lone extra base hits as each finished with a double, while Willey scored three runs.

Lauren Cutshaw also had an RBI base hit and scored two runs along with Svoboda.

In the nightcap, Ottawa took a 3-0 lead in the second inning and never looked back. The Lady Cats did try to rally in the bottom of the seventh with three runs, but couldn't get any closer despite pounding out 14 hits.

Rison had three hits and a double to lead the way for Louisburg, while Alyse Moore, Paige Eccher, Cutshaw and Svoboda all added two hits each. Brooklyn Diederich, Moore and Willey each had RBIs.

Lady Cats win nightcap to split with Bonner Springs



Louisburg freshman Mia Wilson makes a pitch during the Lady Cats' game with Bonner Springs on Tuesday at Lewis-Young Park.

It was a tale of two games for the Louisburg softball team Tuesday when it hosted Bonner Springs for a Frontier League doubleheader.

Coming off their first sweep of the season, the Lady Cats fell to Bonner Springs in the opener, 6-1, and had hard time getting things going offensively. Louisburg turned things completely around in the nightcap.

The Lady Cats put together an offensive barrage in the second game at Lewis-Young Park as they rolled the Braves, 12-2, to get their third win of the season.

Louisburg's three seniors, Madison Svoboda, Karson Griggs and Molly Rison, got the Lady Cats going offensively.

Svoboda led the way with a pair of doubles to go along with 3 RBIs and Griggs had three hits, including a double, and 2 RBIs. Rison also had two hits, 2 RBIs and a double herself.

The Lady Cats (3-7) scored two runs in the first and third innings, three in the fourth and five more in the fifth to complete the run-rule win in the fifth inning.

Sophomore pitcher Brooklyn Diederich got the win for Louisburg as she allowed one earned run on seven hits. Juniors Lauren Cutshaw, Kayla Willey and sophomore Alyse Moore also had RBI hits for Louisburg.



Junior Kayla Willey runs back in to make a diving catch Tuesday against Bonner Springs.

"I challenged the girls to move on from game one and strike early,"

Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "We did just that, scoring two in the first,

and never really looking back. Brooklyn did a nice job of locating her pitches.

Neither she or Mia (Wilson) have overwhelming velocity, so they have to pitch

to contact and avoid bad pitches in key situations.

“Our defense in game two was outstanding both in the infield and

outfield. Our three seniors really stepped it up with their hitting,

especially with runners in scoring position.”

In the opener, the Lady Cats had a

tough time getting going offensively against starter Emily Ashford. The Bonner

Springs sophomore struck out 10 batters, but the Lady Cats did have

opportunities as they walked seven times, including three from Svoboda.

Louisburg just couldn't string

hits together as Griggs and Moore had the Lady Cats' only two hits in the loss.

Bonner Springs broke open a scoreless game in the third with three runs and

added three more in the fourth to pull away.

Freshman Mia Wilson started the

game for Louisburg and gave up three earned runs on six hits over seven

innings. She also struck out three batters.

“I was hoping we would come out with some

momentum from our games last week,” Ozier said.

“Unfortunately, we were as flat

as a pancake. We did squander some great scoring opportunities early that came

back and really hurt us. I thought Mia pitched a great game.

We had a couple of defensive lapses that lead to some unearned runs.

“Their pitcher did a nice job of locating her pitches against all of our hitters. Softball is a game where timely hitting and solid defense can produce wins. That is exactly what Bonner Springs was able to do in game one.”

Louisburg will return home tonight for a single game against Frontier League foe Tonganoxie. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Lewis-Young Park.

Lady Cats get first wins of season with sweep of Wellsville



Louisburg senior Karson Griggs slides safely into home plate Thursday during the Lady Cats’ doubleheader against Wellsville at Lewis-Young Park.

The Louisburg softball team had a lot of pent up frustration after losing its first six games to start the year.

Louisburg decided to take it out on Wellsville on Thursday during the Lady Cats' home opener at Lewis-Young Park

– more specifically the Eagles' pitching. The Lady Cats exploded for 25 runs in the two games as they rolled to an 11-1 and 14-4 victory.

Not only were the Lady Cats able to get their offense going, but they got good pitching performances in both games and the Lady Cats played solid defense in the process.

"After getting through the extremely difficult front end of the schedule, we continued to work very hard in our practices, and for the most part, kept a positive frame of mind," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "A huge weight was lifted after the victory in game one. The girls played more aggressively and relaxed in every aspect of the game once we established some breathing room. We were able to put together some great at-bats in key situations with runners in scoring position. We had struggled mightily with that in our first three double-headers."

The Lady Cats (2-6) got things going early in the opener as they used a 7-run second inning to stake them to an early lead they wouldn't give up.

Louisburg got a lot of production from the top of its order as the first five batters combined for nine of the team's 12 hits in the contest. Senior Madison Svoboda led the way with three doubles and an RBI, while Lauren Cutshaw and Karson Griggs each added

a pair of singles. Griggs also drove home two runs and Cutshaw added another.

Senior Molly Rison provided the Lady Cats with a big hit in that second inning as she connected on a 2-run home run over the centerfield fence. Junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher also had a 2-run single in the inning and junior Kayla Willey added an RBI hit.



Members of the Louisburg softball wait on Molly Rison to step on home plate to celebrate her home run Thursday.

Freshman pitcher Mia Wilson kept the Wellsville hitters in check most of the evening as she allowed one earned run on three hits to go along with four strikeouts in the complete game effort.

“Mia demonstrated great focus and tremendous resolve in battling through some tough situations in game one,” Ozier said. “The coaching staff has emphasized the importance of trusting the defense, and

aggressively attacking
the hitters. She did just that.

“Our defense all night was tremendous. Instead of playing to not
make mistakes, we attacked the ball and made plays.”

In the nightcap, the Lady Cats actually found themselves down a
pair of runs in the third inning before tying it. Wellsville
answered with a
run in the fifth to take the lead again, but the Lady Cats
made sure they ended
it in the bottom of the inning.

Louisburg responded with 11 runs in the bottom of the fifth to
secure the run-rule victory as they took advantage of several
Wellsville errors
in the frame.



**Louisburg junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher makes contact with a
pitch Thursday during the Lady Cats' doubleheader.**

Rison had another big performance for the Lady Cats as she recorded a single, a double and 4 RBIs in the win. Cutshaw also had a pair of hits, while junior Paige Eccher had a two-run double.

Svoboda, Griggs, Willey and Jordan Mynsted each added a single in the win, while Griggs, Willey, Mynsted and Brooklyn Diederich each drove home a run.

Diederich picked up the win in game two for the Lady Cats as she pitched a complete game. The Louisburg sophomore gave up one earned run on eight hits.

“Brooklyn battled through some tough situations, allowing us to stay close until we got our bats going,” Ozier said. “Like Mia in game one, she maintained a warrior like mentality throughout the game. Up and down the lineup in both games, we had timely hitting, great base running and great discipline at the plate.”

Louisburg will try and keep its winning ways going today when it hosts Bonner Springs for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m., at Lewis-Young Park.

LOUISBURG DROPS PAIR TO SPRING HILL

On April 2, the Louisburg softball team traveled to Spring Hill for a Frontier League doubleheader and the Lady Cats had hard time getting its offense going in a 7-0 and 11-1 loss.

In the opener, the Lady Cats tallied just three hits from

Karson

Griggs, Lauren Cutshaw and Paige Eccher. Unfortunately, Spring Hill took advantage of three Louisburg errors as the Broncos used a 5-run third inning to pull away.

Runs were also hard to come by in the nightcap for Louisburg. The Lady Cats scored one run on four hits, while the Broncos scored four runs in the third and five more in the fourth to help complete the sweep.

Sophomore Alyse Moore led the Louisburg bats with a pair of hits and Griggs accounted for the Lady Cats' lone run with a solo home run in the third inning. Rison also had a single for Louisburg.

Lady Cats fall on the road to defending state champs



Louisburg second baseman Madison Svoboda throws out a Baldwin runner from the ground last Tuesday in Baldwin City.

BALDWIN CITY – Coming off a doubleheader against a tough Piper team, the schedule didn't get any easier

for the
Louisburg softball team last Tuesday when it had to travel to
Baldwin.

Baldwin won the Class 4A Division
II state title last season and the Bulldogs return several
members off of last
season's championship squad. The Lady Cats had a difficult
time quieting the
Bulldog bats as Baldwin handed Louisburg a 9-4 and a 16-3 loss
in Baldwin City.

In the opener, Louisburg scored three runs in the first two
innings to tie the game at 3-all going into the bottom of the
second inning. Baldwin answered with four runs in the frame
and two more in the sixth to seal the win.

The Lady Cats were able to scatter
10 hits in the first game, but had a tough time turning those
into runs after
the second inning.

"We came out quick and scored in the
first inning and that got us going a little, but Baldwin
turned in some great
defensive plays to keep us off the board time and time again,"
Louisburg coach
John Ozier said. "We turned in some great defensive plays, but
we could not
stop their hot bats. We made a run late, but they held us
off."

Louisburg (0-4) seniors Karson Griggs and Molly Rison each led
the Lady Cat offense with two hits each, while junior Lauren
Cutshaw, senior Madison Svoboda, junior Kayla Willey and
sophomore Alyse Moore each drove home a run. Sophomore
Brooklyn Diederich had the team's lone extra base hit with a
double.

In the nightcap, Louisburg got out to a 3-0 lead to start the game thanks to an RBI single from Rison that scored Svoboda. Diederich then drove home Griggs and Rison with a single of her own.

Baldwin answered with a run in the first and second inning, but the Lady Cats still had a 3-2 lead going into third. It was then when Baldwin blew the game open as it scored nine runs in the third and five more in the fourth to get the win.

Griggs led the Lady Cats offense with two hits, including a double, and Paige Eccher also had a hit for Louisburg.

“Baldwin’s hitting was just too tough on us,” Ozier said. “We had some innings where we gave up five outs through some defensive errors. Baldwin is a team that will make you pay for your mistakes. We’ve had a tough start to the season, but we are committed to keep working hard.”

Louisburg will return to action this Tuesday when it travels to Spring Hill for a doubleheader. The Lady Cats will host Wellsville on Thursday for their home opener.

Lady Cats lose season opener to Piper



It was a different start to the season for the Louisburg softball team.

Louisburg was scheduled to begin its season with a doubleheader at Piper last Tuesday – and they did. Well, half of it anyway.

The Lady Cats lost the opener 12-5, but jumped out to a quick 3-0 lead in the nightcap on a home run from Karson Griggs. Mother Nature had other ideas as inclement weather postponed the second game until Thursday.

Not only did the Lady Cats lose the first game, but lost the lead in the nightcap as well. The game was forced to start over and Louisburg was on the wrong end of a 16-0 loss Thursday at Piper.

“Our conviction in game two was evident when we came out and scored three runs in the top half of the first,” Louisburg coach John Ozier said. “During the bottom half of the first, the heavy rains put an end to our momentum and forced postponement until Thursday night. Unfortunately we were forced to begin the game over rather than resuming from all we had left off on Tuesday night.

"It was an unfortunate ruling, but we attempted to regain our momentum, and move on. We could just not regain our energy from Tuesday and ended up on the losing end of a very lopsided game."

In the opener, Louisburg jumped out to an early 3-1 lead in the second inning after Griggs walked with the bases loaded and seniors Madison Svoboda and Molly Rison each came through with RBI singles.

However, Piper scored 11 runs in the next three frames to give the Pirates a 12-3 lead and the Lady Cats, despite scoring two runs in the fifth, couldn't catch up.

Griggs led the Lady Cats with three RBIs, while Griggs, Rison, Svoboda and Alyse Moore each recorded hits. Griggs had the lone extra base hit with a double. Junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher and freshman Jordan Mynsted each walked twice and Mynsted scored two of the Lady Cats' runs.

"After having only one practice outside this preseason, I thought we came out very solid in the first game," Ozier said. "We experienced a few defensive hiccups and Piper began to hit the ball hard and had a big inning that really hurt us. After we regained our composure, we put a couple more runs on the board. We stranded nine runners, so we really missed some great opportunities to score in the first game."

It got a lot tougher for the Lady Cats on Thursday in the second game. Piper scored 10 runs in the first inning to take an early lead and never looked back.

Sophomore Brooklyn Diederich had two hits to lead Louisburg, while Rison, Svoboda, Griggs and Kayla Willey each

had a single for Louisburg.

The Lady Cats (0-2) will try and get back on track Tuesday when they travel to Baldwin for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m.

Experienced Lady Cats excited to get season started



Louisburg senior Molly Rison, a first team all-league and all-state player a season ago, looks to lead the Lady Cats along with seniors Karson Griggs and Madison Svoboda.

The 2018 season was a rocky one for the Louisburg girls softball team as it featured a lot of young players on the varsity level.

It turned into a three-win season for the Lady Cats, but with all the growing pains they experienced a year ago, Louisburg hopes 2019 will bring a newfound optimism to the team.

Louisburg returns almost their entire varsity roster from a season ago, including its three

All-Frontier

League selections. It is a good start for a Lady Cat team that struggled to find many positives last year.

"We are hoping to improve upon last year's three win season," Louisburg coach John Ozier said. "We let six games get away from us last year in the last few innings, so we have got to learn to finish games. The coaching staff has witnessed good chemistry thus far with our girls, and we anticipate it continuing throughout the upcoming season."

The Lady Cats return a good group of bats to lead the way offensively and it starts with senior Molly Rison. The Louisburg first baseman earned first team All-Frontier League honors last season and was an all-state selection.

Rison

had a big season for Louisburg as she led the Lady Cats in four statistical categories as she finished the season with a .508 average and had a .720 slugging percentage. She also had 33 hits on the year to go along with 10 doubles, one home run and 30 RBIs.

Seniors Karson Griggs and Maddie

Svoboda will also give Louisburg some depth at the top of the lineup as the two will play third and second base, respectively. Both players could also see time in the outfield as well.

Griggs, who earned honorable

mention all-league honors last season, ended the year with a .420 average, which included 23 hits, eight RBIs,

six doubles and a home run as she hit near the top of the lineup most of the season. She also led the team with 29 runs scored.

Svoboda also had a good season at the plate for Louisburg as she connected on four home runs and had 13 RBIs to go along with 22 runs scored and a .300 batting average.

“All three seniors have stepped up and accepted the leadership role with the underclassmen,” Ozier said. “I look for great things out of all three this year.”



Sophomore Alyse Moore is one of several returning starters for the Lady Cats.

Junior Kayla Willey, who was selected honorable mention all-league last season at second, will split her time between there and the outfield. Willey, who didn't commit an error last year, also had .417 average on the year with eight RBIs.

Sophomore Alyse Moore will return to her starting shortstop role, while juniors Reilly Ratliff-Becher and Lauren Cutshaw will split time at the catcher spot. Junior Paige Eccher will also see some time in the outfield.

The Lady Cats will have to rely on a young pitching staff and sophomore Brooklyn Diederich will see a lot of time on the mound this season after starting several games as a freshman.

Junior August Daniels and freshman Mia Wilson are the other two Louisburg pitchers who are vying for playing time as well.



Sophomore Brooklyn Diederich will lead the Louisburg pitching staff.

The games haven't even started yet for the Lady Cats and they have already encountered some obstacles – namely Mother Nature. Louisburg has had very few practices outdoors due to the cold and snowy weather, and are a little behind on getting ready for the season.

“This is my fourth year with the program and I have never experienced a start to the season where we have not been able to have a complete practice outside,” Ozier said. “The girls have worked hard under the very difficult practice situations. It is very difficult to simulate game situations, especially outfield reps, when you are crammed into a gym.”

Louisburg will get its season started Tuesday when it travels to Piper for a doubleheader. First pitch is set for 4:30 p.m. at Piper High School.

It will be the first of three straight doubleheaders on the road for Louisburg. The Lady Cats have their home opener on April 4 against Wellsville.

Top 10 Stories of 2018



It was a successful, and eventful, 2018 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 to Louisburg.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2018, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

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 2019 to begin. Looking forward to it!



10. Dillon medals at state golf for second straight year

EMPORIA – All season, Calvin Dillon had been atop or near the front of leaderboard and that didn't change in what was his biggest tournament of the season.

The Louisburg High School sophomore went up against the state's best during the Class 4A state golf tournament on May 19 at the Emporia Municipal Course and did more than old his own. Dillon earned a state medal as he finished 11th overall with a 3-over par 74.

It was the second consecutive state medal for Dillon after he finished 10th overall last season at Wamego as a freshman.

"It is a real honor to earn another state medal, especially with the quality players that were at the state tournament," Dillon said. "There were lots of good players and lots of good teams."

It was another notch on Dillon's list of accomplishments that included a Frontier League title and six straight tournament victories during the 2018 season.



Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein



Louisburg girls soccer coach Kyle Conley

9. Conley, Ebenstein named Class 4A Coach of the Year

Louisburg girls soccer coach Kyle Conley and Wildcat football coach Robert Ebenstein both led their respective teams to special seasons.

Those seasons were special enough for both coaches to earn two big awards.

Conley was rewarded for all his hard work in June when it was announced that he was named as the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association's Girls Coach of the Year for Class 4-1A.

He guided the Wildcats to a 14-7 record and a spot in the state championship match, where the Lady Cats finished second overall. The

finish was something to remember for Wildcat fans as that was accomplished in just the program's third year of existence.

He has posted a 41-18-2 record during his time as the Wildcat girls head coach and also guided the Louisburg boys soccer team to its best finish in program history in 2017 with a fourth place finish at state.

As for Ebenstein, he guided the Wildcats to 10 straight victories and a regional championship to start the 2018 season, before getting knocked out in the sectional round against eventual state champion, Bishop Miege.

Following the season, the Kansas Football Coaches Association named Ebenstein as the Class 4A Coach of the Year. Ebenstein, who is just in his second season as head coach, has a 16-4 record with the Wildcats as he guided his team to a Frontier League championship this year.



8.

Holtzen finishes Louisburg career with 12 varsity letters

Once Isabelle Holtzen received her diploma and walked out of Louisburg High School for the last time as a student, she officially became one of the most decorated female athletes in school history.

No, she doesn't have any individual state championships, or even one as part of a team. Holtzen's decorations aren't ones in the form of trophies or all-state honors, but instead, they can be found on the front of

her letter jacket.

Holtzen became the first female athlete in at least 20 years to earn 12 varsity letters, which means she lettered on the varsity level in three sports in each of her four years of high school.

In research done by Louisburg Sports Zone, it was unable to find the last athlete to accomplish the feat, which could mean Holtzen could be the first Lady Cat to do so. She competed in cross country, basketball and track and field

The last athlete to come close was in 2001 when Krystal Bowes earned 10 varsity letters before moving on to a collegiate track career at Wichita State.

“The biggest thing that it means to me is to just have an opportunity to participate in three sports at a school like Louisburg,” Holtzen said. “The bigger the school that you go to, the harder it is to play multiple sports at the varsity level and I think Louisburg is unique in that fact. The best part of this whole journey was I think my freshman year because there was no pressure and no one was expecting anything from me. It was surprising and exciting to be able to letter in all three sports.”

Holtzen is currently at Northern Iowa, where she received a scholarship to pole vault for the Panther Track and Field Team.



7.

Dixon earns All-American, Player of the Year honors, signs with Kansas State

Louisburg

senior Anna Dixon led the Lady Cat volleyball program all season and she was recognized for her play on the court.

Dixon was named to the Under Armour Volleyball All-American team as she received a spot on the honorable mention squad when the list was released in November.

Dixon, the 6-foot-3 outside hitter, was recently named the Class 4A Player of the Year by the Kansas Volleyball Association, and along with that was also selected to the all-state first team.

It was the second year in a row Dixon was named player of the year, as she had to share the honor last season with Rose Hill's Gracie Van

Driel.

The honors certainly didn't stop there as Dixon was all named to the All-Frontier League first team as she helped guide the Lady Cats to an undefeated league season.

Dixon led the Lady Cats in kills with 584 in 105 sets played. She also finished with 325 digs, as she played all six rotations and also had 50 aces and 42 blocks.

In her four years with the program, Dixon finished with 2,003 kills, which would place that total among the best the school has ever seen.

All that success resulted in a dream come true for Dixon as she made it official last November when she signed to play volleyball at Kansas State.

"I have always known Kansas State was going to be my home," Dixon said. "Even since I committed as a sophomore, I always wanted to go up to Manhattan and see the girls and spend time with the team. K-State is where I need to be."



6. Louisburg wrestling sends six to state, Holtzen earns first state medal

SALINA – As the final whistle sounded in his blood round match, Cade Holtzen looked up into the rafters of the Tony’s Pizza Events Center and smiled.

He had finally reached his goal.

Holtzen defeated Columbus’ Gabe Porter by a 6-0 decision Saturday during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships in Salina and secured his state medal.

“It is one of the best feelings that I have had in my life,” Holtzen said. “Just knowing that I’m going to place – you just can’t match that with anything else.”

It certainly wasn’t

easy for the Louisburg freshman as he faced a win or go home with nothing scenario heading into his match with Porter. Holtzen pulled out the victory and eventually finished sixth overall at 113 pounds to give Louisburg a state medalist for the third consecutive season.

"It is pretty cool," he said. "I have been working for this all season, so to get a state medal is great. It may not have been as high as I wanted, but any state medal is pretty amazing."

Holtzen had a special year for the Wildcats as he finished with a 45-6 record and broke the school record for most wins in a single season. He won four different tournaments and was a Frontier League and regional tournament runner-up.

To add to his resume, he became only the second freshman in school history to earn state medal – second to only Austin Hood, who would go on to win three state titles.

Austin Moore finished one victory shy of earning his first state medal, while Ryan Adams, Thad Hendrix and Blue Caplinger also picked up wins at the state tournament.



5. Moore, Johnson finished in top 10 at state cross country, girls qualify for second straight year

WAMEGO – It was going to be hard for the Louisburg High School girls cross country team to duplicate its magical season of 2017.

Not only did the Lady Cats qualify their team for state for the first time in program history, but they also had a top five finisher in Trinity Moore.

Fast forward to 2018, Louisburg wasn't able to match that successful run – the Lady Cats took it a step further.

Moore, along with freshman Reese Johnson, each had a top 10 finish during the Class 4A Kansas State Cross Country Championships at Wamego Country Club, and it is the first time

in school history that two female runners had medaled at a state meet. Louisburg added on to that as the girls finished fifth in the team standings with 154 points, which is also the highest finish in school history.

Moore, who finished fifth at state a year ago, bested her performance by one place as she took fourth with one of her better performances of the season. Johnson was right behind her as she crossed the finish line in sixth.

Shaylor Whitham, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Delaney Wright and Kennady Wilkerson were also members of the Lady Cats' team to run at state. Emily Williams was a member of the regional team that finished second overall.



4. Louisburg track earns six state medals, Gassman state runner-up in

300 hurdles

WICHITA – Carlee Gassman had broken the Louisburg High School 300-meter hurdle record three different times in 2018 prior to the state track meet.

She picked the perfect time to make it a fourth.

Gassman broke her own school record in the 300 hurdles in May at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita as she ran a time of 45.68 seconds to earn a silver medal as she was the Wildcats' top performer on the weekend. Andale's Abby Smarsh, who is a senior, won the event in 44.73.

It was the Louisburg sophomore's first time competing at the Kansas meet as she transferred in from Iowa last year, where she qualified for the state meet there in the 400 hurdles.

Gassman's medal in the 300 hurdles was just one of six the Wildcats were able to bring home following the two-day meet. Those six medals were the most Louisburg has earned since 2011, when the Wildcats combined to medal in 10 events and the boys won their first team state title.

The 300 hurdles wasn't the only event Gassman found success in as she also medaled in the long jump. Gassman, who hadn't competed in the event prior to this year, finished fifth with a mark of 17 feet, 0.25 inches.

Isabelle Holtzen would go on to finish sixth in the pole vault, the boys 4x400 team of Chris Williams, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins went on to take seventh. Williams finished eighth in the 400-meter run and

Trent Martin medaled eighth in the boys pole vault.



3. Louisburg volleyball takes runner-up at state for second straight season

HUTCHINSON – The feeling was much of the same.

The pride of finishing as a state-runner up was a popular one among the members of the Louisburg volleyball team. At the same time, the frustration of taking second in state in back-to-back seasons was just as prevalent.

Louisburg wasn't quite sure what to feel following its 25-13 and 25-14 loss to Bishop Miege in the championship game of the Class 4A state tournament Saturday at Hutchinson Sports Arena.

In 2017, the Lady Cats fell to Rose Hill by two points in the championship

match, and fast

forward to the present, they were in the same spot – holding the state

runner-up trophy. It was the 15th time in program history that Louisburg finished in the top four at state.

The Lady Cats rattled off four straight wins to start the tournament, including knocking off No. 1 seed Independence, and defending state champions Rose Hill and Topeka Hayden. Louisburg then battled back to defeat Andale in the state semifinals.

“The loss was tough,”

Louisburg coach Jessica Compliment said. “To come so close to a state title two

years in a row, only to come up short is tough. But with that being said, it is

a huge accomplishment for this team to get back to the state championship and

make it two years in a row. Finishing second is nothing to hang our heads on.

Last year’s finish fueled the fire for the team this year, and I challenged the

returning players to use this loss and feeling to fuel them for next year.”

Louisburg has been

one of the more dominant teams in Class 4A in the last decade as the Lady Cats

have made the state tournament seven out of the last nine years and have

finished as a state runner-up on three different occasions, along with several

third and fourth place finishes. They finished 2018 with a 36-9 record.



2. Louisburg girls soccer advances to title game, has best finish in program history

NORTH NEWTON – The obstacle seemed insurmountable – and it was.

The Louisburg High School girls soccer team found itself in the Class 4-1A state championship match in the program's third year of existence, but if they wanted to take it another step further, the Wildcats were going to have to knock the defending state champion of its perch.

Unfortunately, Bishop Miege wasn't about to be moved.

In a state title game that was played in the sweltering heat in late May at Bethel College, the Wildcats couldn't stay with the Stags in a 5-0 defeat. It was the third consecutive title for Bishop Miege, while Louisburg earned a state plaque for the first time in its short history.

It was special season for the Wildcats as the night before they knocked off Topeka Hayden, 1-0, in the state semifinals to secure the program's first state plaque. In 2017, Louisburg

both games in its state tournament appearance and finished fourth.

The road to this state championship appearance has been an interesting one for the Wildcats. More than three years ago, a group of Louisburg parents and citizens raised enough money to begin the girls soccer program and fund it for three years.

Louisburg was in the final year of that funding, and while the program isn't going away, the team realized they needed to play for more than themselves.

"We played for the community tonight," Louisburg senior Bailey Belcher said after the Hayden win. "We have to remember that when they raised money for this program, it was just through this year, so I think we owed it to them to play well. I really think it might have helped with how we played and I think it was one of the best games we played all season."

"It is a third-year program with 41 wins, three regional championships, two state final fours and now a state runner-up," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said after the title game. "We just have kids who come in and work their butt off. They are not soft, they aren't weak and from top to bottom they are going to work hard."

"We worked hard, but we just played Miego. That is one of the best teams in the state, and that stinks, but our kids played hard, worked

their tail off and it was a great year. We had people criticize us for how we got there, but we won games and that really motivated the kids. It got them fired up to go do something bigger than themselves. I couldn't be more proud of they stuck together and what they accomplished."



1. Football wins 10 straight, takes Frontier League title and regional championship

It had been almost two months since Louisburg and Piper squared off on the football field in what was one of the more entertaining games on the Wildcats' schedule.

Back in early September, Louisburg left Piper High School with a seven-point win – a victory that would help propel them to a Frontier League championship and a perfect regular season.

The two teams squared off again and the stakes were a bit higher. The game, at least for Louisburg anyway, was even more exciting.

The Wildcats dominated action from the opening kickoff and never looked back in a 48-0 win over the Pirates. In the process, Louisburg won the school's first regional championship since 2016 and are off to a 10-0 start for the first time since 2010.

Louisburg advanced to the sectional round where it fell to eventual state champion Bishop Miege, 55-21, and finished its season with a 10-1 record.

It was as season marked with special moments, including a 28-7 victory over then-undefeated Paola late in the year to secure a league title.

"Being 10-0 and then having that first loss of the season was very disappointing," Louisburg coach Robert Ebenstein said. "Losing always sucks, but losing in the playoffs and having to wait until next August is the worst. At the end of the day, Miege is a very good team and we did some good things. We got them to fourth down on multiple drives in the first quarter, we just couldn't make the plays on those big downs. Then we got behind a little and started pressing.

"Overall it was a great year. I am very proud of our guys and excited for them that they were able to get double digit wins for only the third time since 2000, and

there was a
lot of really good football played during that time period. It
was a lot
fun to be a part of.”



Austin Moore was named to the Kansas Shrine Bowl and was a first-team all-state player for the Wildcats. Moore was also named as the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year by 810 Varsity.

With all that success, honors
started to roll in for its players as running backs Austin
Moore and Blue
Caplinger, along with linemen Brayden White and Kiefer Tucker
all earned
all-state honors.

Moore and White went on to be
semifinalists for the Simone Awards and Moore was also
selected to participate
in the Kansas Shrine Bowl in the summer of 2019. Ebenstein was
also named as
coach of the year by the football coaches association.

Most recently, Moore was named the Kansas Small-Class Player of the Year and Running Back of the Year by 810varsity.com, while White was named the Small-Class Lineman of the Year. Ebenstein was also named Kansas Small-Class Coach of the Year by 810 Varsity.