Wildcat boys run away with team title at home invitational



Louisburg's (from left) Blue Caplinger, Brandon Cooper, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins battle it out in the 100-meter dash last Thursday at the Louisburg Invitational.

The Louisburg boys track and field team ran away with its home invitational title, both figuratively and literally.

Louisburg won six events, including four on the track, and the Wildcats came away with several medals as they racked up 192 points to win the Louisburg Invitational. Spring Hill was runner-up with 163 as the Wildcats won by nearly 30 points.

"I thought we came out and did what we needed to do," Louisburg coach Andy Wright said. "Over half of the athletes got their personal record for the year and I was excited to see us build some confidence."

The Wildcats had a lot of speed on display as they won both the 100 and 200-meter dashes, along with 4×100-meter relay.

Sophomore Justin Collins had a big day as he won the 100-meter dash in 11.47 seconds and the

Wildcats swept the first four places. Senior Brandon Cooper (11.52) was second, senior Blue Caplinger was third (11.64) and sophomore Ben Wiedenmann was fourth (11.71.)

Caplinger went on to win the 200 dash in 23.27 seconds and edged Osawatomie's Thaid Timblin by .01 seconds. Wiedenmann went on to medal third in 23.55.

The 4×100 relay team of Collins, Caplinger, Wiedenmann and Cooper blew away the competition as they took gold in 44.24 seconds.

"Every week we have someone different winning the 100," Wright said. "That is fantastic. As a coach, it is so nice to have 4-5 sprinters that can push each other every week at practices and in meets. The 4×100 team is slowly improving throughout the year, but we still need to clean up our handoffs."

In the field events, Louisburg went 1-2 in the pole vault as junior Trent Martin had his best day of the season as he cleared 13 feet to win the event for the first time this season. Sophomore Luke Faulkner was second at 12-6.

"Trent is working his way back up to his personal record, so it was good for him to get some momentum with the win," Wright said. "He will keep working hard, and I expect to see him keep climbing."

Junior Carter Anglin was another
gold medal winner for Louisburg as he captured the discus title with a throw of
143 feet, 2 inches and senior teammate Kiefer Tucker was second at 130-2.
Junior Brayden White also scored points in the event with a toss of 115-10 and
took fourth.

Tucker also picked up a medal in the shot put as he was runner-up with a mark of 41-9.25. White (40-2) and Jonathan DePriest (38-2.75) also scored points as they were fifth and sixth, respectively.



Sophomore Jay Scollin rears back for a throw in the javelin last Thursday. Scollin was third overall.

The Wildcats continued their
throwing success in the javelin as they had two athletes earn medals. Junior
Michael Waldron recorded a throw of 163-8 and took second overall, while

sophomore Jay Scollin had a toss of 144-8 to take third.

Louisburg was also able to score points in the jump as junior Indy Strumillo was third in the triple jump with a mark of 37-0.25. Freshmen Isaac Guetterman (36-8.25) and Will Finestead (36-1.75) took fifth and sixth, respectively.

Freshman Hayden Feikert had his best day in the long jump as he recorded a leap of 19-8 to finish runner-up by just .25 inches. Martin finished fourth with a mark of 19-2.75 and Finestead was sixth at 18-10.25.

Back on the track, freshman Tom Koontz medaled in both hurdle events. Koontz was second in the 300-meter hurdles in 43.57 seconds and third in the 110 hurdles in 17.56.

Senior Chris Williams also earned a runner-up performance in the 400-meter dash in 52.33 seconds.

In the distance races, junior Anthony Davis finished second in the 1,600-meter run in a time of 5 minutes and 7 seconds. Freshmen Ryan Rogers (5:15) and Caden Bradshaw (5:20) also scored points as they took fifth and sixth, respectively.

The same three runners also fared well in the 800 run. Davis medaled third in 2:20, while Bradshaw was fourth in 2:23 and Rogers was fifth in 2:24.



Junior Brayden White scored points in both the shot put and discus for Louisburg.

Louisburg also ended the meet on a strong note as the Wildcat 4×100 throwers relay took gold as the team of Waldron, Tucker, DePriest and Austin Moore won in 47.52 seconds.

The Wildcats return to action today as they travel to the Prairie View Invitational. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

100 dash: Charlie Koontz, 14th, 12.37

200 dash: Skyler Tinsley, 10th,

25.21; Cooper Hipp, 13th, 25.85

400 dash: Dylan Armstrong, 8th,

56.74; Weston Guetterman, 11th, 58.91; Isaac Guetterman, 22nd, 1:03

800 run: Sawyer Richardson, 7th,

2:28; Gareth Baus, 16th, 2:47

1,600 run: Richardson, 7th,

5:24; Baus, 12th, 6:13

Pole vault: A.J. Reed, 7th,

9-6; Caleb Shaughnessy, 12th, 8-6

Long Jump: Indy Strumillo, 11th,

17-4.75; W. Guetterman, 15th, 17-0

Triple jump: W. Guetterman, 8th,
35-10.5

Shot put: Cole Evans, 7th,

37-9.5; Will Patterson, 27th, 30-3

Discus: Chase Pritchard, 9th,

105-9; Jonathan DePriest, 10th, 102-2

Javelin: Reed, 8th,

135-11; Austin Moore, 12th, 130-1; Tyler Detherage, 26th, 86-3

Wildcat relay medals at KU Relays

Justin Collins, Chris Williams,
Blue Caplinger and Ben Wiedenmann had a big day at the Kansas Relays on Friday
and Saturday in Lawrence.

The quartet competed in the Sunflower Finals of the 4×400-meter relay and the Wildcat team medaled fifth overall in 3 minutes and 30 seconds.

Several other Wildcat athletes competed in the two-day meet and Louisburg coach Andy Wright was pleased with what he saw from his athletes.



(From left) Chris Williams, Ben Wiedenmann, Blue Caplinger and Justin Collins medaled in the Sunflower Finals of the 4×400-meter relay Saturday at KU Relays.

“KU Relays was a great experience
for our guys,” he said. “We experienced lows and highs that come from high
stakes competing. The stage at KU Relays is as big as we are going to see,
probably bigger than state as there are the best of the best

from multiple
state competing, as well as college athletes. This can be an intimidating
experience, and I thought that our athletes stepped up to the task and competed
well.”

On Saturday, junior Michael

Waldron threw the javelin and was 22nd with a throw of 151-3.

Louisburg opened the meet on

Friday as senior Brandon Cooper was 43rd in the 100 dash in 11.53

seconds. Williams also ran the open 400 and took 29th in 53.90 seconds.

Collins, Wiedenmann, Cooper and
Caplinger also competed in the 4×100 relay, but were disqualified.

Lady Cats win team title, boys second at Anderson County



Louisburg junior Michael Waldron won the javelin competition

Thursday at the Anderson County Invitational and helped the Wildcat boys to a second place finish.

GARNETT – On a cold, blustery day in Garnett, it was going to be difficult for any of the athletes of the Louisburg track and field teams to set any kind of personal bests.

However, that didn't mean the Wildcats weren't able to find success.

The Louisburg girls won the team title Thursday at the Anderson County Invitational with 119 points and finished seven points ahead of runner-up Spring Hill. Anderson County was third with 111.5

"The weather should never be a factor for competing," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "Everyone has to deal with the same conditions so only the mentally tough will overcome and we did. It was a close race for first and our girls stepped up."

It was the same type of performance on the boys side as the Wildcats finished second in the team standings with 152.5 points and won seven events on the night. Spring Hill was first with 216.5 and Eudora was third with 89.5.

"The weather conditions were less than ideal," Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. "I just wanted our athletes to go out and compete against the rest of the field.

With the results that we were able to achieve, they did just that.”

Senior Blue
Caplinger led the boys side as he recorded three gold medals on the day,
including two individual wins. The Wildcats swept the 100-meter dash and
Caplinger won in 11.74 seconds, while sophomore Ben Wiedenmann was second at
11.82 and senior Brandon Cooper was third in 12 seconds.

Caplinger later won the 200-meter dash in 24.18 seconds and Wiedenmann was right behind him in second in 24.66. To end the meet, the Wildcat 4×400-meter relay of Chris Williams, Wiedenmann, Caplinger and Justin Collins took gold in 3 minutes and 34 seconds.

“It was nice having Blue back,” Wright said. “When
you are forced to run into a very hard wind it takes a strong runner to finish,
and Blue fits that caliber. Blue ran two strong races, of course because
of the wind and conditions they were not his best times, but he stepped up
and competed and that is all we can ask.”

Senior Chris Williams won his second consecutive
race in the 400-meter dash with a time of 53.78 seconds. Junior distance runner
Anthony Davis also medaled as he took third in 1,600-meter run in 5:08, while
freshman Tom Koontz was third in the 300-meter hurdles in 46.20 seconds.

The Wildcat also struck gold in the field events as they won three in that area.

Michael Waldron didn’t let the conditions stop him

as he recorded a personal best throw in the javelin with a mark of 163 feet, 10 inches and the Louisburg junior finished first. Freshman A.J. Reed also medaled as he took third with a toss of 137-06.

Sophomore Luke Faulkner continued his success in the pole vault as he finished first with a clearance of 12-6, which tied his personal best.

Junior Trent Martin shined in the long jump as he recorded a mark of 19-9.5 to win gold for the first time this season in the event.

“I’m proud of the way they competed because of the conditions most of the track meet was a mental game,” Wright said. “The athletes in the field events stepped up and made their marks work. Learning how to compete in terrible conditions now will help all of our athletes down the road.”

On the girls side, freshman Delaney Wright continued her successful start to the season.

Wright won gold in two events and later helped the 4×400-meter relay of Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh and Sydni Keagle to a second place finish in 4:25. Wright later went on to win the long jump with a mark of 17-1.5 and the 400-meter dash in 1:05.

Gassman also had a big day for the Lady Cats as she finished with three second place finishes and a gold. In the 4×100 relay, Gassman, Jordon Leach, Pugh and Keagle edged Eudora to finish first in 54.21 seconds.

Gassman also went on to take second in the long jump with a mark of 16-05 and was also runner-up in the 300-meter hurdles in 51.95 seconds.

Also on the track, Keagle took third in the 100-meter hurdles in 18.25 seconds, while senior Shaylor Whitham did the same in the 1,600-meter run in 6:22.

“We had several girls really step up and place higher than usual,” Reece said. “One in particular that stood out was Shaylor as she placed third in the 1,600 and scored a total of 10 points for the team. She has definitely made her senior year her best year in both cross country and track.”

The Lady Cats earned another medal in the field events as junior Avery Graham finished second overall in the pole vault as she cleared 9-0.

Louisburg returns to the track this Thursday when it competes in its home invitational. Events are set to begin at 4 p.m. at Wildcat Stadium.

Other results are:

GIRLS

100 dash: Rain Pugh, fourth, 14.13; Jordon Leach, 12th, 14.70; Andrea Gaza, 17th, 15.15; Hannah Cook, 20th, 16.31

200 dash: Gaza,

12th, 32.79; Cook, 20th, 36.07

400 dash: Gaza,
sixth, 1:16

800 run:

Shaylor Whitham, fifth, 2:54; Lacie Kallevig, 13th, 3:21

1,600 run:

Kallevig, 11th, 7:17

100 hurdles:
Kristen Bell, sixth, 20.26

300 hurdles:

Bell, 10th, 1:09

High jump:
Eileen Benne, fourth, 4-10; Shelby Grandon, eighth, 4-6

Pole vault:
Malee Rutherford, fifth, 7-0

Long jump:
Sydni Keagle, fifth, 14-10.75; Pugh, ninth, 14-3.25; Benne,

14th,
12-5.5

Triple jump:
Benne, seventh, 29-11.5

Shot put: Shea

O'Hara, 12th, 27-2; Melia Rice, 19th, 23-2.5; Aiyana

Penca, 25th, 21-3

Discus: Rinny

McMullen, ninth, 82-1; Penca, 10th, 77-10; Rice, 11th,

75-2; O’Hara, 17th, 66-7; Davis Guetterman, 20th, 62-11

Javelin:

Guetterman, 14th, 72-5; Rice, 24th, 56-8; Lexi Rogers, 25th, 54-7

BOYS

100 dash: Justin Collins, fifth, 12.09; Charlie Koontz, eighth, 12.15

200 dash:

Collins, sixth, 25.71; Koontz, 12th, 26.72; Dylan Armstrong, 20th, 28.02

400 dash:

Weston Guetterman, 12th, 59.97; Will Finestead, 13th, 59.99; Isaac Guetterman, 17th, 1:01; Armstrong, 19th, 1:03

800 run:

Anthony Davis, seventh, 2:23; Sawyer Richardson, 13th, 2:31; Caden Bradshaw, 14th, 2:31; Gareth Baus, 29th, 2:54

1,600 run: Ryan Rogers, ninth, 5:23; Bradshaw, 12th, 5:36; Richardson, 14th, 5:40; Baus, 25th, 6:16

110 hurdles:
Tom Koontz, fourth, 17.96

High jump: Indy Strumillo, seventh, 5-2

Pole vault:

Trent Martin, fifth, 11-0

Long jump:

Finestead, 14th, 17-4; I. Guetterman, 18th, 16-9.5;

Strumillo, 23rd, 15-11; Armstrong, 25th, 15-9

Triple jump:
Strumillo, sixth, 35-11.5; W. Guetterman, seventh, 35-5.5; I.

Guetterman, 10th,

34-5.5; Finestead, 16th, 32-8

Shot put:

Kiefer Tucker, fifth, 39-4.5; Brayden White, 10th, 38-1; Jonathan

DePriest, 17th, 35-5.5; Cole Evans, 18th, 35-4.75; Will

Patterson, 28th, 31-3

Discus: Carter
Anglin, fourth, 129-7; Tucker, fifth, 126-10; DePriest, ninth,

108-9; White, 12th,

106-3; Chase Pritchard, 21st, 98-1

Javelin: Jay

Scollin, fifth, 134-9; Austin Moore, 13th, 114-8

Lady Cats win three events at Paola, finish fourth as team



Louisburg freshman Rain Pugh takes the hand-off from senior Jordon Leach during the 4×100-meter relay Thursday at the Paola Invitational.

PAOLA – When Louisburg junior
Sydni Keagle crossed the finish line of the 100-meter hurdles, she saw the rest
of the competition behind her.

On Thursday at the Paola
Invitational, Keagle won the event with a time of 16.56 seconds to get her
first gold medal on the day. There would be a couple more that went her way.

Keagle was a part of the 4×100-
and 4×400-meter relay teams that also won gold and helped the Lady Cats to a
fourth-place team finish in Paola.

Louisburg recorded 83 points, just
five points behind third-place Spring Hill. Paola won the girls team title with
145 points and Lamar (Mo.) was second with 116.

On the 4×100 relay, Keagle teamed
with Jordon Leach, Rain Pugh and Carlee Gassman to win in 52.48 seconds.
Gassman, Keagle, Pugh and Delaney Wright blew away the competition in the 4×400
relay as they finished first in 4 minutes and 22 seconds and won by five

seconds.

Wright finished her outing with four medals overall, which was her second four-medal performance in a week. The Louisburg freshman finished runner-up in the long jump with a mark of 16 feet, 11.75 inches and was also second in the 400-meter dash (1:03) and third in the 200 dash (27.28).

Gassman, a junior, also finished the day with four medals as she was runner-up in the 300-meter hurdles in 49.28 seconds. She also took third in the long jump with a mark 16-2.5, along with her two performances on the relays.

Junior Avery Graham also earned a medal for the Lady Cats as she took third in the pole vault and tied a personal record in the process with a clearance of 9-6. Sophomore Shelby Grandon was other lone point-getter in the field events as she took seventh in the high jump at 4-6.



Louisburg senior Shaylor Whitham leads a pack of runners Thursday during the Paola Invitational.

Along with their performances in the relays, Leach and Pugh both scored points in the 100 dash as they finished fifth and sixth, respectively. Senior Shaylor Whitham also helped the Lady Cats in the distance races as she took eighth in the 800-meter run in 2:49.

Louisburg returns to action tomorrow when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational. Events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

1,600 run: Shaylor Whitham, 10th, 6:24

100 hurdles: Kristen Bell, 14th, 20.17

Long jump: Rain Pugh, 10th,
14-4.25

Shot put: Shea O'Hara, 10th,

29-11; Melia Rice, 18th, 25-1; Eden Strumillo, 20th, 22-6

Discus: Aiyana Penca, 13th,

77-07; Rice, 15th, 75-9; O'Hara, 19th, 58-0

Javelin: Tae Ellison, 17th,

77-07; Rice, 22nd, 57-08

Wildcat boys track takes fourth at Paola Invite



Louisburg senior Chris Williams sprints to the finish line in the 400-meter dash Thursday during the Paola Invitational. Williams won the event with a time of 52.02 seconds.

PAOLA – The Louisburg boys track and field team competed in its second meet in four days Thursday when the Wildcats traveled to the Paola Invitational.

Louisburg was missing several
athletes due to a class trip, so the Wildcats were a little

short-handed. It didn’t seem to bother them much as they racked up points in several different events as they went on to finish fourth in the team standings.

The Wildcats recorded 69 points on the night and was just one point behind third place Lamar (Mo.). Spring Hill won the meet with 187 points and Paola was second with 164 in the 11-team meet.

“With two of our senior sprinters absent from the meet, I was proud of the other athletes that stepped up,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “I thought our throwers and relays did a nice job earning some points against tough competition.”

Senior Chris Williams got the Wildcats’ lone gold medal on the night as he won the 400-meter dash in 52.02 seconds. Just minutes earlier, Williams filled in on the 4×100-meter relay team with Justin Collins, Ben Wiedenmann and Charlie Koontz to take second in 44.57 seconds.

The 4×400-meter relay of Williams, Wiedenmann, Collins and Dylan Armstrong also took runner-up in 3 minutes and 35 seconds.

“Chris ran a solid race,” Wright said. “His times are not where he would like them to be, but as long as he keeps working hard I have no doubt that we will see those times just keep improving.

“We are fortunate to have 5-6 sprinters that can step in on

the
4×100 if needed. With the little practice that we were able to get in, we
actually ran faster at Paola with the two new runners. In the 4×400 relay, Dylan
stepped in and ran a nice solid leg. I was pleased with effort from both
relays.”

The Wildcats were also able to earn
medals in the field events as they had several place in the top 3.

In the discus, junior Carter Anglin was second with a throw of 125 feet, 6.5 inches and senior Kiefer Tucker was right behind him in third with an attempt of 124-10.5. Tucker also scored points in the shot put with a mark of 42-2 to finish sixth.

Junior Michael Waldron set a new personal
record in the javelin with a toss of 160-10 to come in third, while teammate
Jay Scollin also recorded a new personal record at 146-2 to take sixth.

Sophomore pole vaulter Luke Faulkner tied
his personal record as he cleared 12-6 to finish third overall. Junior Trent
Martin also scored points as he cleared 11-6 and finished sixth.

“Carter and Kiefer have been working really hard in practice, so
it’s nice to see that work paying off for them,” Wright said. “Luke is going to
keep progressing in the pole vault and I have no doubt we will continue to see
him go higher. Michael and Jay take a lot of pride in javelin, and they

are going to keep improving every week.”



Louisburg freshman Ryan Rodgers sprints to the finish line of the 1,600-meter run. Rodgers took sixth overall.

On the track, Collins (11.87) and Wiedenmann (12.04) finished seventh and eighth, respectively, to score points in the 100-meter dash.
Wiedenmann also took seventh in the 200 dash in 24.32.

In the distance races, freshman Ryan Rodgers had a strong performance in the 1,600-meter run as he finished sixth in 5:04.

Louisburg returns to the track Thursday when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational. Events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

200 dash: Justin Collins, 10th,
24.32

400 dash: Dylan Armstrong, 9th,

55.54; Weston Guetterman, 18th, 59.39

800 run: Ryan Rodgers, 13th,

2:22; Sawyer Richardson, 18th, 2:29

1,600 run: Richardson, 13th,

5:27; Gareth Baus, 16th, 6:13

Long jump: Indy Strumillo, 11th,

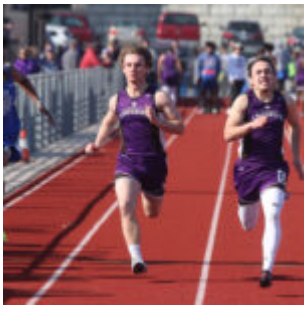
17-6.25; Armstrong, 15th, 16-5.5; Guetterman, 18th, 14-2.5

Shot put: Brayden White, 10th,

39-4; Jonathan DePriest, 20th, 34-3

Discus: DePriest, 18th,
92-1.5

Wildcats finish third in season opener at Leavenworth



Louisburg's Justin Collins (right) and Charlie Koontz (middle) battle it out in the 100-meter dash Monday during the

Leavenworth Invitational. Collins took fifth overall and Koontz helped the 4×100 relay to a first place finish.

LEAVENWORTH – It was the start the Louisburg boys track and field team was looking for Monday in its season opener at the Leavenworth Invitational.

The Wildcats won two events, and medaled in several others, as Louisburg finished third in the team standings with 70 points at Leavenworth High School. Leavenworth won the meet going away with 166 points and St. James Academy was second with 120, but it was good first step for the Wildcats this season.

“We were just happy to get the season started,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “We have had to face a lot of adversity as a track team, and I couldn’t be more pleased with how the kids came out and competed. We found out we have some room for improvement, but overall I was ecstatic with the start.”

Sophomore Luke Faulkner got it started for the Wildcats in the pole vault as he came close to matching his personal record in his first time out. Faulkner took the gold medal in the event as he cleared 12 feet and won by six inches.

“Luke came close to tying his PR from last year, so that is a great starting point for the first meet of the year,” Wright said. “With our jump pits unavailable for practice, we have had to get

creative with getting kids reps and borrowing time on other tracks. Now
that we should be able to start practicing on our track, we look to really
start getting practice time in to improve the marks.”



Sophomore Luke Faulkner clears a height in the pole vault Monday in Leavenworth.

The Wildcat 4×100-meter relay team also
struck gold with a nice performance. The team of Charlie Koontz, Blue
Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Brandon Cooper edged out Sumner Academy and
Leavenworth for first in 44.63 seconds.

“Of course a win is always good to start the season with, but we
aren’t satisfied with that,” Wright said. “We want to continue to build from
this meet.”

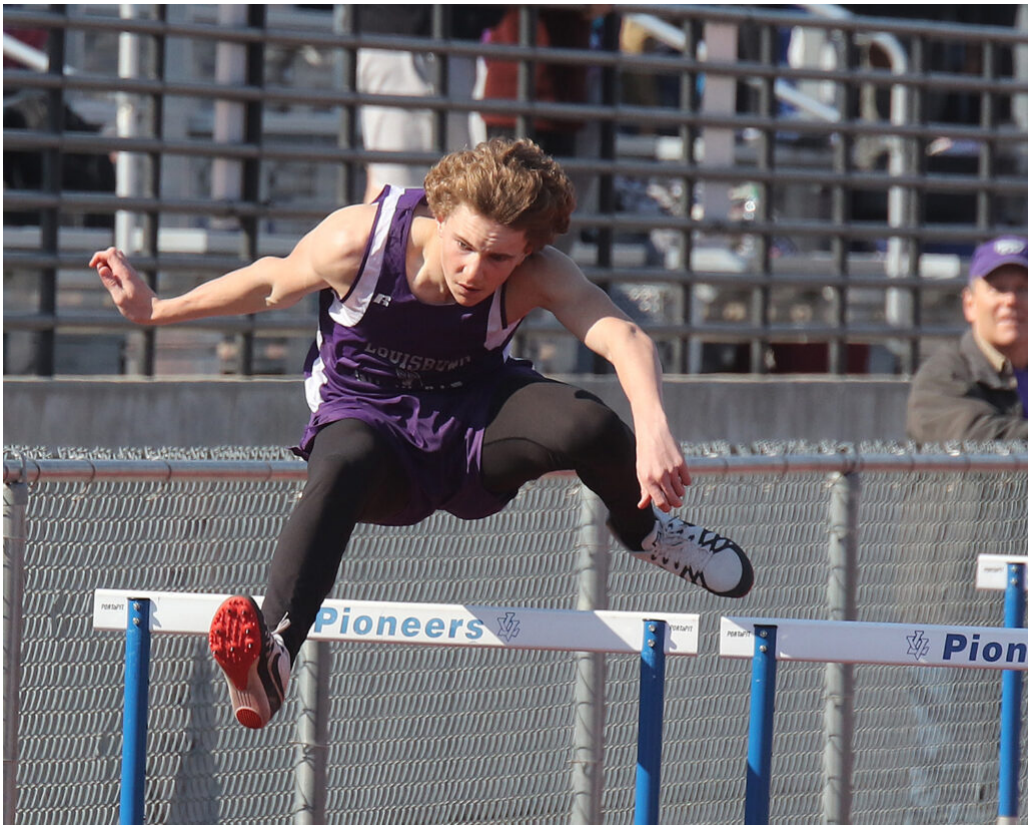
Louisburg also brought home several other medals, including three runner-up performances.

Junior Michael Waldron had a strong first throw in the javelin with mark of 158 feet, 11.5 inches to finish second and was less than three
feet out of first.

“Michael is going to surprise a few
schools this year,” Wright said. “This is only his second year throwing the javelin,
and we are very excited with what the future holds for him.”

On the track, Caplinger earned two more medals, including one individual and one on another relay. Caplinger ran a time of 23.80 to finish
second in the 200-meter dash.

To end the meet, Caplinger joined Chris Williams, Justin Collins and Wiedenmann and took second in the 4×400 relay in 3 minutes and 33 seconds.



Freshman Tom Koontz clears a hurdle Monday in Leavenworth. Koontz took third in the 110 hurdles and fourth in the 300 hurdles.

Williams was a two-time medalist for the Wildcats as he also took third in the 400 dash in 52.54. Freshman Tom Koontz had a strong day in the hurdles for Louisburg as he finished third in the 110-meter hurdles in 17.87 and fourth in the 300 hurdles in 45.83.

In the field events, freshman A.J. Reed came in fourth in the pole vault after he cleared 9-6. Sophomore Jay Scollin also scored points for the Wildcats in the javelin with a fifth-place finish with a mark of 139-9.

On the track, Collins (12.08) and Wiedenmann (24.07) scored more points for Louisburg as they finished fifth in the 100 and 200 dash, respectively.

A few of the Wildcat throwers also got to have a little fun as they took part in the throwers relay. Austin Moore, Kiefer Tucker, Michael Waldron and Jonathan DePriest won with ease in a time of 48.49 seconds.

Louisburg will get back on the track today when it travels to the Paola Invitational. Events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results from Leavenworth are:

Pole vault: Tom Koontz, eighth, 8-0

High jump: Indy Strumillo, eighth, 5-4; Weston Guetterman, ninth, 5-0

Long jump: Will Finestead, 12th, 17-10.5; W. Guetterman, 14th, 17-4.5; Dylan Armstrong, 19th,

16-9; Strumillo, 19th, 16-9; Isaac Guetterman, 21st, 16-0

Discus: Kiefer Tucker, seventh, 129-5;

Jonathan DePriest, 12th, 111-1; Brayden White, 14th,

107-8; Chase Pritchard, 22nd, 69-9

Shot put: Tucker, seventh, 41-11; White,

13th, 40-0; Cole Evans, 17th, 35-10.5; DePriest, 18th,

35-0; Will Patterson, 19th, 33-7.5

Javelin: A.J. Reed, ninth, 134-5; Austin

Moore, 13th, 126-9; Remington Rice, 24th, 78-6

100 dash: Brandon Cooper, eighth, 12.19; Ben

Wiedenmann, 10th, 12.25; Charlie Koontz, 11th, 12.30;

Finestead, 29th, 13.13

1,600 run: Anthony Davis, 13th,

5:19; Ryan Rodgers, 15th, 5:25; Caden Bradshaw, 18th,

5:34; Gareth Baus, 24th, 6:17

400 dash: Armstrong, 10th,

57.09; Finestead, 15th, 58.69; W. Guetterman, 19th, 1:00

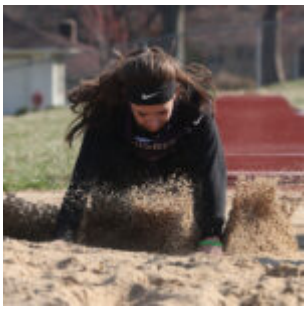
800 run: Davis, 13th, 2:22;

Rodgers, 15th, 2:29; Bradshaw, 16th, 2:31; Sawyer

Richardson, 17th, 2:35; Baus, 20th, 2:52

200 dash: I. Guetterman, 26th,
27.09

Wright medals in four events; Lady Cats take fourth at Leavenworth



Louisburg freshman Delaney Wright lands in the sand pit for one of her attempts in the long jump Monday during the Leavenworth Invitational. Wright won the event and medaled in three others.

LEAVENWORTH – Delaney Wright may just be a freshman, but she performed like a seasoned veteran during Louisburg's season opening track and field meet Monday in Leavenworth.

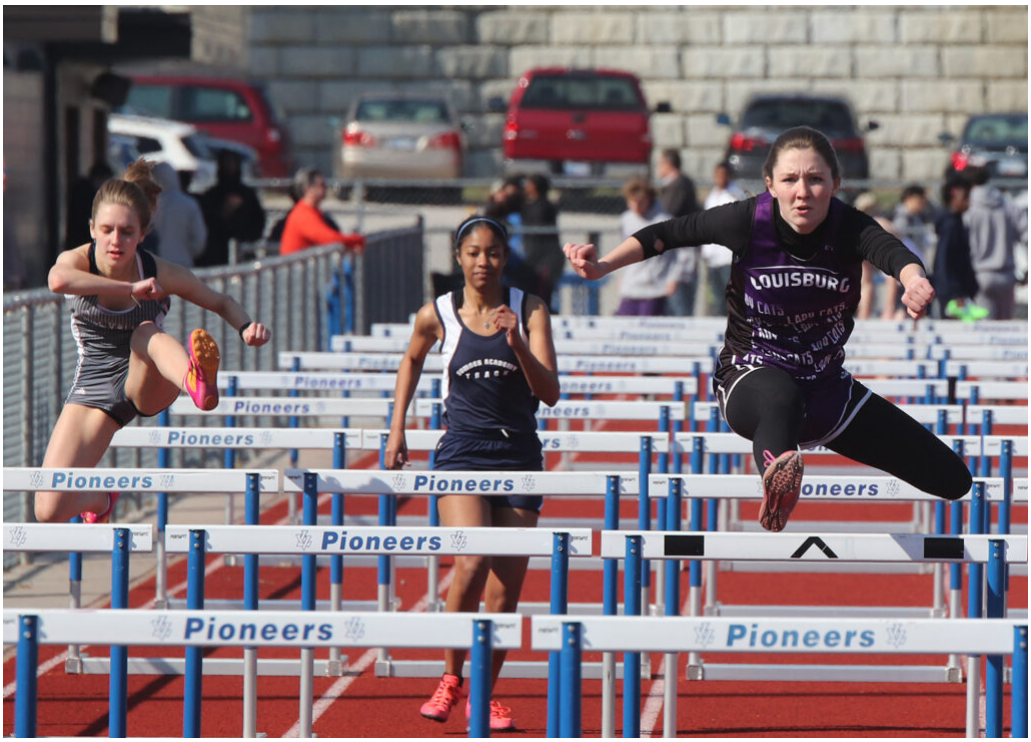
Wright finished in the top three in all four of her events, including a gold medal in the long jump, at the Leavenworth Invitational and helped the Lady Cats to a fourth-place team finish.

The Louisburg freshman garnered the long jump title with a mark of 17 feet 5 inches, to win the event by six inches. Wright later went on to finish runner-up in the 100-meter dash in 13.47 seconds and was third in the 400 dash (1:04) and 200 dash (27.84).

"Delaney did fantastic," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "Medaling in her first meet as a freshman is incredible, but to medal in multiple events is…wow. Delaney and her

teammates are going to have a lot of fun and success this year as we move through the season.”

Wright’s teammates had plenty of success Monday at Leavenworth as the Lady Cats captured gold in two other events.



Louisburg junior Sydni Keagle gets out to a big lead in the 100 hurdles Monday in Leavenworth.

Junior Sydni Keagle pulled away from the field in the 100-meter hurdles
as she won in 17.66 seconds to get her season off to a good start. Fellow
junior Avery Graham also had a good performance in the pole vault she cleared 9
feet to take first as well.

“Sydni and Avery are setting a high standard for themselves and
their teammates by their effort,” Reece said. “It seems like we will be
visiting short term goals more frequently and continuing to bump up their long
term goal as the season progresses.”

Louisburg junior Carlee Gassman also came away with a pair of medals on the evening. Gassman finished third in the 300-meter hurdles in 50.96
and also took third in the long jump with a mark of 16-7.

Freshman Rain Pugh earned points for the Lady Cats as she was fourth in the 200 dash in 28.15 and sixth in the 100 dash in 13.73.



Louisburg junior Avery Graham clears a height in the pole vault Monday. Graham won the pole vault crown after she cleared 9-0.

In the field events, Eileen Benne (4-8) and Shelby Grandon (4-6) took fourth and fifth, respectively, in the high jump. Senior Melia Rice was fifth in the discus with a mark of 87 feet and freshman Malee Rutherford was fifth in the pole vault after she cleared 7-6.

The Lady Cats also participated in the throwers relay and finished first with a time of 1:00.81.

Louisburg racked up 77 points for its fourth-place finish.

Mill
Valley won the meet with 126 points and St. James Academy was second with 121.

“I was very impressed with the girls’
effort on a not so good weather day,” Reece said. “Their times, distances, and
heights showed they competed well. Finishing fourth as a team was outstanding.

“We had several
girls best their marks from last year or better their marks from early season
trials. They are a close knit group that will encourage each other and expect
the best effort by all at all times.”

The Lady Cats
return to action Thursday when they travel to the Paola Invitational. Events
are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

Long jump: Sydni Keagle, seventh,

15-1; Rain Pugh, eighth, 15-0; Eileen Benne, 17th, 13-7

Triple jump: Benne, eighth, 28-0

Discus: Aiyana Penca, ninth,

78-04; Shea O’Hara, 12th, 63-04; Rinny McMullen, 13th,

62-6; Davis Guetterman, 14th, 59-10

Shot put: O’Hara, ninth, 30-3.5;

Eden Strumillo, 12th, 25-1; Melia Rice, 13th, 24-11;

Penca, 16th, 22-8; Cayden Forrester, 17th, 22-0.50

Javelin: Alyse Moore, ninth,

85-3.5; Tae Ellison, 10th, 79-09; Rice, 12th, 68-04; Guetterman, 16th, 59-9.5

100 hurdles: Kristen Bell, 10th, 20.89; Shelby Grandon, 11th, 21.61

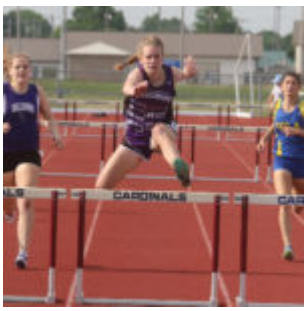
100 dash: Jordon Leach, 14th, 14.13; Andrea Gaza, 25th, 15.55

300 hurdles: Keagle, 10th, 58.29; Bell, 11th, 1:11

800 run: Shaylor Whitham, 12th, 2:52

200 dash: Leach, ninth, 28.96; Carlee Gassman, 10th, 29.15; Gaza, 22nd, 32.02

Wildcat track hoping for another big season that ends with state medals



Louisburg junior Carlee Gassman hopes to improve on her state

runner-up finish in the 300-meter hurdles this season.

It was a successful 2018 for the Louisburg High School track and field team, and one that saw the Wildcats medal in six events at the state meet.

The Wildcats hope that success will translate into even bigger things in 2019 as they return athletes in five of those state events. Gone is Isabelle Holtzen's medal-winning event in the pole vault, but the Wildcats appear to be even stronger all the way around.

On the girls' side, junior Carlee Gassman returns to lead the Lady Cats after her state-runner up finish in the 300-meter hurdles last season. Gassman was a two-time state medal winner last season after taking fourth in the long jump.

Gassman is one of the favorites to stand atop the podium in the 300 hurdles once the season is complete and will be a big part of the Lady Cat squad.

"Carlee did awesome last year and I see her taking the state title (in the 300)," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "She has been alternating between sprint and distance workouts in hopes of maybe running the steeple sometime this year. As far as events go, we will do some different things with her from the 100 to the 400, two relays, long jump and maybe some others."

Louisburg will also add a new face to the girls team as freshman Delaney Wright will look to achieve success at the high school level after two

years of breaking numerous records in her two years of middle school track.

Wright, like Gassman, hopes to medal in several events this season. She is slated to run the 400-meter dash, long jump, relays and will try a couple other events throughout the season as well.

“Delaney will do multiple events like Carlee,” Reece said. “We will give her an opportunity to compete in both individual events and the relays. I do not want to burn her out as she is just a freshman and I hope she has a great four years.

“We will work different girls in both relays until we find the right mix and they should be very competitive come league and regional meets.”

The Lady Cats also return senior Eileen Benne in the jumps, who made progress in the high jump last season, along with junior Sydni Keagle who returns as the team’s top performer in the 100-meter hurdles from a year ago.
Senior Melia Rice will help lead the Louisburg girls in the throws and senior Shaylor Whitham will lead the Lady Cats in distance.

In all, Louisburg has 34 girls out for track this season and Reece believes his team will improve as the season goes along.

“It has been a challenge getting started this year with the weather and surprisingly the construction has not been that much of an issue,” Reece said. “We will have quite a few young athletes asked to step up into a varsity role this year so we will go through some growing pains, but be really

competitive at the end of the season.”



Senior Chris Williams will lead the Wildcats in the 400 dash and 4×400 relay after he medaled at state in both last season.

On the boys side, senior Chris Williams will lead the Wildcats on the track after earning his first state medal in the 400-meter dash last season and then later helped the 4×400 relay to a seventh-place finish at state to get his second state medal.

“I would like to see Chris start where he finished last year and grow from there,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “After we get a few meets under our belt, I would like to see Chris extend to the open 800.”

Along with the Williams, the team of Blue Caplinger, Justin Collins and Ben Wiedenmann also return to run the 4×400 relay as the Wildcat quartet hopes to improve on their state finish from a season

ago.

The Wildcats also return an experienced 4×100 relay in Caplinger, Collins, Wiedenmann, Charlie Koontz and Brandon Cooper as all five will be competing for a spot this year.

“If we stay healthy, our relays should be competing for the top
spot at most meets,” coach Wright said. “Both relays have all four returning
runners and it should be a good year.”



Louisburg junior Trent Martin returns to lead the Wildcat vaulters after he medaled at state last season.

Louisburg also had a lot of returning experience in the pole vault as junior Trent Martin returns after his state medal performance last
season. Sophomore Luke Faulkner, who also qualified for state last season, will
also provide the Wildcats with a lot of depth in that event.

“They both have been working to improve in the off-season,

going to camps and indoor practice facilities," coach Wright said. "I think both should have the opportunity to qualify for state and place in the top 8 if they continue to work hard."

The Wildcats will also hope a lot of depth in the sprints as Cooper, Caplinger, Wiedenmann, Collins and Koontz all hope to medal throughout the season in the 100 and 200 dashes.

Although they didn't go to state last season, Louisburg also has several returning letter winners from a year ago. Senior Kiefer Tucker, who made good strides in the shot put, comes back to lead the Wildcats in the throws and junior Michael Waldron will look to do the same in the javelin.

Junior Anthony Davis will lead the Wildcat distance runners as he will compete in the 800 and 1,600-meter run.

In all, the Wildcats have 52 boys out this season with 25 being freshmen, and despite the rough start to the season with cold practices, Wright has liked what he has seen so far.

'We have been making the best of the weather and lack of track," he said. "Other schools have been generous and allowed us to workout at their facilities when they are done. The athletes have handled the adversity well and they are staying positive headed into the first meet with limited reps in the field events."

Louisburg will open its season today when it travels to the Leavenworth Invitational. The Wildcats will also compete on Thursday in Paola.

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 with 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 4×400 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 Miege. 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.

Hinkle ready to take on role as LHS activities director



Walking into Scott Hinkle’s office, it doesn’t appear he started a new job two weeks ago.

The moving boxes are mostly gone. His desk is organized with everything in its place, along with a calendar crammed full of upcoming events.

Hinkle is not shy to tell people about his love for the Boston Red Sox. Sitting on one wall are two older chairs from Fenway Park, along other memorabilia.

The one thing that Hinkle hasn’t caught up on is his efforts to get some purple gear. An avid Kansas Jayhawk fan, he hasn’t had need to purchase any purple flair in the past. Seems like that will change shortly as he was hired as the new activities director and assistant principal at Louisburg High School

earlier this summer.

“I have been a Jayhawk fan all my life,” Hinkle said. “It will be a little weird to wear purple that is for sure, but I am sure I will get used to it. Before I left my old job, people found out where I was going so they started giving me little gifts with purple on it, like markers and stuff like that. They definitely got a kick out of that.”

Hinkle takes over for Jeremy Holloway, who was promoted to principal at LHS and becomes the third activities director in as many years to take over that spot.

“My wife has family in Kansas City and I have family in Wichita and so we were looking to come this way,” Hinkle said. “I had a couple friends that told me that the Louisburg position had opened up. I had heard of Louisburg a long time ago. I actually coached at Ottawa University in the early 90s and was familiar with the area. I came up, interviewed and here I am. It has obviously worked out well.

“Everyone has been so helpful and friendly and it is a good time to be coming to Louisburg. I am excited to be here.”

Before taking the job in Louisburg, Hinkle had spent the last 22 years in the Liberal school district in a variety of roles. He served as the boys high school basketball coach, along with nine years as an activities director, a year as the head girls basketball coach at the local community college and last year he served as assistant principal at the high school.

Hinkle graduated from Valley Center High School, and went on from there to earn his bachelor’s degree from Friends University, where he played basketball, and his master’s from the University of Kansas.

Basketball has always been a passion for Hinkle, but during his time as activities director at Liberal, he had a chance to learn the life of other sports as well.

“Liberal changed a lot from when I first got there in the mid 90s when they were a football and track powerhouse,” Hinkle said. “There were just athletes galore, but the culture kind of changed. We were really good in soccer and decent in track and volleyball. We still had good kids and good athletes, but it was a big transition as far as sports go when I first got there. My kids grew up there and being involved and being able to watch their events was something that has always appealed to me.

“Basketball has always been in my blood. Other than my nine years as athletic director, I have coached in some capacity and I am a big basketball fan. Obviously, being an athletic director I am just a big sports fan in general.”

Still new in town, Hinkle is still trying to get to know his coaching staff, but he is excited about the situation he is walking into with the Wildcats finishing as state runner-ups in volleyball and girls soccer last season. Several cross country, golf, wrestling and track athletes also earned state medals.

However, if there is one thing he wanted to relay to everyone is that he wants to give his coaches the freedom to run their programs.

“I want to let the coaches, coach,” he said. “I am not going to be the guy that says this is how we did things in Liberal and I am not that type of leader. If it comes to the point where they need some advice, I want to be a resource for them. I don’t want to be someone that is looking for something.

“I have met a few of the coaches. I have let them know that I am here if they need anything. I have stopped by the weight room to speak to a few coaches and some have stopped by to introduce themselves. I am still learning names and faces. We have a coaches meeting on the 10th and I will see and learn a lot more about them then.”

With all the success the Wildcats had last season in the sports arena, Hinkle is happy to be a part of the LHS family and is learning new things about the town every day.

“I have heard all types of things,” he said. “I have heard they take football pretty seriously here. I know they were state runner-up in volleyball and girls soccer last year and that is an exciting thing to walk into. I think expectations are obviously high in those sports, but I think everyone always has high expectations. I am not going to do anything different than normal and I am just going to sit back and observe for a while and take it all in.”

Hinkle will experience some different things along with his new position. This season, the Frontier League will welcome three new teams – Bonner Springs, Piper and Tonganoxie – and will say goodbye to De Soto.

Another big change will be the postseason formats with several sports as the Kansas State High School Activities Association reshuffled their classification system, eliminating Class 4A-Division II.

“With the changes in the league, the classification system and being a new AD, it is probably a good time to be coming on,” Hinkle said. “The learning curve is going to be the same for all of us.

“I walked into a good situation for scheduling because (Holloway) already had everything all taken care of,” he said. “I think the dynamics of the league are going to change. Liberal’s former girls basketball coach is the coach at Piper and I know a little bit about them. As far as the programs and rivalries, that is something that is going to come with time.”

Even with all the changes in his life – moving, starting a new job, getting to know new faces – Hinkle is ready for what lies ahead and the staff at Louisburg has helped with that transition.

“It has been a whirlwind and it has been information overload,” he said. “It is a lot of the same things I did in Liberal as athletic director, I just haven’t done it for the last five years. Being an assistant principal at Liberal last year, I think, helped me prepare for the principal side.

“People have just gone out of their way to be helpful. From the administration to the custodial staff to the secretaries, everyone has been super helpful. When I was out around town, people have welcomed me and it has been a friendly feel everywhere I have been.”

Holtzen accomplishes rare feat earning 12 varsity letters



Isabelle Holtzen became the first female athlete in Louisburg High School history to earn 12 varsity athletic letters after finishing out her senior season. Holtzen earned letters in cross country, basketball and track and field in each of her four years of high school.

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.

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.”

Thoughts of finding her way onto the varsity team her freshman year was one she couldn’t even fathom four years ago. She wasn’t experienced in cross country. She enjoyed basketball, but didn’t even dream of playing with the school’s best.

In track, Holtzen would qualify for state in the pole vault for all four years of high school and earned two state medals. It was that sport where she almost didn’t get a letter her

freshman year.

It is the same sport where she earned a Division I scholarship offer to pole vault at Northern Iowa University next season.

“I was not very good my freshman year,” Holtzen said. “I wasn’t that great in pole vault and I remember throughout the season that I would add up all my points to see if I was going to have to have enough to letter. I actually barely lettered my freshman year. I think you had to get 20 points and I ended up getting 20.5 or something like that.

“In basketball, I was not expecting to letter at all and it didn’t even cross my mind that it would. We had some really good seniors that year in Natalie Moore, Kirstin Lowry and Kallie O’Keefe and they were all playing at a high level. I just remember standing next to them and I was about 4-5 inches shorter than they were and I felt like a little freshman. I wasn’t expecting to play any varsity at all. I thought freshman and maybe a little JV, so it was surprising when I got a few minutes on the varsity level.”

However, it was in cross country where she first realized that she had more to give and it was thanks in part to a special conversation from a senior.

Holtzen found herself holding back in practice and not wanting to pass the team’s upperclassmen. She was told that things needed to change.



“My freshman year I had some of the best seniors that I have ever gone through here,” Holtzen said. “Mary Kate Roy always pushed me in cross country. One time at practice she pulled me aside and told me that if I want to be faster that you are going to have push yourself and don’t be afraid to go ahead of us.

“Her saying that really impacted me because I was all about running with my friends, but I realized that I needed to push myself for my teammates and have a chance to get team medals and individually get better too. As a scared little freshman, what she said really meant a lot.”

Very quickly, Holtzen found her way to the varsity level in cross country and stayed there through her four years. This past season, Holtzen was on the Lady Cat squad that became the first team in school history to qualify for the Class 4A state meet.

“It is a big accomplishment to earn a varsity letter in any sport, but to do that all four years in three sports is amazing,” Louisburg cross country coach John Reece said. “Most freshmen find themselves waiting their turn to see varsity time and understand their role. Isabelle was looked to by her coaches to step up and fill voids at the varsity level as a freshman and even be a top performer for the team in some cases.

“She was prepared in her athletic skills to do so and also went through the growing pains of mentally developing at the next level of competition. Because of her never quit attitude, she took coaching criticism, both positive and negative, and used it to get better. In cross country, she ran her way into the top seven and never looked back. She was always a top five runner for the team and was that kid that would run their guts out to support her teammates in front of her.”

After seeing a little varsity time her freshman year in basketball, Holtzen eventually worked her way up the ranks to where she found herself as a starting guard and team captain her senior year.

“To accomplish something like this requires such significant commitment and determination,” girls basketball coach Shawn Lowry said. “She’s such an impressive student-athlete because of the leader she was for multiple teams at Louisburg High, her high level of success in the different programs and her outstanding academic performance.”



Earning 12 varsity letters might be impressive enough to some, but it certainly wasn’t enough for Holtzen as she also had a lot of success in the classroom.

Holtzen was No. 1 in her class with a 4.0 GPA and was a fixture on the Wildcat debate team. She went on to finish third in the state in the 2-speaker competition for two years and was also a member of the 4-speaker team to take third at state last season.

To find time to participate in three sports, debate and find a way to get her school work done, Holtzen had to become a master planner.

“The biggest you thing you have to do, no matter what activity you are doing, is you have to prioritize your time,” she said. “You have to choose what is the most important to you and what is going to help you most on the long run.

“For me, it was having good grades. Learning in school is going to transfer in my job later in life and the odds of me actually pole vaulting professionally are really, really slim, so you have prioritize getting your homework done and staying on task in class. A lot what I tried to do was to get as much stuff as I could in class and then after school I could I just go to my sport and finish up the homework later.”

In a time where specialization in sports has become the norm, the multi-sport athletes are becoming harder and harder to come by.

At a smaller school like Louisburg, many believe it is important to have athletes out for multiple sports if it wants to compete at a high level and Holtzen enjoyed her time with the different activities. In fact, she believes it helped her in her sport of choice – track.

“On the athletic side, playing multiple sports keeps you from getting injured because you are working different muscles constantly and not overworking the same ones,” she said. “Outside of that, I like doing different activities because it is fun and I get bored when I have to do the same thing over and over again. Being active helps keep it more fun and exciting. Each sport taught me something different.

“Cross country teaches you to push through how hard it is because it is a big mental game and the most successful runners may not be the fastest, but they are most mentally strong. In basketball, I think it teaches you a lot of hard work and commitment and you have to work with other people and not just yourself. With doing pole vault, it is just fun for me because you have to learn a lot of different things and it teaches you patience.”



However, the drawback of being involved in so many things is that sometimes they will overlap, which has happened the last few winters with basketball and debate. Holtzen has had to miss games to attend state debate competitions.

“Basketball season is when it got the hardest for me because it was the same time as debate,” Holtzen said. “Both of those are team activities and I don’t get to set my own schedule. It was hard for me to balance the two and I definitely thought about quitting one or the other a few times, but I didn’t because I enjoy them way too much.

“It is really hard when I have to tell my coach I am not going to be able to be at the game, because it is going to be hard for the team. Everyone on the team has a role, and whenever I am not there to fill my role, it is hard for them and hard for me. I don’t want to miss any games because it is so much fun and you make memories from those.”

Despite all the hustle and bustle of being a 3-sport athlete and achieving academic success, Holtzen would do it all over again if she could.

“It will mean more to me later,” she said of the 12 letters. “My parents have always told me to do three sports and to be involved in as many things as you can. For me, I was going to do it no matter what. I know not everyone thinks that way or has the opportunity. When I look back at high school knowing that I got everything out of it that I could by being involved in three sports and other activities, I will definitely appreciate it more later on.

“It is awesome to see other people doing multiple sports because it is extremely fun and you get to meet and be involved with different people. You get to have a lot of memories with these girls and I think that is one of the best parts of high school.”