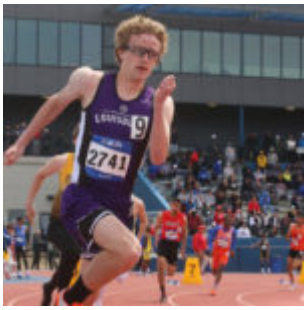
Reece breaks school record at KU Relays, earns medal with Holtzen



Louisburg junior Chris Williams gets off to a good start in the 400-meter dash Friday during the Kansas Relays at Rock Chalk Park in Lawrence. Williams competed in both the 400 and 800-meter run.

LAWRENCE – Several members of the Louisburg High School track and field team had a chance to compete against some of the best athletes – not only from the Kansas City area – but surrounding states as well, at the Kansas Relays on Friday and Saturday in Lawrence.

Two Wildcats brought home medals from the event and one of them added a new school record to their resume.

Senior Wyatt Reece set a new school record Saturday morning in the 2,000-meter steeplechase and Reece put together a strong showing as he finished seventh in 6 minutes and 43 seconds to earn a KU Relays medal.

Reece broke his own record of 6:45 that he set earlier in the year at the Baldwin Invitational and he did it in rainy, cool weather.

“Wyatt had a great race in some crummy conditions,” Louisburg

coach John Reece said. “He was able to improve his school record and was rewarded with a medal.”

Fellow senior Isabelle Holtzen also left Lawrence with a medal as she finished eighth overall in a difficult pole vault competition. Holtzen cleared 11 feet, which is six inches off her school record.



Senior Isabelle Holtzen clears a height in the pole vault Friday during the Kansas Relays.

Paola’s Samantha VanHoecke won the competition after she cleared 12 feet and the two vaulters will be in the same regional together in late May.

Holtzen wasn’t the only Lady Cat to find success as sophomore Carlee Gassman nearly broke her own school record in the 300-meter hurdles. Gassman won her heat with a time of 47.89

seconds and finished 12th overall in an event that featured 42 athletes.

Senior Kaitlyn Urban also competed in the triple jump for Louisburg and took 27th with a leap of 31 feet, 9.5 inches.

“Isabelle, Carlee and Kaitlyn did great at KU,” coach Reece said. “They all enjoyed the opportunity to compete at the Relays and I hope this helps them as we get to the end of season. The pressure that comes with the big meets will not be an issue because they have competed at a high level at KU.

“Carlee ran a strong 300m hurdles and was only beat by one other 4A girl. Isabelle vaulted great and brought home some hardware for her effort.”



Louisburg sophomore Carlee Gassman won her heat in the 300-meter hurdles and took 12th overall Friday at the KU

Relays.

On the boys side, junior Brandon Cooper came in 26th out of 38 runners in the 100-meter dash in 11.31 seconds. Cooper, along with Charlie Koontz, Ben Wiedenmann and Blue Caplinger, also competed in the 4×100 relay and came in 47th in 45.16 seconds.

Junior Chris Williams also competed in a pair of events Friday. Williams ran in the 400-meter dash and took 28th in 53.18. He later took 31st in the 800-meter run in 2:08.

“It was great for our athletes to compete with and be around the level competition at KU,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “I think it helped us see what we need to work on, and what we need to do to be prepared against great competitors.”

Wildcat girls, boys finish second at home invitational



Louisburg junior Payton Shaffer gets off to a good start in the 4×800-meter relay Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational. Shaffer won the 800-meter run for the first time this season and the Lady Cats finished second as a team.

In their one chance to compete in front of their home fans, the Louisburg boys and girls track teams made the most of it.

Both the Wildcat teams took second in the team standings of the Louisburg Invitational on Thursday, behind champion Spring Hill, and won a combined 12 events.

Juniors Brandon Cooper and Chris Williams were responsible for six of those victories to lead the Wildcat boys. Cooper won the 100-meter dash in 11.39 seconds and later won the 200 dash in 23.46 seconds.

Cooper later joined Charlie Koontz, Blue Caplinger and Ben Wiedenmann to win the 4×100-meter relay in 43.78 seconds. In fact, all three Louisburg relays found their way to a gold medal.

Caplinger, Collins, Wiedenmann and Chris Williams won the 4×400-meter relay in 3 minutes and 33 seconds, while Williams, Cade Holtzen, Jackson Staab and Dylan Knipp won the 4×800 relay in 9:27. Williams also won the 400-meter dash in 51.69 seconds.

All relays set personal bests, as did sophomore Trent Martin, who won the pole vault after he cleared 13 feet to win that competition.

“It was nice to finally have the weather cooperate with us at a track meet,” Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. “The track team as a whole did really well and we had multiple personal records. I was excited to see Trent Martin go 13’ in pole vault, and all three of our relays PR as well. If everyone can stay healthy, I hope to continue to see improvement in all three relays.”



Blue Caplinger takes a handoff from teammate Charlie Koontz during the 4×100-meter relay Thursday.

The Wildcat boys scored several points on the track as Collins finished right behind Cooper in the 100 dash as he took runner-up in 11.79 seconds. Sophomore Michael Waldron took fourth in the 400 dash in 58.15 and Knipp was sixth in the 800-meter run in 2:30.

Louisburg also scored several points in the throws as sophomore Brayden White led a group of Wildcats in the shot put as he took third with a toss of 37 feet, 11.75 inches. Junior Kiefer Tucker (37-10.25), senior Matt Holloway (37-10) and junior Jonathan DePriest (37-7) finished fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively.

Waldron continued his strong season in the javelin as he threw 154-7 to take third overall, while junior Austin Moore recorded a toss of 134-1 to take fourth. Waldron also finished

fourth in the discus with a throw of 115 feet and sophomore Carter Anglin was sixth at 112-4.

“The throwers have been working really hard in practice and it shows through their improvement in competition,” Wright said. “Brayden has been pretty consistent on his throws in shot, but I would like to see him get one out there. Kiefer has been improving his distances every week, and continues to work hard.

“Micheal Waldron is an awesome surprise. He is working very hard, and is finding a natural fit with the javelin. It is his first year throwing javelin and is currently one of the top six in our regional.”



Senior Matt Holloway lets the shot put fly Thursday during the Louisburg Invitational.

Along with his win in the pole vault, Martin also scored points in the long jump with a mark of 18-1 to take sixth overall, while Jack Mick was fourth in the high jump with a clearance of 5-6. As a team, the Wildcats were second with 132 points and Spring Hill won the seven team meet with 149.

The Lady Cats also found a lot of success on the track. Sophomore Carlee Gassman, sophomore Sydni Keagle and senior Isabelle Holtzen led the way as they each took gold in two different events.

Gassman won the long jump with a mark of 16-4.5 and later helped the 4×100 team of Holtzen, Kaitlyn Urban and Keagle to a first place finish in 52.09 seconds.

“The 4×100 ran great,” Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. “We cannot wait for a good warm day to see what they are capable of doing. There is always work to be done with handoffs to get them just right, and when we do, we will hit a good time.

“Carlee continues to improve each meet in long jump. She has been working hard on popping off the board and when she gets that down, she is going to post a big jump.”

Keagle continued her success in the 100-meter hurdles as she set a personal best time of 16.52 seconds to win the event. Holtzen also won the pole vault after she cleared 9-6.

Louisburg also had a champion in the 800-meter run for the first time this season as junior Payton Shaffer won the event in 2:46 and teammate Shaylor Whitham was second in 2:48.

“Payton and Shaylor are two competitors,” Reece said. “To see them go one and two in the 800 was awesome. They were rewarded for the hard work that they put in each practice.”

Also on the track, the 4×400 meter relay of Mikayla Quinn, Urban, Holtzen and Gassman finished runner-up in a time of

4:28. The 4×800 relay of Shaffer, Whitham, Kennady Wilkerson and Quinn also took second in 11:30.



Senior Mikayla Quinn helped the Lady Cat 4×800 relay to second place finish and also took fourth in the 400 dash.

Quinn finished fourth in the 400 dash in 1:07.80, while Kristen Bell (18.97) and Shelby Grandon (19.78) took third and sixth, respectively in the 100 hurdles. In the 300 hurdles, Keagle took third in 54.51, Grandon was fifth in 59.68 and Bell was sixth in 1:00. Jordon Leach came in sixth in the 100 dash in 14.07.

In the field events, Urban had a good performance in the triple jump as she took second at 31-9 and teammate Eileen Benne was fourth at 30-9.25. Benne also came in third in the high jump after she cleared 4-8.

Senior Lexie Reece also recorded her best throw of the season

in the discus with a toss of 102-3 to take second. As a team, the Lady Cats tallied 126 points to finish second to Spring Hill, which totaled 200.

“The girls did an awesome job at the meet,” coach Reece said. “They finished second as a team with a great effort by all girls. It is always great to compete in-front of the home crowd and it was nice to recognize our senior athletes.”

Other results from the Louisburg Invitational are:

Girls

100 dash: Andrea Gaza, 13th, 15.05; Gabbie Nichelson, 14th, 15.53; Hannah Cook, 15th, 15.80; Shayla Aye, 18th, 17.51

200 dash: Jordon Leach, 7th, 29.74; Eileen Benne, 14th, 31.56; Cook, 16th, 33.14; Nichelson, 17th, 33.45; Aye, 20th, 37.51

400 dash: Gaza, 9th, 1:17

800 run: Lakin Cunnigham, 8th, 3:12

Long jump: Shelby Grandon, 8th, 13-0.75; Cook, 16th, 10-11.5

Shot put: Shea O’Hara, 10th, 26-8.75; Eden Strumillo, 14th, 24-7; Lexie Reece, 16th, 23-6.5; Melia Rice, 18th, 23-4.75; Aiyana Penca, 19th, 22-9

Discus: Rice, 11th, 76-8; Strumillo, 13th, 68-1; Kody Lowry, 15th, 67-1; Penca, 21st, 52-8

Javelin: Cunningham, 11th, 75-7; Rice, 15th, 66-4; Lowry, 17th, 56-4; Strumillo, 18th, 53-9

Boys

100 dash: Jay Scollin, 7th, 12.65; Indy Strumillo, 13th, 13.32

200 dash: Daulton Davis, 11th, 28,43; Thomas Arnett, 14th, 31.24

400 dash: Dylan Armstrong, 12th, 1:05; Arnett, 17th, 1:13

800 run: Cade Holtzen, 7th, 2:34; Jackson Staab, 10th, 2:41

1,600 run: Jones Reece, 10th, 6:08

Long jump: Charlie Koontz, 8th, 17-2; Justin Collins, 10th, 16-5; Armstrong, 19th, 13-10

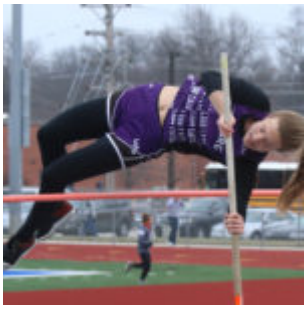
Triple jump: Kyle Allen, 7th, 33-9

Shot put: Brian Houck, 15th, 31-8.25

Discus: Jonathan DePriest, 7th, 107-0

Javelin: Scollin, 8th, 125-3; Matt Holloway, 9th, 124-8; Carter Anglin, 22nd, 78-7

Holtzen ready to soar to new heights at Northern Iowa



Louisburg senior Isabelle Holtzen is ready to take the next step in her pole vaulting career as she recently signed her letter of intent to pole vault at Northern Iowa next season.

Isabelle Holtzen has already broken the school record in the pole vault and earned a state medal, and for most athletes, that would be enough.

Not for Holtzen, in fact, she is ready to take another big leap forward.

On April 11, in front of a big gathering of family and friends, the Louisburg High School senior made it official as she signed her letter of intent to pole vault at the University of Northern Iowa – a Division I program.

“I am really excited to be able to sign because I just love pole vault so much,” Holtzen said. “I can’t really put into words how much fun it is for me, so it is really exciting to be able to continue to do something that I love so much. Northern Iowa is a great school and the coaches and my teammates are great as well. It is a great atmosphere and I think it is going to be an awesome experience.”

Holtzen took up the sport in the eighth-grade and has fallen in love with it. It has shown.

Last season as junior, Holtzen broke the 15-year-old school record with a mark of 11 feet, 1 inch, and last week broke her own record at the Anderson County Invitational when she cleared 11-6.

She has qualified for state in each of her three years of high school and medaled seventh at state last season. Holtzen hopes to possibly break her record again and add to her medal collection.

“I am really hoping to get 12 foot this year, and I know that is a high goal, but I am hoping I can achieve that,” she said. “Even without that, I want to go back to state and place again.”



Senior Isabelle Holtzen signed her letter of intent with the Northern Iowa track program on April 11 in front of family and friends. Sitting next to Isabelle are her parents Michelle and Craig Holtzen. Standing (from left) are Louisburg track coaches Andy Wright and John Reece.

It was following her junior season where Holtzen decided she wanted to take her pole vaulting career to another level,

which is when she began looking at places that, not only fit her athletically, but academically as well.

As a business major, she wanted the chance to achieve both dreams and found that Northern Iowa was the perfect fit for her.

“That happened for me after the last track season, over the summer,” Holtzen said. “There was a moment where I realized where I loved pole vaulting and I realized that I am not ready to be done with it. I still wanted to go to a bigger school, and there were a lot of things I still wanted to consider.

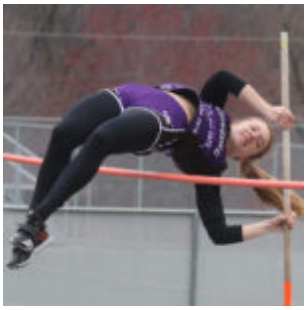
“The business school has really high placement rate for kids graduating, so getting both the track and school was really what sealed the deal for me. I know there aren’t a lot of kids that have the opportunity or chance that I have. I am really blessed to have this opportunity.”

Although she has yet to complete her high school season, Holtzen is looking forward to the opportunity to vaulting for the Panthers. She had a chance visit the campus and enjoyed the coaching staff, including the team’s vault coach.

“What stood out the most to me was that the coach there was a really experienced vaulter, and he has vaulted 18-foot plus,” Holtzen said. “This year he had a freshman who improved a lot and was a conference champion. He is a good coach and he knows what he is talking about.

“I showed the coaches a video of me pole vaulting and he said there were a lot of areas that I can improve on and that is going to help me get new heights and I am excited to see what I can do.”

Holtzen breaks school record, Wildcats win 8 events at Garnett



Louisburg senior Isabelle Holtzen clears a height in the pole vault during a meet earlier this season. Holtzen cleared 11 feet, 6 inches on Thursday at the Anderson County Invitational, which broke her own school record of 11-1, that was set last year.

GARNETT – Isabelle Holtzen's name was already on the Louisburg High School girls track record board – it is just going to have a new number by it now.

Holtzen broke her own school record in the pole vault Thursday at the Anderson County Invitational after she cleared 11 feet, 6 inches and eclipsed her old mark of 11-1 that she set last year.

"Isabelle is doing some great things in pole vault," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "Breaking her school record was inevitable and I feel this is just the beginning. She has been moving up onto bigger poles and she continues to vault well when this is sometimes a difficult transition for a few meets."

The Louisburg senior won the event going away and picked up three gold medals on the day, as did with senior teammate

Kaitlyn Urban as the Lady Cats finished fifth in the team standings with 75 points.

On the boys side, junior Brandon Cooper propelled himself to three golds in the sprints and fellow junior Chris Williams added another first place finish to help the Wildcats to third place in the team standings with 96.5 points.

Along with her victory in the pole vault, Holtzen helped the 4×100-meter relay of Sydni Keagle, Urban and Carlee Gassman to a first place finish with a time of 53.25 seconds. Urban, Holtzen and Gassman also teamed up with Mikayla Quinn to win the 4×400 relay in 4 minutes and 28 seconds.

Urban picked up her third gold of the day as she won the triple jump with a mark 31-3.5.

“Kaitlyn is a hard worker and she earns everything she accomplishes,” Reece said. “She is staying consistent right now with interesting weather, so she will be ready to pop a great jump when the conditions are right.”

In other field events, Gassman finished runner-up in the long jump with a leap of 16-1, while Eileen Benne took fourth in the triple jump (30-2) and high jump (4-8). Avery Graham tied a personal best in the pole vault as she took third after clearing 9-6.

On the track, the Lady Cats also placed in the 4×800 relay as Quinn, Lakin Cunningham, Shaylor Whitham and Payton Shaffer took third in 11:50.

Quinn and Gassman scored points in the 400 dash as they finished fifth (1:09) and sixth (1:10), respectively. Shaffer recorded a fifth-place finish in the 800 run in 2:52, while Kristen Bell was fifth in the 100 hurdles in 20.46.

“The girls did a great job at Anderson County,” Reece said. “They are really competing well and have stepped up when

needed and have run different races than they are used to. Competition creates stronger athletes both mentally and physically.

“Our relays are doing well. One of these days we will get a warm day with little to no wind and we will really see them fly. Maybe this Thursday.”

Cooper dominated the sprints on the boys side as he won the 100-meter dash in 11.95 seconds and later won the 200 dash in 24.52. In between the two races, Cooper picked up another gold – this time as the anchor of the 4×100 relay – and helped Charlie Koontz, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann to a first place finish in 44.39 seconds.

Also on the track, Williams ran his way to a gold in the 400-meter dash in 52.49 seconds and later joined Wyatt Reece, Collins and Wiedenmann to a runner-up finish in the 4×400 relay in 3:38. Williams, Reece, Gareth Baus and Jackson Staab took third in the 4×800 relay in 9:48.

Koontz, Collins and Wiedenmann also scored points in the sprints. Koontz (12.47) and Collins (12.56) finished fourth and fifth, respectively, in the 100-meter dash and Wiedenmann (25.10) was fifth in the 200 dash.

In the field events, sophomore Michael Waldron put together a record day for himself in the javelin. Waldron threw a personal best 157 feet to finish second overall and had his best day as a Wildcat.

The pole vault provided more drama for Louisburg as that event was the last to be completed and had to finish with car lights shining on the runway. Despite that, Frankie Hurst, Trent Martin and Luke Faulkner all finished with season best heights.

Hurst cleared 12-6 for the first time this season and took third, while Martin was fourth at 12-0.25. Faulkner was fifth

with a personal best 12 foot clearance.

Louisburg also got some big points in the high jump and shot put as Jack Mick and Brayden White had their best days of the season. Mick cleared 5-4 to take third in the high jump, while White threw 40-5.5 to take fourth overall.

The Wildcats will hit the track again this Thursday when they host the Louisburg Invitational, their lone home meet of the season.

On Friday and Saturday, several Wildcats will also compete in the 2018 Kansas Relays at Rock Chalk Park in Lawrence. Wyatt Reece (steeplechase), Chris Williams (400, 800), Brandon Cooper (100, 4×100), Blue Caplinger (4×100), Ben Wiedenmann (4×100), Charlie Koontz (4×100), Isabelle Holtzen (pole vault), Kaitlyn Urban (triple jump) and Carlee Gassman (300 hurdles) will participate in the two day event.

Other results are:

GIRLS

100 dash: Jordon Leach, ninth, 14.81; Kaitlyn Urban, 16th, 15.19; Andrea Gaza, 23rd, 16.24; Shayla Aye, 29th, 18.48

200 dash: Isabelle Holtzen, 10th, 30.47; Leach, 11th, 30.49; Aye, 23rd, 38.62

400 dash: Gaza, 18th, 1:15; Eileen Benne, 19th, 1:15; Hannah Cook, 23rd, 1:30

800 run: Shaylor Whitham, seventh, 2:56; Lakin Cunningham, 16th, 3:23

100 hurdles: Sydni Keagle, eighth, 21.43

300 hurdles: Keagle, ninth, 56.93; Kristen Bell, 12th, 1:03; Shelby Grandon, 13th, 1:04

Long jump: Grandon, 17th, 13-0.50

Shot put: Shea O'Hara, 13th, 25-7.5; Lexie Reece, 17th, 23-11; Aiyana Penca, 18th, 23-10.25; Eden Strumillo, 19th, 22-10.5; Melia Rice, 23rd, 22-0

Discus: Reece, 10th, 83-5; Rice, 13th, 78-9; Kody Lowry, 14th, 74-3; Strumillo, 17th, 68-9; Penca, 20th, 62-0

Javelin: Rice, 12th, 68-0; Cunningham, 14th, 67-9; Lowry, 16th, 64-9; Strumillo, 24th, 49-9

BOYS

100 dash: Jack Mick, 22nd, 14.20

200 dash: Mick, 15th, 27.25; Daulton Davis, 18th, 28.49

400 dash: Dylan Armstrong, 13th, 1:01; Jay Scollin, 16th, 1:02

800 run: Wyatt Reece, 10th, 2:22; Dylan Knipp, 16th, 2:33; Cade Holtzen, 17th, 2:39; Jackson Staab, 22nd, 3:16

1,600 run: Knipp, 10th, 5:49; Holtzen, 12th, 5:55; Reece Jones, 15th, 6:29

3,200 run: Gareth Baus, 11th, 13:06

300 hurdles: Davis, 10th, 48.84

High jump: Indy Strumillo, 11th, 5-0

Pole vault: Logan Faulkner, 10th, 10-0; Caleb Shaughnessy, 12th, 9-6

Long jump: Scollin, 20th, 15-5; Luke Faulkner, 23rd, 14-5.5; Armstrong, 24th, 13-11.5

Triple jump: Kyle Allen, seventh, 34-0.50

Shot put: Matt Hollloway, 11th, 37-2; Jonathan DePriest, 14th, 36-4.5; Kiefer Tucker, 19th, 33-10.25; Brian Houck, 27th, 27-9

Discus: Carter Anglin, 8th, 113-9; Michael Waldron, 10th, 109-7; Brayden White, 20th, 96-2; Hunter Day, 28th, 70-2

Javelin: Scollin, 10th, 124-1; Holloway, 12th, 119-9; Anglin, 28th, 87-0

Cooper wins two events at Paola to pace Wildcat boys



Louisburg junior Brandon Cooper leans at the finish line to finish first in the 100-meter dash Thursday at the Paola

Invitational. Cooper won the 100 dash, helped the 4×100 relay to a first place finish and took second in the 200.

PAOLA – There weren't many runners who could keep up with Louisburg junior Brandon Cooper last Thursday in Paola.

Cooper turned out to be one of the fastest on the track as he had two gold medal performances and nearly had a third during the Paola Invitational. Louisburg also added three runner-up and third place finishes on the track and in the field.

Those performances helped the Wildcats to a fifth place team finish with 69.5 points and Lamar, Mo., won the meet with 124.5. De Soto was second with 112.5 points.

Cooper won the 100-meter dash with a personal-best time of 11.06 seconds as he edged out De Soto's Exavier Jackson, who ran an 11.09. He wasn't done as Cooper set another personal best in the 200 dash with a time of 22.98 seconds in the prelims and took second in the finals with a time of 23.55.

"Brandon ran very smart races during the Paola meet," Louisburg coach Andy Wright said. "It was our first meet that had prelims, and he knew how to conserve his energy for the finals. Brandon had a great start in the finals of the 100 to win, and he had his personal best times in the 100 and 200."

Cooper continued to score points for the Wildcats as he helped the 4×100-meter relay team of Charlie Koontz, Ben Wiedenmann and Justin Collins to a first place finish in 44.04 seconds. Wiedenmann also scored points in the 200 dash as he took eighth overall.

"The 4×100 relay took off almost a whole second from their previous time," Wright said. "We had to make some adjustments due to an athlete being out for an injury, and I couldn't be prouder of how the group responded."

Louisburg junior Chris Williams earned a medal in the 400-meter dash as he took second in 51.69 seconds, despite leading for a majority of the race.

In the distance events, senior Wyatt Reece ran a pair of strong races in the 1,600 and 3,200-meter runs. Reece took third in both events as he ran a 4:46 and 10:33, respectively.

“Wyatt ran a solid race,” Wright said. “He was not satisfied with his times, but it was his first time running the 1600 and 3200 this season and I felt he gave it his very best. I only look for him to become even more competitive as the season advances.”



Freshman Luke Faulkner clears a height in the pole vault Thursday in Paola. Faulkner cleared a personal best 11-6 to take seventh.

In the field events, the Wildcats placed three in the pole

vault, including two in the top three. Senior Frankie Hurst cleared 12 feet to take second overall, while sophomore Trent Martin tied for third after he cleared 12 feet, as well.

Freshman Luke Faulkner set a new personal best with a mark of 11-6 and finished seventh.

“I was very happy with the outcome of the vaulters,” Wright said. “All 3 of our boys made adjustments from our last meet and continue to improve. The highlight was Luke setting a PR with an 11-6 vault. I think the sky is the limit with this group, and I am excited about the potential success this group of vaulters could have.”

Sophomore Michael Waldron and junior Austin Moore also scored points for Louisburg in the javelin. Waldron recorded a toss of 144 feet to take fifth overall. Moore finished eighth with a mark of 136-4.

Louisburg returns to action this Thursday when it travels to Garnett for the Anderson County Invitational. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

100 dash: Justin Collins, 9th, 11.73; Charlie Koontz, 13th, 11.93

400 dash: Michael Waldron, 16th, 58.10

800 run: Cade Holtzen, 20th, 2:37

1,600 run: Dylan Knipp, 20th, 5:36; Holtzen, 23rd, 5:45

3,200 run: Knipp, 19th, 12:40

Long jump: Koontz, 14th, 17-9.5; Collins, 16th, 17-4

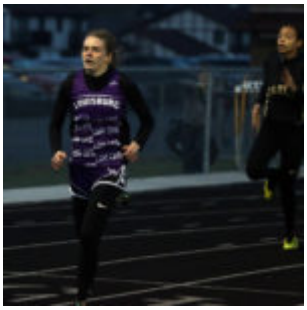
Triple jump: Kyle Allen, 13th, 33-4.5

Shot put: Brayden White, 15th, 38-6; Matt Holloway, 20th, 36-7; Kiefer Tucker, 21st, 35-3.5

Discus: Tucker, 9th, 113-2.25; Jonathan DePriest, 19th, 92-8; Hunter Day, 24th, 81-10.75

Javelin: Holloway, 14th, 124-4

Gassman breaks record in 300 hurdles to lead Lady Cats



Louisburg sophomore Carlee Gassman distances herself from the rest of the pack in the 300-meter hurdles Thursday at the Paola Invitational. Gassman set a school record time of 47.57 seconds in the event and finished first.

PAOLA – As Carlee Gassman crossed the finish line in the 300-meter hurdles, she had a big smile on her face as she won the event by almost three seconds.

Her smile got even bigger just moments later.

Gassman recorded a time of 47.57 seconds Thursday at the Paola Invitational and broke a 29-year-old school record in just her second meet as a Wildcat. The Louisburg sophomore eclipsed Elizabeth Nicks' record of 48.1 in 1989 and head girls coach John Reece was at the finish line to tell her.

"Carlee had a great race," Reece said. "It was neat to see her excitement when I told her the time and that she broke the record. 'I love this race' was her reaction as she jumped around in the infield. I hope this record stands for 29-plus years as well."

After finishing second in the event in her first meet of the season at Leavenworth, Gassman knew that setting a new record was doable.

"I was very excited to find out that I broke the record," Gassman said. "I noticed the record earlier in the school year and thought I could beat it. I ran in the 400 hurdles in Iowa before moving here, so I didn't have a time to compare it to coming into the season. Then when Reece told me I was a second off the school record after my first meet, I knew I could beat it after that."

Gassman's record-breaking performance was one of many positives for her and the rest of her Lady Cat teammates in Paola.

Louisburg finished fifth in the team standings with 61 points, while Paola won the team title with 195.5 points and Spring Hill was second with 104.

Although Gassman's run was the lone victory for the Lady Cats, Louisburg recorded three runner-up finishes.

Senior Kaitlyn Urban had a strong performance in the triple jump as she took second with a mark of 32 feet, 5 inches. Junior teammate Eileen Benne set a personal best attempt at 30-7 to take seventh.

Gassman would also go on to finish fourth in the long jump with a mark of 16 feet and Benne also scored points in the high jump after she cleared 4-8 to come in sixth.

“Kaitlyn is another one of those hard workers who will continue to improve because of her work ethic,” Reece said. “She jumped well at Paola and I hope the trend continues. Eileen also did great at Paola and set a PR to help with team points.”

In the pole vault, senior Isabelle Holtzen had another high finish for the Lady Cats. Holtzen cleared 10 feet to finish second overall. Her teammate, sophomore Avery Graham, also finished strong after she cleared a personal best mark of 9-6 to take fourth.



Louisburg’s Kaitlyn Urban sprints down the straightaway during the 4×100-meter relay Thursday in Paola. The Lady Cats finished second in the event.

Holtzen, Urban, Gassman teamed up with sophomore Sydni Keagle to record its third, second-place finish of the day. The Louisburg 4×100 relay ran a time of 52.45 seconds to take runner-up and finished right behind Paola, which ran a 52.17.

Louisburg's 4×400 and 4×800 relays also scored points. Mikayla Quinn, Gassman, Holtzen and Urban took fourth in the 4×400 in 4:25 and the 4×800 team of Payton Shaffer, Kennady Wilkerson, Shaylor Whitham and Quinn was seventh in 11:29.

"The 4×100 is starting to find their groove and the girls are getting the baton around the track which is sometimes half the battle," Reece said. "All the relays are showing improvement but we still have work to do."

Keagle also scored points for the Lady Cats in the 100-meter hurdles as she recorded a personal best time of 16.77 seconds to take fourth overall.

"Sydni continues to improve her competitiveness which in-turn leads to running PR's," Reece said. "She is training well and it is showing. I feel that she will take on any race I put her in and do well."

Louisburg returns to the track Thursday when it travels to the Anderson County Invitational in Garnett. The meet is set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results are:

100 dash: Jordon Leach, 10th, 14.01; Kaitlyn Urban, 17th, 14.35; Andrea Gaza, 20th, 15.06

200 dash: Leach, 19th, 30.45

400 dash: Mikayla Quinn, 11th, 1:09; Gaza, 16th, 1:15

800 run: Payton Shaffer, 12th, 2:44; Shaylor Whitham, 15th, 2:51; Kennady Wilkerson, 18th, 3:10

100 hurdles: Kristen Bell, 11th, 19.59

300 hurdles: Sydni Keagle, 12th, 59.06; Bell, 16th, 1:05

Shot put: Shea O'Hara, 18th, 26-1; Lexie Reece, 20th, 25-1.5; Aiyana Penca, 21st, 24-7.5

Discus: Reece, 12th, 85-2.75; Melia Rice, 14th, 83-6.5; Kody Lowry, 18th, 68-7

Javelin: Rice, 16th, 64-8; Lakin Cunningham, 17th, 60-5; Lowry, 19th, 53-0

Wildcats win three events at Leavenworth Invite



Louisburg's Blue Caplinger hands the baton off to teammate Ben Wiedenmann on Tuesday during the 4×100-meter relay at the Leavenworth Invitational. The 4×100 relay team finished second overall, while the boys finished fifth in the team standings and the girls took fourth.

LEAVENWORTH – In the midst of a gloomy, windy and cold day, the Louisburg High School track and field teams hand plenty of positives shine through in their first meet of the season.

Louisburg competed in the Leavenworth Invitational on Tuesday that featured several Class 5A and 6A programs and both Wildcat teams more than held their own. They recorded three first place finishes and the Wildcats placed 13 in the top three.

It was a strong day on the girls' side as the Lady Cats won two events and finished fourth in the team standings with 59.33 points. Mill Valley won the girls title with 138.33 points and St. James Academy was second with 121.83.

"The girls did a great job for the first meet," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "They all competed well for the cold, wet conditions that we had. We had several girls score those important points from second to sixth place and that makes a huge difference in the team scores."

Sophomore Sydni Keagle got the Lady Cats started in the 100-meter hurdles as she won with a time of 17.57 seconds to score 10 points.

Louisburg continued that success in the pole vault as senior Isabelle Holtzen cleared 10 feet, 6 inches to win her first competition of the season. Holtzen just missed on clearing 11-2 in her next attempt, which would have broken her school record of 11-1.



Louisburg sophomore Sydni Keagle gets out to a lead in the 100-meter hurdles Tuesday in Leavenworth.

It was a 1-2 finish in the pole vault for the Lady Cats as sophomore Avery Graham cleared 9 feet to grab the runner-up spot.

“Isabelle picked up where she left off from last year and vaulted great,” Reece said. “She will be fun to watch this year. Avery also vaulted well and will score points all season for us.”

Sophomore Carlee Gassman also provided the Lady Cats with a spark on the track and in the field events. Gassman put together a strong race in the 300-meter hurdles as she took second in 49.19 seconds.

Gassman also came through in the field events as she finished third in the long jump with a mark of 15-2.

“Carlee had a great 300 hurdle race from lane 8,” Reece said. “She was on her own until lane 4 caught up and gave her

someone to compete against. She is already moving in on the school record and with more races will put up some great times. She can and will be used in many different events as we make our way through the season."

The Wildcat boys also provided some bright moments and some of those were in the pole vault. Senior Frankie Hurst tied for first with Topeka High's Connor Harris after he cleared 12 feet and teammate Trent Martin was third after he cleared 11-6.



Louisburg senior Frankie Hurst clears a height in the pole vault Tuesday.

"It was very cold and the little bit of a head wind made it difficult to jump," Louisburg boys coach Andy Wright said. "Frankie had a rough start, but after overcoming the conditions, he made some adjustments and finished strong. Everyone at the meet had the same conditions, so I was proud of how Frankie just went out and competed."

As a team, the Wildcats finished fifth overall with 61.50 points. Mill Valley won the team title with 138.5 and Leavenworth was second with 91.

“Even though the weather wasn’t the best, it was nice to start competing in track meets,” Wright said. “The guys did a good job competing, but we aren’t satisfied, and we know there is still some work we need to do as a team to get better.”

Louisburg had a pair of relays that finished toward the top as the 4×100 and 4×400-meter relays each came in runner-up.

The 4×100 team of Charlie Koontz, Blue Caplinger, Ben Wiedenmann and Brandon Cooper was second in 45.08 seconds, while Caplinger, Justin Collins, Wiedenmann and Chris Williams helped the 4×400 squad do the same in 3:37.39.

“Competing against some good programs and finishing second in both relays was a great way for us to start the season,” Wright said. “We still need to work on some of our exchanges, and improve our running shape for the 4×4. Both relays did just go out and compete, and that’s what I was looking for in the first meet.

Cooper also had a pair of strong finishes in the sprints as he finished third in the 100 and 200-meter dashes. He ran a time of 11.36 in the 100 and 23.79 in the 200.

Williams also finished third in two races as he performed in the 400-meter dash and 800-meter runs. He ran the 400 in 52.93 seconds and recorded a time of 2:10 in the 800.

Louisburg returns to action Thursday when it competes in the Paola Invitational. Events are set to begin at 3:30 p.m.

Other results from the meet are:

GIRLS

100 meter dash: Kaitlyn Urban, 11th, 14.00; Andrea Gaza, 22nd, 15.28

200 dash: Gaza, 21st, 32.16

400 dash: Mikayla Quinn, 5th, 1:09

800 run: Payton Shaffer, 9th, 2:52; Shaylor Whitham, 11th, 3:03

1,600 run: Shaffer, 15th, 6:33

100 hurdles: Kristen Bell, 9th, 21:37

300 hurdles: Sydni Keagle, 9th, 58.57; Bell, 16th, 1:09

4×100 relay: Urban, Isabelle Holtzen, Keagle, Carlee Gassman, 4th, 51.32

4×400 relay: Quinn, Holtzen, Urban, Gassman, 4th, 4:35

4×800 relay: Quinn, Whitham, Kennady Wilkerson, Shaffer, 6th, 11:43

High jump: Eileen Benne, 4th, 4-8

Triple jump: Urban, 4th, 30-8

Shot put: Lexie Reece, 12th, 24-11.75; Shea O'Hara, 13th, 23-2; Aiyana Penca, 14th, 22-6.5

Discus: Reece, 6th, 87-11; Melia Rice, 12th, 70-8; Kody Lowry, 14th, 63-11

Javelin: Lowry, 12th, 49-10; Lakin Cunningham, 13th, 49-4.5;

Rice, 14th, 45-11.5

BOYS

100 dash: Charlie Koontz, 15th, 11.99; Justin Collins, 16th, 12.00

200 dash: Ben Wiedenmann, 5th, 24.04; Koontz, 10th, 24.95

400 dash: Blue Caplinger, 9th, 55.04; Michael Waldron, 24th, 1:01

High jump: Waldron, 7th, 5-2

Long jump: Koontz, 6th, 17-11; Collins, 11th, 17-2; Caplinger, 12th, 17-1

Shot put: Kiefer Tucker, 13th, 37-4.5; Brayden White, 14th, 37-3; Matt Holloway, 14th, 37-3

Discus: Tucker, 5th, 113-3; John DePriest, 11th, 98-9; Hunter Day, 15th, 84-4

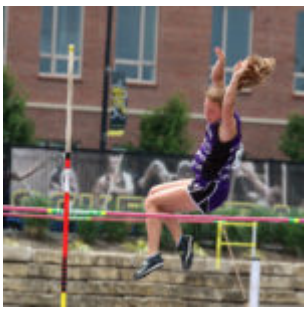
Javelin: Waldron, fifth, 137-9.5; Holloway, 8th, 126-8.5; Austin Moore, 11th, 121-7.25

Reece wins steeplechase at Baldwin Invitational

Louisburg senior Wyatt Reece competed on his own Thursday at the Baldwin Invitational and won gold in an event, while scoring points in another.

Reece won the 2,000-meter steeplechase in a time of 6 minutes and 45 seconds. He also had a strong performance in the 800-meter run as he took fifth in 2:07.

Wildcat track has same goals under new leadership



Louisburg senior Isabelle Holtzen hopes to get back to the state meet this season after she finished seventh in the pole vault last year in Wichita. Holtzen is the lone returning state medalist for Louisburg.

The Louisburg High School track and field teams will have a little different look to them this season.

Both the girls and boys programs are under different leadership in 2018 for the first time in several years. Former assistant John Reece is the new girls head coach after he replaced Greg Darrington, who resigned after last season.

Andy Wright will take over the boys program after he replaced longtime coach Gary Griffin, who retired after more than two decades on the Wildcat coaching staff. Wright was an also assistant for the Wildcats last season.

Still, despite the new leadership across the program, Louisburg still has the same goals in front of them – qualifying for as many events at the state meet as possible.

The Louisburg girls return a few state qualifiers from a season ago, which includes their lone medalist in Isabelle Holtzen. The Wildcat senior medaled seventh in the pole vault at state last year and she hopes for another trip to the medal stand this year.

“Practice is going great so far with the nice weather,” Reece said. “I am very excited about taking over the program and moving forward with it. We currently have 28 girls out for the team and are returning several varsity athletes as well as state qualifiers.

“Isabelle is our returning state medalist and I hope to see her improve upon last year’s marks as well as helping us out on the track even more. After some time trials and throw offs, we are pretty evenly spread out between the track and field so we can score points in both areas.”

Senior Kaitlyn Urban returns to lead the Lady Cat jumpers after she qualified for state in the triple jump last season. Fellow seniors Lexie Reece (throws) and Mikayla Quinn (mid-distance, relays) will also look to score points this year, along with Holtzen, who will compete in the sprints as well as the pole vault.



Senior Kaitlyn Urban hopes to make another return trip to state in the triple jump.

“They bring many years of experience to the program and will be looked upon to lead the team,” Reece said of his seniors. “We hope to improve as a team in placings at the meets we attend this year and move up in league standings. We have an awesome group of both girls and boys and an outstanding coaching staff.”

Juniors Kristen Bell, Eileen Benne, Jordon Leach, Melia Rice, Payton Shaffer and Shaylor Whitham also hope to have a big year for the Wildcats. Leach helped the Wildcats to a state appearance last season in the 4×100-meter relay.

Sophomores Carlee Gassman, Avery Graham, Sydni Keagle and Kody Lowry will also look to score points for Louisburg. Graham (pole vault) and Keagle (hurdles) made strides for the Lady Cats last season and hope to take another step forward.



Junior Chris Williams will try for another trip to the state meet in the 400-meter dash.

On the boys side, the Wildcats return several athletes on the track, including junior Chris Williams, who just missed out on a state medal after he finished ninth in the 400-meter dash as a sophomore. Williams will try for that medal again as he competes in the 400 and 800-meter dash this season.

Williams is one of 38 Wildcat boys out this season and will be joined by a few seniors in leading the team. Senior Wyatt Reece, a returning state qualifier in the 4×800 relay and state medalist this season in cross country, will run distance and hopes to earn another berth to state.

Another senior, Frankie Hurst, returns after qualifying for state in the pole vault last season, and he will be joined by sophomore Trent Martin as both look to take another step forward.

“Practices have been going really good,” Wright said. “The boys have been working hard and it should be a good year. Individually, we should have some success in most running events.”



Senior Wyatt Reece will lead the Wildcat distance runners this season.

Louisburg gained some speed on the track as junior Brandon Cooper returns after a year at Blue Valley Northwest, where he was a state qualifier in the 100 dash and the 4×100 relay. He will run 100 and 200-meter dashes, and will help the 4×100 relay team.

The Wildcats will run a pair of relays this season. Sophomore Charlie Koontz, junior Blue Caplinger, freshman Ben Wiedenmann and Cooper will start the season on the 4×100 team, while Caplinger, sophomore Michael Waldron, Wiedenmann and Williams

will run the 4×400 relay.

Louisburg opens its season at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday when it competes in the Leavenworth Invitational at Leavenworth High School. The Wildcats will compete again Friday at another meet in Belton, Mo.

OPINION: 2017 was a banner year for Louisburg



Having the opportunity to cover Louisburg High School athletics, for what has been almost 10 years now, I have seen a lot of different highs and lows.

I have been lucky enough to cover state championship teams and watched several athletes perform at the highest level. However, this last year has to be one for the record books when it comes to success at Louisburg High School.

For Wildcat athletics, 2017 was a banner year for many reasons.

Louisburg qualified for the state tournament in three different sports – volleyball, girls soccer and boys basketball – and the first two each placed in the top four.

The volleyball team was just a point away from winning the

school’s first state title after the Lady Cats finished second to defending state champion Rose Hill, and tied for the best finish in school history.

The Wildcat girls soccer team qualified for the state semifinals in just its second year of existence and suffered a heartbreaking 1-0 loss in the semifinals to eventually take fourth overall.

In boys basketball, the Wildcats qualified for the state tournament for the first time in 12 years despite getting knocked out in the first round by defending state champion Bishop Miege.

Most schools would love to have that success with their athletic programs, but for Louisburg, that was just the tip of the iceberg. As special as the seasons were for those three programs, the Wildcats also thrived in a few other sports.

Louisburg’s cross country program, which has been around for 19 years, had the best season in its history – by far. Not only did the Wildcats have three state medalists for the first time ever, but it had a year that featured the school’s first female league champion in Trinity Moore and the best league finish by a male, Wyatt Reece, who took second.

Tim Smith continued the Wildcat success as he became the school’s first regional cross country champion, and Moore, Reece and Smith each went on to win a state medal. Moore and Smith also set school records for the fastest time.

The Wildcats also qualified the girls team for the first time in school history as Moore, Carlee Gassman, Reilly Alexander, Isabelle Holtzen, Kaitlyn Lewer, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams took third at regionals and eventually 10th at state.

The Wildcat wrestling team tied a program best by qualifying eight for the state tournament and came back with a medal by Ryan Adams, who finished sixth.

Louisburg’s track and field team persevered and qualified for state in 10 events and had two regional champions in Quinn Rigney and Chris Williams. Isabelle Holtzen and T.J. Dover each brought home their first state track medals.

The boys soccer team was one goal away from making its second consecutive trip to the state semifinals, but their run was halted by a loss to McPherson in state quarterfinals. Still, the Wildcats won a regional title, which was the seventh in team history.

Freshman Calvin Dillon led the Wildcat golf team this past year and recorded the program’s first state medal in more than decade as he took 10th overall.

All these things and more I described in detail when releasing my top 10 stories of the year and what a year it was.

Obviously, I haven’t had a chance to look through all the results, but I can’t imagine a more successful year for LHS when you are talking about athletics. There may have been years in the 70s, 80s and 90s that I don’t know about, but I find it hard to imagine one that tops 2017.

Sure, the 2010-11 school year featured two state championship teams in football and boys track and field and that was a fantastic time to be Wildcat, but as far as calendar years go, 2017 was one to remember.

Even outside the sports world, Louisburg High School put together many great accomplishments as the Wildcat Marching Band was selected to participate in the Tournament of Roses Parade and put on a great show for the nation on New Year’s Day.

Then in October, the FFA Food Science team of Hallie Hutsell, Faith Seuferling, Addie Katzer and Hattie Harris won a national championship, while Hutsell and Seuferling placed second and third in the nation, respectively.

I don’t get a lot of opportunities to cover programs or groups outside the sports world, but these are fantastic accomplishments and deserved to be recognized.

For me, 2017 was a whirlwind. It seemed around every corner, school history was being made and there aren’t many schools around the state that can boast about the successes Louisburg has experienced.

It was an honor for me to cover many of these historic runs in Wildcat history and I hope you all realize how lucky you have it. Louisburg is a school filled with great coaches who care about the student athletes.

Believe me, I know how fortunate I am to be able to be a part of something special and this place is it. If 2018 is half of what 2017 was, it will be a fun ride.

I can’t wait for what 2018 has in store and hopefully you all will follow along to see what these Wildcats can accomplish.

Top 10 Stories of 2017

It was a successful, and eventful, 2017 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 2017, 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 2018 to begin. Looking forward to it!



Louisburg's Calvin Dillon earns his first state golf medal as a freshman as he took 10th at the state meet.

10. Dillon medals at state golf

Louisburg freshman Calvin Dillon certainly didn't play like a first-year varsity player as he led the Wildcat golf team all season. Dillon finished 10th at the Class 4A state tournament in Wamego and became the first Wildcat golfer to earn a state medal in several years.

Dillon made the state tournament alongside senior Ty Martin, who finished in 28th place overall after he earned his second straight state appearance.



Isabelle Holtzen earned her first state medal in the pole vault as she took seventh back in May.

9. Holtzen, Dover earn first state track medals



T.J. Dover finished eighth in the discus at the Class 4A Kansas State Track and Field Championships in Wichita.

Junior Isabelle Holtzen and senior T.J. Dover both ended their track and field seasons on a good note as they earned state medals in late May at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita.

Holtzen had a big season in the pole vault as she ended seventh in the state after she cleared 10 feet. Earlier in the year, Holtzen broke a 15-year old school record in the pole vault as she topped 11-1.

Dover made his second consecutive trip to the state meet and finished strong in his final high school performance. He took eighth with a throw of 143-4.

The Wildcats qualified for the state meet in 10 events and had two regional champions in junior Quinn Rigney (100-meter dash) and sophomore Chris Williams (400 dash).



8. Frontier League adds three schools, says goodbye to another

For the Frontier League, 2017 brought a lot of changes to a league that has featured seven schools for the last several years.

Starting in the 2018-19 season, the Frontier League will add three new schools. Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs each accepted invitations to join the league last April to create a 10-team league.

It is didn’t stay 10 teams for long as De Soto will make the move to a different league during the same season. The current league will be made up of nine schools: Louisburg, Paola, Ottawa, Spring Hill, Baldwin, Eudora, Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs.



7. Louisburg boys soccer wins regional crown

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team was trying to make its second consecutive trip to the state tournament this past season and the Wildcats almost got there.

Although the Wildcats fell to McPherson in the state quarterfinal game in late October, Louisburg put together another successful season that included a 1-0 victory over Independence in the regional championship game.

The Wildcats finished the season with a 13-6 record and earned the school’s first Frontier League championship since 2010.



Junior Ryan Adams celebrates after he earned a state medal at 138 pounds.

6. Wildcat wrestling qualifies eight for state, Adams picks up medal

The Louisburg High School wrestling team had an historic season as it qualified eight for the Class 4A state wrestling tournament, which tied for the most in school history, during the regional tournament in February at Frontenac High School

Thad Hendrix (106 pounds), Nathan Keegan (120), Kyle Allen (126), Ryan Adams (138), Dylan Meyer (145), Austin Moore (170), Austin Raetzel (195) and Mason Koechner (285) all competed at the state tournament in Salina.

Adams earned the school's lone state medal on the season as he finished sixth overall at 138 pounds.



Louisburg head football and boys track and field coach Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years. It was one of many changes for the LHS athletic department.

5. LHS goes through staff/coaching changes

The 2017-18 school year looked a lot of different than in previous years for Louisburg High School athletics.

LHS saw a lot of changes in its coaching staff and in the administration as well. Activities director Darin Gagnebin stepped down and was replaced by current director Jeremy Holloway.

In the coaching department, former head and assistant football Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years with the high school and Louisburg promoted assistant Robert Ebenstein

as the new Wildcat head football coach.

Jason Nelson resigned his post as the Wildcat head boys basketball coach and he was replaced with Ty Pfannenstiel. Griffin and Greg Darrington also resigned as the boys and girls track and field coaches, and were replaced by Andy Wright (boys) and John Reece (girls).



Louisburg cross country runners (from left) Tim Smith, Trinity Moore and Wyatt Reece each ended the season with a state medal.

4. LHS cross country earns three state medals, qualifies girls team

The Louisburg High School cross country team might have had

its best season in its 19-year history in 2017.

The Wildcats thrived against some of the state's best competition as seniors Wyatt Reece, Tim Smith and sophomore Trinity Moore all earned state medals at the Class 4A meet in Wamego.

Moore recorded the highest finish for a female runner in school history as she finished fifth in the state and broke her own school record in the process with a time of 19 minutes and 47 seconds.

In the boys race, Reece picked up his first state medal with a time of 17 minutes and finished 11th overall. Smith, who won a regional title the week before, came in 15th with a time of 17:05. Smith was the first Wildcat to win a regional title in school history.

Louisburg also made history as the Wildcat girls team qualified for the state meet for the first time after they finished third at their regional in Burlington. Moore joined Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams to make up the seven-member squad that finished 10th in the team standings at state.

Earlier in the year, Moore became the school's first Frontier League champion, while Reece recorded the highest league finish in boys history as he took second at the league meet.



3. Louisburg boys basketball earns first state tournament berth in 12 years

The season may not have started out the way the Louisburg boys basketball team would have liked, but it certainly finished on a positive note.

Louisburg knocked off rival Paola in the sub-state semfinals and then defeated Fort Scott in the championship game in early March to earn its first sub-state championship since 2005.

The Wildcats earned the No. 6 seed and squared off with eventual champion Bishop Miege at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. The Stags ended the Wildcats’ season with an 81-47 loss.



2. LHS girls soccer finishes fourth at state tournament

Louisburg’s girls soccer program has only been around for two years, but the Wildcats have set high expectations from the beginning and that continued in 2017.

The Wildcats advanced to the Class 4-1A state semifinals for the first time in school history as they defeated Piper with a 2-1 victory in overtime. This victory came off their second consecutive regional title as they knocked off Bonner Springs.

At the state tournament, Louisburg faced off with Thomas More Prep and suffered a heart-breaking 1-0 loss in the semifinals. The Wildcats moved on to the third-place game against Maize South and eventually finished fourth overall.



1. Lady Cat volleyball ends season as state runner-up

The Louisburg High School volleyball team was just one point away from not only becoming the school's first state volleyball champion – but also the first female team to win a state title in Louisburg history.

As close as the Lady Cats got, they came up just short against defending state champion Rose Hill in late October at the Class 4A-Division I state championship. Louisburg fell 23-25, 25-10 and 29-27 in heartbreaking fashion to finish as the state runner-up.

Still, it was an impressive season for Louisburg volleyball as it finished with a 34-10 record. The Lady Cats reeled off wins over Basehor-Linwood, Bishop Miege and Rose Hill in pool play and then downed Wellington in the state semifinals.

The Lady Cats received several accolades as junior Anna Dixon

and senior Sophie McMullen earned first team all-state and all-league honors. Dixon was also named as the Co-Player of the Year in Class 4A-Division I.

Junior Carson Buffington was also named to the all-state tournament team with Dixon and McMullen.