

Dennis leaves lasting legacy in Louisburg, LHS athletics



Damon Dennis, and his wife Karla, pose for quick picture during a timeout at a Louisburg High School basketball game Dennis was announcing. Dennis, who is better known as Doc D, is handing over his business at Louisburg Chiropractic Office to Dr. Jacob Polzin and is stepping away as the LHS team doctor after 28 years of service. His last day at the office is tomorrow (Saturday).

Almost every day of the week, if you were looking for Damon Dennis, he could be found at his office on 11 S. Broadway St., helping treat those pesky aches and pains, taking X-rays, or mending those beaten up athletes after a game.

Doc D – as he is affectionately known – opened Louisburg Chiropractic Office 28 years ago and has served as the Louisburg High School athletic team doctor for almost that same amount of time.

Dennis has seen it all. The walls in his office are lined with mementos from his years of service to both the community and the high school.

He has taped thousands of ankles, seen even more patients and has touched many lives during his time in Louisburg. That is why this week is one of the more emotional times in his life.

On Saturday, he will officially leave Louisburg Chiropractic Office and hand the reins over to Dr. Jake Polzin. Add to

that, Dennis is also stepping away as LHS' team doctor and will leave an absence on the sidelines and behind the mic that many in Louisburg have come to know.

"My decision to step down and sell the practice has turned out to be the hardest thing I have ever done," Dennis said. "I have poured everything I have into my job and community. It has become my entire existence. I was taught from a young age to serve others and your community. I feel like the pressures I have put on myself have become unhealthy. I have put about 40 years work in to 28 and feel like there is never going to be a good time to make such a huge life change.

"That being said, I feel like I need to make changes while I am still able to do the things that will be best for my family. Dr. Polzin came along and I think he will carry on the work at the office wonderfully. We are a lot alike in many ways. I could not have found anyone better to replace me."

For many, Dennis has been a big part of people's lives, especially in the athletic arena. He has served as the LHS team doctor since 1992 and has treated many athletes in those 28 years.



Dennis (left) and Dr. Jake Polzin pose for a picture in their office. Polzin will officially take over the practice from Dennis after this week, but both have been seeing the patients the last three months.

During the school year, Dennis would leave his place of business every day after 3 to go to the high school to tape up athletes from all different sports and made sure they were all ready to go for practice. After that was over, he would rush back to his office to finish the day treating his patients.

It would be hectic life for some, but it is one that he has treasured for the last nearly three decades.

“My time in practice has been a blessing,” Dennis said. “I truly care about all of the patients and people in the community that I have been involved with. I have tried to be a positive impact on the town through my involvement in different organizations. As with any business, there are bumps in the road. I genuinely appreciate everyone who has had a positive impact on me through these years.

“I have poured my heart and soul in to every aspect of my business and involvement in the community, sometimes at the sacrifice of my wife, Karla. I am eternally grateful for her patience and love. Part of the reason why I am handing over the reigns is that I have a lot of making up for time to do.”



Damon Dennis (middle) walks out of the locker room with the Wildcat football coaches prior to a game.

Dennis and his family have made a lot of sacrifices during his

time and many of the Wildcat coaches – both former and present – appreciate what he has done for them and their players.

“As far as what he has meant to the community, it is immeasurable,” longtime former coach Gary Griffin said. “He came in the first year and made himself available to all the coaches and was there for whatever the kids needed from the medical stuff, to a new pair of shoes, or money to go to a team dinner. He was even there to lend an ear to a kid that was having issues from girlfriends, teacher issues or problems at home.

“For me personally, he was a cheerleader when times were not good, he was an advocate for kids when I didn’t always know what was going on behind the scenes. I trusted Doc like he was a member of the coaching staff. I told him a lot of things in confidence so I could get his advice knowing it would not go any further. As far as the community goes, he is a pillar and he is involved in everything and is held in high regards by most. It is really hard for Doc to tell anyone no, so most of his days are longer than just his office hours. Doc is going to be missed in so many ways. He is a very humble man and he is very deserving of slowing down and enjoying the fruits of his labor.”

A Small Beginning

Back in June of 1992 is when Dennis began to plant his roots in the town he would begin to call home.

Dennis purchased the small satellite office from Dr. Larry Fulk, who at the time also had a practice in Paola. Dennis was less than a year out of school and was eager to get involved in the Louisburg community.

Two months later, Dennis reached out to then Louisburg High School administrator Doug Chisam and asked if he could serve as the team’s doctor – free of charge. Since August of 1992,

Louisburg High School would not be the same.

Dennis made trips over to the high school for treatment and would also follow many of the team's to their games after work was over. It was a life that would go on to create many memories.

"Jim Knox, Don Meek and Doug Chisam were all very supportive and I am forever in their debt," Dennis said. "I started out just going to all games, home and away, and every sport that I could. At that time I was in the office from 6 am to 7 pm and then off to games 3-4 nights a week. The things I have always enjoyed about being the team doctor was the kids and the coaches. High school athletes have not changed since day one. They want someone who cares about and shows interest in what they are doing. I am still close with a lot of the students who have come through the high school and will continue to be.

"My role evolved over the years. I began doing all the taping before practice and games, Impact testing, announcing basketball and other roles as the coaches requested. I enjoy helping others and that is how my role evolved in to so many other areas. Over the years, the coaches have included me and I will always be grateful to them for allowing me to be a part of the experience."



Damon and his wife Karla pose for a picture in front of his office back in the early 90s.

His role got even bigger when the new high school was built and Dennis was asked if he would like to announce basketball games. He certainly didn't mind having a mic in his hand and loved playing off the crowd and making sure the athletes felt a little extra special.

"We had a girls' tournament and Dave Tappan asked me if I would announce the game," Dennis said. "He thought it would be a nice touch to have an announcer. I am not sure he ever asked me to continue, I just did it. I had to be at games anyway and I like to talk, so it worked out. Dave never said to quit, so I just kept doing it.

"I really did enjoy that. I would try to throw in a little funny once and awhile just to see if people were listening. Dottie Cook had a birthday every game night for several years. Knowing the kids so well, it was fun to add their middle name or nickname at the game."

Tappan, who is currently the USD 416 assistant superintendent, worked as the LHS activities director and principal during many of Dennis' years in Louisburg and the two became quick

friends.

With that, Tappan is well aware of Dennis' work ethic and commitment to Louisburg athletics. In fact, he has seen it firsthand.



Doc D lets out a cheer on the sidelines following a big play during the Wildcats' 2010 state championship game.

"Most people know that Doc doesn't take vacations very often," Tappan said. "In fact, it usually takes a team of us to get him out of the office for more than a day. But in 2010, he and Karla scheduled a trip over Thanksgiving break to Chicago. Well, that was also the year of our run to the state football championship and there was no way he was going to miss it. In typical Doc D fashion, he lined things up to perfection. He takes a 5 a.m. flight from Chicago to Kansas City, has Karla drive him to the Legends off of I-70 and at about 6:30 I'm

picking him up and we beat the team to Salina. When the bus finally rolls in, he looks at Coach (Gary) Griffin with a grin and says, 'What took you so long?' About four hours later we were celebrating a championship.

"The commitment that Doc D has demonstrated over the years to the students of Louisburg schools is second to none. From the football sidelines on a Friday night in the fall, to being behind the mic in the LHS gym during basketball season, Doc always supported the students, the coaches and the administration of USD 416. I am proud to call Damon Dennis my friend."

Beyond The Call of Duty

Running a business can be difficult enough, but when you have other responsibilities on top of all that, it can be stressful at times.

The coaches at Louisburg High School never got that when working with Doc D. Veteran and young coaches alike were amazed at the dedication he displayed.

"Doc D is one of the most honest and honorable men I have ever met," Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. "He has donated countless hours and years for helping Louisburg student athletes. He always went out of his way to help anyone and everyone. He wasn't always just helping players. He would always check in on the coaches as well – checking on their well-being, their teams, and their families.

"Doc always went out of his way to make someone feel important and special. He was NEVER too busy for anyone. He will be greatly missed and he is irreplaceable. Thank you Doc D for everything that you have done for my teams, my family and for myself. You are someone I am lucky enough to call a friend."

That dedication would not only be found after school in the evenings, but even before the sun came up as well.



Doc D checks out Louisburg's Hallie Hutsell following an injury during last soccer season.

"Doc D will be greatly missed," Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment said. "He unselfishly devoted many hours to our athletes and was always a phone call or a text away. I can't count how many times he would meet myself and an athlete or two at the school at 5:30 a.m. prior to departure for a volleyball tournament. Not only was he a great role model and mentor for the athletes, but he served as a great mentor to a young coach for the past 14 years. He will be greatly missed by many."

However, where Dennis is most recognized was on the football sidelines. He did anything from tending to injured athletes, mentoring future trainers and handing out free food or candy to the student section before certain games.

It wasn't gone unnoticed as many around the school and

community know what Doc D has meant to the district.

“If Louisburg had a Mt. Rushmore, Damon would definitely be up there,” Louisburg graduate and longtime coach Jeff Lohse said. “Doc is one of the most selfless people that I know. He was always more than willing to help anyone out and never expected anything in return. I consider Doc to be a great friend of mine and this is definitely bittersweet. I wish him and Karla nothing but the best as they open up this new chapter in their lives. Damon will be missed but his legacy in Louisburg will live on forever.”

Dennis always made sure to welcome the new coaches to the district and made them feel a part of the family and that was the case with boys basketball coach Ty Pfannenstiel when he came to the school three years ago.



Doc D was presented with a team signed helmet following the team's award banquet two years ago.

"Doc D is the most selfless man I know," Pfannenstiel said. "What Doc gave to this school and community is unprecedented. He cared so much for all of our athletes, there's no way we are going to be able to replace what he brought to this school. I feel bad for whoever is going to come in and try to fill his shoes – he set the bar way too high."

Dennis has been on the sideline for many of Louisburg's greatest athletic achievements, including three state football appearances and has watched many athletes along the way achieve great individual accomplishments.

He knows that he has been blessed to be able to be a part of Wildcat athletics in one form or another the last 28 years.

“As for favorite memories, it is not always about the wins and losses,” Dennis said. “The things I have most enjoyed is the time spent with athletes and coaches. The things that go on in the locker room, before and after games were the fun part. I have had a behind the scenes view of some pretty amazing people.

“Obviously the 2010 state football championship is at the top of the list. We had gone to the championship twice and come home in second on two occasions. It was a great group to be around and a great experience. If I had to choose a group of kids that really stand out the most, it would be the seniors my first year here (class of 1993). They welcomed me with open arms and made me feel like I was appreciated. I still speak to members of that class often and consider them friends. It was a really special group. I also loved seeing kids accomplish their dreams of success. Louisburg has had its share of champions and athletes that have gone on to do some amazing things.”



Doc D was also good with equipment as he works on Madden Rutherford's helmet prior to a game.

In his last week at the office, Doc D has seen a lot of visitors that have come to thank him for everything he has done. Although Dennis won't be around as much as he used to, he wants people to know that this isn't a farewell – but more of a see you later.

“I want everyone to know how much I appreciate their kind words,” Dennis said. “There has been talk of various activities surrounding my career change that have been proposed. While I genuinely appreciate this, I don't think I can handle the attention. My emotions have gotten the better of me and I am not sure that I can handle any celebrations publicly, unless everyone wants to see me cry.

“I am not going away. I just won't be at 11 South Broadway or at the high school every day. Thank you to everyone that has

supported me as I have made every effort to support my community.”

No, Doc – thank you...

LHS sports preparing to start back up in June with summer workouts



Kansas high school sports has been absent since the middle of March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that all could change very soon.

During its board of directors meeting earlier this month, the Kansas State High School Activities Association made a change to its summer regulations. Starting on June 1, school employed coaches may begin summer programs as long as it is permitted by the community’s health authorities and the school district.

Coaches at Louisburg High School are making plans to move forward beginning the first of June, but they must meet some guidelines to do so.

In the first two calendar weeks in June, athletes will need to attend a conditioning session each day. Those must be completed to be able to participate in a coach’s camp or

organized competition.

If an athlete is playing football, they must complete an extra five days of conditioning before being able to participate in competition.

The first two weeks of conditioning sessions will not involve weights, indoor facilities or sporting equipment to ensure safety. Masks will be optional at workouts, but six feet of distance will be in place along with no more than the 90 gathering restriction under the phase 3 guidelines put out by the state.

Then on June 15, barring no setbacks, conditioning will include indoor weight sessions and indoor facilities will be allowed. Coaches will also be able to hold camps and competition throughout the summer.



Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein has plotted out summer workouts for his football team beginning with three weeks of conditioning starting June 1

“I think the guidelines were set to help ensure the safety of all student athletes accords the state, along with their physical health as well as the preparation for the season,” Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein said. “Challenges may be there, but overall they are irrelevant as all the teams in the state have to follow the same guidelines. Our school administrators have been very supportive throughout this process.”

Along with the new changes, KSHSAA also lifted the moratorium period at the end of the summer and will allow teams to practice all the way up to the beginning of the school year. Fall sports, however, will take precedence from Aug. 1 through Aug. 15.

For some programs, the changes won't be much different as what they have experienced in the past, other than practicing social distancing through the first two weeks of conditioning.

“We are still allowed to compete in leagues and camps after all athletes have completed 10 days of conditioning/training,” Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment said. “Our summer weights program is changing some this summer, so it gives the players a chance to acclimate back into workouts before putting a ball in their hands.

“When you really look at the schedule, we lost the first two weeks in June (in terms of volleyball skill work), but we gained the moratorium week and have full contact until August 16. The fall season starts on August 17. Normally, we can't have contact, outside of weights and conditioning, after mid-July. This actually gives us about four weeks on the back end of summer to work with the athletes.”



Louisburg volleyball coach Jessica Compliment has her normal summer scheduled planned out despite a different start.

Still, the new-look summer won't be without its challenges – especially in the first 10 days of the summer calendar. However, the coaches and athletes will gladly work around the new rules in order to get back together and competing again.

“I think the new guidelines will help kids get back to some normalcy as long as everything continues to get better, but the six feet of social distancing could be challenging when you are coaching a team sport,” Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley said. “We will find a way to overcome these challenges and help the kids develop as much as possible.”

Coaches have already altered their camp schedules for the summer, and that information, along with a list of camps, can be found [here](#).

As for Louisburg cross country, the runners will also be going through a conditioning period like everyone else. They will meet at the football practice field at 7 a.m. for an hour every morning beginning June 1 and that will continue through the summer.

Since school has been out since the middle of March, coaches have tried to find a way to stay in touch with their players – and like with online schooling – the zoom platform has been a big help for coaches.

“Football has been doing online zoom workout together for those currently in high school every Monday, Wednesday and Friday while we have been out of school, so I have still been seeing them and they have been doing some cardio,” Ebenstein said. “We have as normal of a summer planned as possible. We will have our weights sessions, our team camp, review/skills night, and we will have our contact camp that KSHSAA is allowing.”

With everything going on around the state and the country, everything is still in limbo and dates could have to be altered once again depending on what local officials decide. Even with all that, the coaches believe there will be a fall season.



Louisburg soccer coach Kyle Conley has tried to keep many of his same events for both the boys and girls teams.

“I am confident our fall season will be played,” Conley said “It may have some things that are different, but we will play. I know that the boys are very anxious in having conversations with some of them.”

Many of the coaches and players are just ready to return to some kind of routine following the spread of COVID-19 and they hope sports can give that to them.

“As of right now, our season is scheduled, and we’ll plan accordingly if told differently,” Compliment said. “But for right now, (activities director Michael) Pickman has stressed that for most of the athletes, a return to summer weights/conditioning/activities will be their first taste of ‘normalcy.’ I’m excited to get back at it and see the athletes

and students again.”

Pickman named as new LHS activities director



Michael Pickman (left) was hired as Louisburg High School’s new activities director and assistant principal last week following the USD Board of Education meeting. Current Louisburg AD, Scott Hinkle (right), will move to the middle school to serve in the same capacity starting next school year.

Louisburg High School will have a little different look to its activities department for the 2020-21 school year.

Following the USD 416 Board of Education meeting on April 13, Michael Pickman was hired to serve as the school’s new assistant principal and activities director. Pickman will replace Scott Hinkle, who has been in that position for the last two years.

Hinkle will remain in the district and will move over to the middle school to serve in the same capacity.

“I had known for a while that I wanted to continue my education by getting a second master’s degree, but I didn’t really know which area,” Pickman said. “I talked with current

administration and was both inspired and encouraged to explore administrative leadership. This is the job I wanted because it meant staying in Louisburg and continuing to work with the staff and coaches who I know have, can and will achieve great things when it comes to our students and student athletes.

“We are a Louisburg family and I want my daughter in the Louisburg community and school system, so I wouldn’t have done this anywhere else. The atmosphere from district leadership to the building leadership is top notch and I am ready to grow as an educator and work alongside (principal) Jeremy (Holloway) and the administrative staff at the high school and the amazing coaches and support them.”

Pickman has taught English at the high school for the last seven years and has also worked in the Prairie View, West Franklin and Maur Hill Prep school districts.

He has also spent a lot of time in the athletic arena as he has served as the Wildcat boys and girls soccer assistant coach, alongside head coach Kyle Conley, for the last five-plus years.

“It will be tough to give up all aspects of it, but the magic of these soccer programs will be especially difficult,” Pickman said. “Kyle has been an amazing person to coach with and his passion is contagious. Getting to start the girls program with him and the immediate success has been amazing. State finals and big wins and the atmosphere – some don’t ever get to experience that – and lastly the players, both boys and girls who have graduated and those who remain to carry on the greatness are why I said yes to coaching. They make the whole experience amazing and fun.

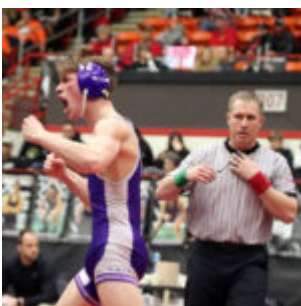
“So it will be hard, but I would also not have gone anywhere else to do a different job and so I will still be able to support the soccer players and every other student and athlete through my new opportunity and to do so the Wildcat Way.”

As for Hinkle, he spent the last two years as the LHS activities director after coming from Liberal High School. He is excited that his new position at the middle school will allow him to spend more time with family.

“I really enjoyed my time at the high school, even though it was only two years,” Hinkle said. “I am leaving behind a great workplace with a great culture and an unbelievable staff. It was not an easy decision.

“I made the move to the middle school to get back some evenings and weekends. I have been an athletic director for 11 years at the high school level in my career, and I was ready to free up some time. I know I am joining another great staff at LMS, and look forward to the new challenge ahead of me.”

Owens, Holtzen leave Salina with state wrestling medals



Louisburg junior Cade Holtzen reacts after winning his blood round match Saturday at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. Holtzen finished fifth at 126 pounds.

SALINA – Ryan Owens and Cade Holtzen both had their own agendas going into the state wrestling tournament.

Owens, qualified for state last

year, but left without a win and he vowed to fix that this time around. As for Holtzen, he came up short in his efforts for a second state medal as a sophomore last season and had all the motivation not to come home empty-handed again.

Both wrestlers more than made up for their rough patches a year ago.

Owens and Holtzen left Salina with a state medal during the Class 4A Kansas State Wrestling Championships on Friday and Saturday at the Tony's Pizza Events Center. Owens made it to the semifinals and wound up earning a fourth-place medal at 120 pounds, while Holtzen finished fifth at 126 pounds.

It also marked the first time since 2016 that Louisburg finished the season with multiple state medalists, when Nathan Keegan and Mason Koechner each brought home medals.

The Wildcats nearly had three medalists as sophomore Brandon Doles finished one win shy of a state medal at 160 pounds with a 2-2 record.

"They both have worked on their mindset training all season, and I'm so proud of how it paid off this weekend at state," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "They focused on their strengths and the variables that they control – their

attitude, their effort, and their aggression – while at the same time avoiding the tendency to focus on things they can't control. They both acted like they belonged there at state and deserved a state medal. The only pressure they put on themselves was to continue wrestling how they've been wrestling all season and to do their very best. When kids focus like that, they stand a much greater chance of accomplishing their goals.

“These guys (and Brandon included) demonstrated to their teammates that there's a process they need to work through in order to achieve their long-term goals. Everyone wants to be a state qualifier, a state placer, or state champion, but so many kids don't know how to set process goals or are committed to staying the course along the way. These guys are living proof that the process works.”

Owens caught some people off-guard to start the tournament Friday as he opened with a pin against Abilene's Kaleb Stroda in just over a minute.



Junior Ryan Owens flips Osawatomie's Chance Mitzner to his back during the 120-pound quarterfinal match Friday in Salina.

His

biggest upset came in the quarterfinals as he pinned Osawatomie's Chance

Mitzner in one minute to advance to the semifinals and assure himself a medal.

Mitzner, who defeated Owens earlier in the season, was ranked fourth going into

the state tournament and Owens was unranked at the time.

In the semifinals, Owens went up

against No. 2 Chadwick Stahl from Mulvane and lost a 5-0 decision, but he had

already made a statement with his good start to the tournament.

"Starting off the state tournament with two pins was my ideal

start," Owens said. "I got into a position that I had a good feel for and threw both my opponents to their backs in the first period. I've been hitting that move since I was six, so I have a lot of confidence in that position. After my semifinals match Friday, the mindset was that 'we weren't finished yet' and there was still a chance to get the next best thing (third place)."

The upsets continued for Owens on Saturday as he outlasted the No. 5-ranked wrestler, Chanute's Trey Dillow, in the consolation semifinals in an 8-5 decision to advance to the third place match. That set up a rematch between Owens and Mitzner, but this time Mitzner got revenge as he pinned the Louisburg junior in the second period.



Ryan Owens pumps his fist after securing his first state medal Friday in Salina.

Despite that, Owens was thrilled with his state tournament performance and is already looking forward to next year.

“It felt unreal to stand on the podium,” Owens said. “I had started off my freshman year on JV, and my sophomore year I

had gone 0-2 at state, so being able to lock up a state medal, especially fourth place, was an amazing feeling.

“That state performance let me know where I was at in that weight class and I was very happy with it. However it’s given me more motivation to do more offseason work than ever and it let me know I have a good shot at the championship next year.”

As for Holtzen, he also put together a strong state tournament run, that included a busy Saturday after going 1-1 on Friday. He opened the tournament with a pin of Wamego’s Nick Cruickshank in the third period.

Holtzen, who was ranked No. 6 at 126 pounds coming into the tournament, squared off with No. 3 Braden Ledford of Winfield. Ledford, who went on to finish second overall, defeated Holtzen in a close 3-0 decision.

That loss sent Holtzen to Saturday to look for a state medal. He began consolation action as he edged out Anderson County’s Ryland Wright in a 3-2 decision.



Junior Cade Holtzen scrambles to keep Pratt's Kaiser Pelland down on the mat during the consolation quarterfinal match Saturday in Salina.

Then in the blood round, Holtzen captured a 2-0 decision over Pratt's Kaiser Pelland to assure himself a state medal and it put last year's disappointment behind him.

"My win in the blood round was a moment of pure elation," Holtzen said. "That was everything I've worked for this past year after I promised myself I would never feel the disappointment I felt after losing in the blood round my sophomore year.

"I thought I wrestled pretty well. I wish I was able to score more points

throughout the tournament especially in my quarterfinals match. But that's something I can work on."

Holtzen then met No. 4 Isaac Novotny from Marysville in the consolation semifinals, and nearly had an upset win himself, but lost a 4-3 decision late in the match. The Louisburg junior responded well in the fifth-place match as he pinned Chanute's Colton Seely in the first period

After finishing sixth as a freshman, Holtzen was proud to see himself take another step forward and he is looking forward to have another chance next season.

"To stand on the podium meant everything to me," Holtzen said. "That was my goal coming into the season and to accomplish that shows that all of my hard work paid off.

"This performance this year has made me realize how close I am to the top wrestlers in the state. It's all a point or two difference. That difference has made me understand that I am capable of being a state champion and that will be my goal for my senior year. It is the one thing I have never accomplished in wrestling and something I want to happen before my career is over."



Louisburg head coach Bobby Bovaird (right) and assistant coach Brandon Ott celebrated Owens' quarterfinal win on Friday.

Doles

also made a run at a state medal but found himself on the wrong-side of a loaded 160-pound class.

The

Louisburg sophomore lost a difficult match to start the tournament as he was pinned by Rock Creek's Drew Burenheide, which meant he had a long journey to a state medal wrestling on the back side.

Doles responded with a 7-2 decision over Winfield's Trevin Biddle and then pulled off an upset of Independence's Ian Lawson with a 3-2 victory. Lawson, who was ranked No. 4 coming in to the tournament, had defeated Doles three times this

season.

That

put Doles in the consolation quarterfinals match against No. 3 Cael Johnson of Burlington and Doles was pinned in the second period.

“Brandon

wrestled really tough at state,” Bovaird said. “He was in total control his first match, and about to add to his lead when he got caught. If that hadn’t happened, there’s a very good chance he could have come through on the back side for a state medal. As it was, Brandon had a tough road in front of him and he gave it everything he had. He got a revenge win against an Independence senior who’d beaten him three times this season and then ran into a tough senior who’s committed to wrestle at Baker University next year.”



Sophomore Brandon Doles keeps his opponent on the mat Friday during the 160-pound match in Salina.

With

two state medalists, the Wildcat wrestling program is looking for even bigger

things next season as they return all but one senior from their team and they

hope to make another run at multiple state medals.

“Next year is going to be an exciting year,” Bovaird said.

“We’re only

losing one senior – Sam Kratochvil – and his leadership will be missed. We’re

returning two state medalists and a two-time state qualifier.

There are two

others who had been ranked throughout the season (Kaven Bartlett and Ben

Wiedenmann), as well as two others who made solid runs at regionals (Aiden

Barker, who lost in the blood round, and AJ Reed, who was two matches from qualifying). Their experience and leadership will be a solid model for the new and returning wrestlers to follow.

“We’ll be working to continue building our numbers and to further develop our girls wrestling program next year. There’s a big number of middle school wrestlers who will be joining the program in the next two years, and I’m excited to see what they can do with the foundation that’s being set by our current wrestlers.”

Holtzen wins regional title; Wildcats send three to state



Louisburg wrestlers (from left) Ryan Owens, Cade Holtzen and Brandon Doles qualified for the Class 4A state wrestling tournament after all three made it to the regional finals Saturday in Louisburg.

Three Louisburg wrestlers advanced to the biggest tournament of the season and did so in front of

their home fans.

Ryan Owens (120 pounds), Cade Holtzen (126) and Brandon Doles (160) qualified for the Class 4A state tournament Saturday during the 4A regional tournament held at Louisburg High School. All three had solid performances against some tough competition.

Holtzen captured the 126-pound regional title, while Owens and Doles both finished as the regional runner-up. All three will compete at the state tournament beginning this Friday in Salina.

“With all the craziness of hosting the regional tournament, I’m very proud of how the team performed overall,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “It was great having three guys make the finals.”

Holtzen (35-3), who is heading to state for the third consecutive year, won his first regional crown with a dominant performance in his bracket. He opened the tournament with pin of Tonganoxie’s Logan Wake and then pinned Baldwin’s Lucas Hopper in just 54 seconds in the semifinals.

All that set up a championship match against Piper’s Nick Lawson, and Holtzen was in control of the match from the opening whistle as he recorded a 13-1 major decision.



Junior Cade Holtzen won the 126-pound regional title Saturday during the 4A regional tournament in Louisburg.

“Being a regional champ is a really good feeling,” Holtzen said. “I haven’t been able to accomplish that my first two years so to be able to get that was almost a weight off my chest and going to state again is a huge deal. You almost start to take it for granted and last year at state I was definitely humbled, so I am ecstatic about going to state this year, but I’m not done yet.

“I feel I wrestled pretty well overall. There are a couple of areas I can touch up on, so I’ll be doing that in practice this week. But you can always get better so you can never be complacent. And the competition at state is always the best that there is so you have to be at your best.”

As for Owens (35-6), the Louisburg junior opened with a 15-0 technical fall over Ottawa's Trevor Kaub and then defeated Baldwin's Jesse Hopper by a 9-4 decision in the semifinals to earn a spot in the championship match and secured a state berth.

Owens faced off with Tonganoxie's Grayson Sonntag in the finals. Sonntag, who is ranked No. 1 in Class 4A, defeated Owens by a 12-4 major decision. Despite the runner-up finish, Owens is excited for his second trip to the state tournament.

"Being able to go to state again is a great opportunity for me to compete against the best in the state," Owens said. "I had worked harder this year than any other year in order to go back to state. The past couple years of my high school career had not gone as planned, but this year I have a great shot at winning some matches."



Louisburg junior Ryan Owens finished second in the 120-pound class during Saturday's Class 4A regional tournament at LHS.

"Overall, I was able to make it into the finals and face off against the No. 1 ranked wrestler in the state, which I was really excited about. I had lost my semis matches in the past couple meets and was finally able to pull off a semifinals win when it really mattered for regionals."

Doles (31-9) faced a similar road to Owens as he opened with a pin of Paola's Corey Holub and then recorded a 15-0 technical fall over Baldwin's William Damet. That set up a championship match against another top-ranked wrestler.

Doles was matched up against Piper's

Anthony Ferguson, who is the No. 1 wrestler in 4A at 160 pounds. Ferguson pinned Doles in the second period, but the Wildcat sophomore earned his second consecutive trip to state.

“Both Ryan and Brandon had tough match-ups in the regional finals, but I’m proud of how they battled against their opponents,” Bovaird said.



Sophomore Brandon Doles took second at 160 pounds during the 4A regional tournament Saturday.

The Wildcats nearly had two more earn a trip to state as freshman Kaven Bartlett and sophomore Aiden Barker each found themselves one win from a state berth.

At 113 pounds, Bartlett (28-12) made his way to the blood round despite a tough 6-4 loss in the first round to Atchison's Archer Willis. Bartlett battled back to the consolation semifinals, where he eventually fell in a 3-1 decision to Paola's Charlie Zeller.

As close as that match was, Barker's consolation semifinal match was even more dramatic. Barker found himself in a back and forth match against Paola's Ben Timpe and nearly had a 2-point takedown at the buzzer.

Barker put Timpe on his back as the buzzer sounded, but was ruled just out of bounds as time expired and lost a 9-8 decision.



Sophomore Aiden Barker takes down an opponent for two points. Barker and teammate Kaven Bartlett each finished one win away from qualifying for the state tournament.

“I’m super proud of those two and how much of a fight they put up,” Bovaird said. “They both truly took on a predator mindset, which we’ve been talking about all year. Some of the best wrestling I’ve ever seen from those two happened this weekend. It is heartbreaking, but some good came of those tough losses. Both of them have been at practice this week helping their teammates, and I think they’re both willing to commit to even more off-season wrestling to help them get to their goals.”

The Kansas Class 4A State Wrestling Championships begin at 10 a.m. on Friday at the Tony’s Pizza Event Center in Salina and the top six in each weight class will earn a medal.

Wildcats medal three at Frontier League tourney



Louisburg junior Cade Holtzen works for a pin Saturday during the Frontier League Tournament on Saturday at Ottawa High School. Holtzen finished second at 126 pounds.

OTTAWA – Three Louisburg wrestlers found their way to the podium during the Frontier League Tournament on Saturday at Ottawa High School.

Cade Holtzen, Ryan Owens and Brandon Doles each placed in the top three of their respective weight classes to help lead the Wildcats in the nine-team tournament. Holtzen made his way to the championship before finishing second, while Owens and Doles each took third place.

In all, six wrestlers placed in the top five and the Wildcats finished ninth overall with 107 points. Bonner Springs won the league title with 234 points and Paola was second with 180.5.

“Competition at league was pretty tough this year, and our league has only gotten stronger with the addition of Piper, Tonganoxie, and Bonner, but I was initially disappointed with how we finished up as a team,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Then I remember that there’s a reason why we have a

full season leading up to regionals and state. We face tests every week at every tournament, and the focus is on growth and progress. No match should define a season, and we're not going to let our league performance define the team's season.

"Last week was Homecoming, which was full of all sorts of activities and distractions, and we also had a snow day when we couldn't even practice. A lot of things provided obstacles, but in the end, we walked out of league with a specific insight into where we need to work on improving for regionals and state."

Holtzen (29-3) earned a spot in the championship match of the 126-pound class. The Louisburg junior opened with pin over Paola's Sheldon Martin and then pinned Piper's Nick Lawson in the semifinals.

All that set up a rematch of last season's 113-pound league final between Holtzen and Bonner Springs' Cassius Vanderpool. Unfortunately for Holtzen, who is currently ranked No. 6 in Class 4A, the result wasn't the same as he lost a close 3-2 decision to finish runner-up.

"Cade wrestled a really tough match, and I loved seeing his confidence early in the match," Bovaird said. "As it progressed, though, I wonder if

he got to thinking too much and let his focus shift from his wrestling to the end of the match. It was a momentary lapse where his opponent was able to get an escape and score the winning point.



Sophomore Brandon Doles tries to put his opponent on his back Saturday during a 160-pound match.

“Overall, he had a pretty dominant day. He had a rematch against the Piper kid. The last time they wrestled, Cade wasn’t able to get the pin and he only scored a tech fall; on Saturday, he not only repeated his dominance on top, but he also got a pretty solid pin out of it.”

Owens

(30-5) had a strong start to his league tournament at 120 pounds as he opened with an 18-8 major decision over Paola's Steven Yeager and then battled Bonner Springs' Peyton Richardson in the semifinals. It was a back and forth match, but Owens was eventually pinned late in the third period.

The

Louisburg junior responded with a pin of Ottawa's Trevor Kaub on the backside of the bracket and then pinned Yeager in the third-place match.

Doles

(26-8) also won his first match of the day as he pinned Paola's Corey Holub, but then came up against Spring Hill's Jakob Stovall in the semifinals. It was a low-scoring, tight match, but Stovall scored late to take the 3-2 decision.

Doles

responded on the backside to pin Baldwin's William Damet and then pinned Bonner Springs' Jackson McArthur in the third place match.



Junior Ryan Owens finished the league tournament with a 3-1 record and a third place finish.

“They both wrestled solid matches throughout the day,” Bovaird said of Owens and Doles. “I think their semifinals losses, along with several other key losses for the team that day, really showed us how much we need to focus on conditioning this week. Brandon was aggressive throughout the semis match with Spring Hill, but unable to capitalize on his scoring attempts.

“Ryan showed a lot of dominance in his semis match against Bonner Springs, but ultimately ran out of gas in the third. They were tied up before he got turned. Overall, I’m pretty

happy with their ability to bounce back and score some big points in the consolation rounds.”

Sophomore Johnathan

Keegan-Childs just missed out on the medal stand as he finished fourth at 195 pounds after recording two pins.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett

also earned two pins at 113 pounds and finished fifth overall. Sophomore Aiden

Barker also took fifth at 170 pounds after he finished with two pins and a 2-2 record on the day.

Louisburg will continue

its postseason action this Friday and Saturday as it hosts the Class 4A

regional tournament. The top four finishers in each weight class will earn a spot at the state tournament next week in Salina.

“I think the whole team is pretty stoked to be hosting regionals,” Bovaird said. “It’s a big deal to have our regional tournament on our home mats, and our gym seems to have been made to host an event like this. We should have a nice crowd cheering on the team, but I think with the smooth practices we’ve been having and the team’s ability to reset and refocus, we should have a pretty solid tournament this year.”

Wildcats end regular season with home dual win



Junior Ryan Owens works for some back points against an opponent during a 120-pound match Tuesday during the Wildcat Duals at Louisburg High School.

Thanks to Mother Nature, the Louisburg High School wrestling schedule was a little bit shorter than in year's past.

A couple different events, including the Wildcats' home tournament last month, had to be cancelled due to weather and head coach Bobby Bovaird was looking to add something to his schedule to give his wrestlers more mat time.

Bovaird was able to find something right before the start of the postseason as Louisburg invited Blue Valley West, Anderson County and Girard to compete in the Wildcat Duals on Tuesday at Louisburg High School.

Although the Wildcats didn't get the results they wanted, as they went 1-2 on the evening, it was a good way to get ready for the important tournaments ahead.

“We

lost 4-5 matches with our home invitational being canceled, then the next week

we lost one more match with the Spring Hill dual being canceled,” Bovaird said.

“It’s tough trying to make-up matches with wrestling. A game can be easily

rescheduled, but not an entire tournament. I’m very thankful that my

administration was willing to let us host this meet to make up some competition

points, plus it gave us one more chance to showcase our wrestlers at home.”

It

didn’t get off to the start the Wildcats were hoping for as they fell to Blue

Valley West (54-24) and Anderson County (42-32). Louisburg did end the night on

a positive note as it defeated Girard, 45-21, in its final dual of the season

as the Wildcats now focus on the Frontier League Tournament this Saturday.

Louisburg

got victories from Kaven Bartlett (113 pounds), Ryan Owens (120), Cade Holtzen

(126), Brett Rangel (145), Brandon Doles (160), Aiden Barker (170), Jonathan

Keegan-Childs (195) and Elijah Eslinger (285) to secure the win over Girard.

“We didn’t wrestle our best Tuesday night, but that’s all right,”

Bovaird said. “It gave us some ideas of where we really need to focus as we get

ready for the end of the season. I especially am proud of the guys for

finishing our dual season with a victory. We have a lot of opens and a lot of younger and lighter kids bumping up to fill our varsity weights. That's something that really impresses me, that we have the ability to fill those weights with kids who can compete."

Owens, Holtzen and Doles each finished the night with a 3-0 record, while Bartlett, Holtzen and Doles are each currently ranked No. 6 in Class 4A in their respective weight classes.

Senior Sam Kratochvil (220) got a win against Blue Valley West, while Barker, Keegan-Childs and Eslinger also picked up victories over Anderson County.

The Wildcats will now turn their attention to the Frontier League Invitational. The Frontier League currently has two teams (Tonganoxie and Piper) ranked in the top 10 in Class 4A, along with state-ranked wrestlers from several schools.

The tournament will begin at 9 a.m. tomorrow at Ottawa High School.

"The Frontier League is traditionally a pretty tough tournament," Bovaird said. "Each of our guys will have some key match-ups that will help us get set for regionals. Whether it's a state-ranked opponent from another league school, a potential regional match-up, or even just a chance for a revenge win, we're

sitting in a good position to win those match-ups.”

Wildcats place three in finals of Baldwin Invitational



Louisburg sophomore Brandon Doles gets a pin during his 160-pound match last Thursday during the Wildcats’ dual against Ottawa.

In what was one of its toughest tournaments to date, the Louisburg wrestling team more than held its own Saturday during the Baldwin Invitational.

The Wildcats put three wrestlers in the finals and had three more place in the top six as they went on to finish ninth in the team standings.

Kaven Bartlett (113 pounds), Cade Holtzen (126) and Brandon Doles (160) each made their way to the finals and finished second. Ryan Owens (120) and Aiden Barker (170) was fifth and A.J. Reed (182) took sixth.

“Coach

Harris at Baldwin has always tried to make this tournament a tough competition, inviting as many 4A schools as possible,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Many times, it’s like a mini-state tournament. You’ll see some marquee match-ups throughout the tournament. I love that we had guys able to step up and battle their way into the finals. It’s a great feeling having our guys able to earn medals at this tournament.”

Holtzen

recorded a couple pins on his way to the championship match as he opened with a first period pin of Clay Center’s Aden Hatcher and then followed that up with a pin in the third period of Burlington’s Johnathon Williams in quarterfinals. In the semifinals, he recorded a 14-3 major decision of Wamego’s Nick Cruickshank.

In the finals, Holtzen squared off with Marysville’s Isaac Novotny, who is ranked No. 5 in Class 4A. Holtzen and Novotny went into overtime, but Holtzen fell in a 10-9 decision.

“It

was definitely an exciting match, and it came down to the fact that Cade made some mistakes that his opponent capitalized on to score his points,” Bovaird said. “The great thing about that is that we have some specific things to work on. We have time to make corrections, to analyze film, and to work on improving technique.

“The next time Cade faces off against this opponent, he’ll have put in the time to improve those areas. Cade really did wrestle a tough match against him, and he’s got nothing to hang his head about.”



Doles, who is currently ranked No. 6 at 160 pounds, also got off to a good start as he pinned his way to the championship match. He opened with a pin of Labette County’s Cody Hambleton and then followed it up with another pin of Baldwin’s William Damet, before getting a revenge win over Eudora’s Nate Criqui with a second period victory in the semifinals.

Burlington's

Cael Johnson was Doles' next opponent in the championship. Johnson, who is the No. 1 ranked wrestler in 4A, pinned Doles in the second round.

"Brandon

received our weekly 'Wildcat Award' for his performance this weekend," Bovaird

said. "He stepped up and got a revenge win against his Eudora opponent and he

battled pretty well against his Burlington opponent, who is ranked #1 in the

state. Five of his six losses this season come from the No. 1 (twice) and No. 5

(three times) ranked wrestlers in 4A."

Bartlett,

who also cracked the state rankings at No. 5 at 113 pounds, recorded three

straight pins on his way to the title match. He defeated Osawatomie's Damon

Estes and Marysville's Tristen Schaefer with first period pins and then pinned

Perry-Lecompton's Mason Bahnmaier in the second period of the semifinals.

In

the first-place match, Bartlett lost a 4-0 decision to Holton's Jake Barnes,

who is currently ranked third in Class 3A.

"Kaven

is really showing that his hard work in the off-season is paying off," Bovaird

said. "He's got some great youth wrestling experience, and now he's stepping up

his game. I told him after his finals match that the conversation is no longer 'he's

got a good chance of qualifying for state.' It's now a conversation of 'he's got a good chance at placing at state.'"

Owens

advanced to the semifinals of 120 pounds and squared off with Osawatomie Chance

Mitzner, who is No. 5 in the state. Owens battled him to the end, but lost a

3-2 decision, and eventually took fifth after he won a 6-5 decision over Eudora's

Dayton Fraser.

Barker went 3-2 on the day to

finish fifth at 170 pounds, while Reed also picked up two wins to take sixth at

182 pounds.

"Ryan

Owens battled and lost a tough 3-2 match to the No. 4 ranked kid in 4A,"

Bovaird said. "In the consolation bracket, he had a tough time bouncing back,

but he competed pretty well. Aiden Barker came out and wrestled well, too. AJ

Reed also had a good tournament. What he's missing in technique and experience,

he makes up for with toughness and competitiveness. Jacob Briley and Sam

Kratochvil also won some matches for us and had a good tournament."

Louisburg

is back in action Thursday when it travels to state-ranked Piper for a Frontier

League dual.

Wildcats fall in Senior Night dual to Ottawa

On a night that honored seniors Hugh Staver, Sam Kraotchvil and manager Elizabeth Kratochvil during Senior Night ceremonies last Thursday, the Wildcats had a tough time against Ottawa in a Frontier League dual.

The Wildcats fell 60-24 to the Cyclones as Louisburg had to deal with several open weights.

Ryan Owens and Cade Holtzen opened with a pair of pins to give Louisburg a 12-0 lead early, but the Cyclones were just too much. Brandon Doles and Aiden Barker also recorded pins on the night for Louisburg.

Holtzen notches 100th career win as Wildcats take third at Parsons



PARSONS – The Louisburg wrestling team gained a little more traction on its season Friday when the Wildcats

traveled to the Parsons Invitational.

The Wildcats racked up 78 points to finish in third place out 12 teams and had five wrestlers finish in the top four. Among those five was junior Cade Holtzen, who had a special night of his own.

Holtzen won the 126-pound division and made a little history in the process. After winning his championship match, he recorded his 100th career victory as he finished the day 3-0.

He opened the tournament with a 7-0 decision on Lebanon's (Mo.) Austin Johnson and then earned a 9-1 major decision over Lebanon's Bo Rosen in the semifinals. Holtzen (21-1) later pinned Labette County's Evan Flatt in 54 seconds in the championship.

"Cade's bracket was pretty unusual," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "His first match was against a JV kid from Lebanon, but that kid could have started on many other teams. His second match in the semifinals was against the varsity Lebanon kid, who was pretty tough. In the finals, he saw a returning state qualifier from Labette County.

"It's challenges like these that shape the rest of the season, and I'm proud of how Cade stepped up and competed. Seeing him join the 'Century Club' by getting that 100th win was a great way to cap off the tournament."

Three

other Wildcats also placed in the top four as junior Ryan Owens (120 pounds)

finished second. Freshman Kaven Bartlett (113) and sophomore Brandon Doles

(160) took third, while sophomore Aiden Barker (170) finished in fourth.

Overall, Bovaird liked what he saw from his team.

“Coming

away with another team plaque was a nice touch as the team has been working so

hard throughout the month of January,” Bovaird said. “In the bigger picture of

the season, January is always a tough month. It’s a long sprint, week-to-week.

We have tournaments each weekend and a dual each week. There’s the regular

problems due to inclement weather, and it’s also the time of year that everyone

seems to get sick. These guys have been working their tails off, and something

like a team plaque is a nice reward to let them know that their hard work is

paying off.”

Owens (21-2) had a good start to his tournament as he pinned Lebanon’s Andrew Dent in the second period and then won a tough 9-7 decision over Independence’s Cooper Anderson to advance to the championship. It was there where he was pinned by Lebanon’s Cole Patten and ended in second place.

As for Doles (18-5), who is currently ranked No. 6 in the state at 160 pounds, he opened with a pin of Cherryvale’s Brad Morris, but ran into Independence’s Ian Lawson in the semifinals and was pinned in the second period. Lawson is currently No. 5 in Class 4A.

Doles

bounced back to pin Lebanon's Connor Brand in the consolation semifinals and then won a 5-1 decision over Santa Fe Trail's Stephan Roberts in the third-place match.

Bartlett (19-4) won his first match in the 113-pound bracket after he pinned Cherryvale's Dalton Morrill, but was pinned by Lebanon's Davis Joiner in the semifinals. Bartlett responded to pin Erie's Nate Thompson in the consolation round and then won a tough 2-0 decision over Lebanon's Taydem Johnson.

At 170 pounds, Barker (12-7) is filling in for junior Ben Wiedenmann who is injured. After losing his first match, he responded with back-to-back pins to advance to the third-place round, where he was pinned by Lebanon's Gabriel Schiller.

As

much success as the Wildcats had, it was a difficult start to the day as school was canceled on that morning, but the meet went on as scheduled. It left the wrestlers with a different start to their day.

"When the kids woke up Friday morning to learn that school was canceled, that really made things challenging," Bovaird said. "It was up in the air as to whether or not we'd be able to compete in the tournament, and thanks to the due diligence and planning of our administrators, we were given the go ahead to travel. I'm very proud of how the team was able to hold their weight, refocus in the face of uncertainty, and get the job done. We had a lot of opens at Parsons, but they still arose to the challenge."

Louisburg is back in action at 5:30 p.m. Thursday when it hosts Ottawa in a league dual on Senior Night. The Wildcats will then travel to the Baldwin Invitational on Saturday.

Wildcats get home dual win over Lawrence



Louisburg junior Ryan Owens brings Lawrence's Kevin Honas to the mat Tuesday at Louisburg High School. Owens upset the No. 4 ranked Honas and won by decision in the Wildcats' 48-30 victory.

When it comes to duals, the Louisburg wrestling team has been a little unlucky so far this season – whether it was because of open weights, injuries or bad matchups.

It all seemed to come together for the Wildcats on Tuesday when they hosted Lawrence High School. Louisburg put together a strong showing as it downed the Lions 48-30 and captured their first dual win since early December.

“It felt great getting a dual win, especially at home on our own mat in front of our crowd,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Lawrence is a young team, but then again, so are we. We ended up with two open weight classes, and that’s been our struggle the last couple of years.

“I had several guys move up a weight to fill out our lineup, and I love the fact that I can do that with our squad. If I didn’t think it was a safe choice or that our guy could handle moving up a weight, I wouldn’t do it. It’s always a gamble, and I’m proud of how the squad stepped up and answered the challenge.”

The dual started at 126 pounds when Cade Holtzen opened with a pin, but Lawrence recorded back-to-back pins against Luke Kelly and Jarrett Hoyle at 132 and 138 pounds, respectively to take the lead. Senior Harrison Laney responded with a big pin at 145 pounds to tie the match.

Lawrence took the lead once again after Louisburg was open at 152, but sophomores Brandon Doles and Aiden Barker came through in their matches. Doles and Barker both notched quick pins at 160 and 170 pounds to give the Wildcats a 24-18 advantage.

Louisburg

would build on its lead from there as sophomore A.J. Reed won by pin at 182 pounds. Lawrence was open in the next two weight classes and the Wildcats were up 42-18 to all but seal the win.

After

Lawrence won by pin in the heavyweight class against Elijah Eslinger, and the Wildcats were open at 106, the Lions cut the Wildcat lead to 12. Freshman Kaven Bartlett sealed the victory with a win by decision.

Even

though the dual was basically over, the final match ended up being the most competitive of the night. Junior Ryan Owens squared off with Lawrence's Kevin Honas, who is currently ranked No. 4 in Class 6A.

Owens

pulled off the upset as he was able to win by decision and improved his record to 19-1 on the season to end the evening on a strong note.

"Ryan's

win at 120 was a great conclusion for the dual," Bovaird said.

"Not only did he

win the match, but I saw a change in attitude and mindset with his

competitiveness. In fact, that's been the staple of his matches all season.

He's really grown and advanced.

"I

don't mind him not being ranked in 4A. He's going to surprise some people this

season, that's for sure. Our seasoned wrestlers stepped up and

wrestled tough,
like I knew they would, and our newer wrestlers still gave it
a great battle,
whether they won or lost.”

Louisburg
is back in action Friday when the Wildcats travel to the
Parsons Invitational.