

Four Wildcats take first in Topeka tournament



TOPEKA – It had been a frustrating start to the new year for the Louisburg wrestling team.

The Wildcats saw their first two events of 2020 cancelled, including their home tournament. It left them itching to get back on the mat and it showed Saturday.

Louisburg traveled to the Topeka Invitational for its first competition in nearly a month and the Wildcats were able to shake off the rust and come home with some hardware. They left Topeka with four champions and one runner-up as the Wildcats finished fourth out of 10 teams.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett (113 pounds), junior Cade Holtzen (126), sophomore Brandon Doles (160) and sophomore Aiden Barker (170) each finished first in their respective brackets to lead the Wildcats. Junior Ryan Owens (120) also advanced to the championship match, but finished second.

“They were definitely eager to get back on the mat,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We’ve been working hard in the practice room, and after two weeks of some really awesome

practices, it's great to see them get a chance to get on the mats to show what progress they've been making.

"The cancellations were frustrating, no doubt about it, but it is what it is. Every year we don't have any meets canceled due to weather, we're pretty lucky. I just hate losing our home tournament because it's a long-standing tradition and a great chance to get some quality matches on our home mats. "

Bartlett (16-3) got his day started with a technical fall of Topeka West's Jay Dillon and then outlasted Burlingame's Conner Collins for a 2-0 decision in the semifinals. Bartlett then captured the title with a 4-1 decision over Council Grove's Jesse Rodgers in the championship match.

At 126 pounds, Holtzen (18-1) pinned his way to a title. He made his way to the championship with easy pins over Bishop Miege's Daniel Henre and Gardner-Edgerton's Therron Meade. Then in the first-place match, Holtzen handed Council Grove's Wyatt Johnson his first loss of the year with another pin.

Doles (15-4) opened his day up with a pair of easy pins over Topeka-Hayden's TC Thompson and Gardner's Trenton Bryan to advance to the championship. He then battled Topeka High's Caemen Blake and won with a 7-5 decision.

Barker (10-5) filled in at 170 pounds for the Wildcats and recorded a pair of pins over Gardner's Aydin Lowery to record his first championship of the season.

Owens (18-1) started the tournament strong as he pinned

Gardner's Zack Thomas and Highland Park's Javier Osorio to reach the finals. It was there where he suffered his first loss of the season in a 5-0 decision to Council Grove's Tom VanValkenburg, who is currently ranked No. 4 in Class 321A.

"Our guys really did come out well on Saturday," Bovaird said. "For Kaven and Aiden, it was their first ever varsity championship. Cade and Brandn have been there before, but they still had to earn it. Kaven held on to win two decisive matches with smart wrestling, especially on top. Cade had a tough opponent in the finals, but one great thing I saw from him was the ability to turn on the heat late in the match. He never let up, and finally got the pin in the third period.

"Brandon faced off against a very unorthodox opponent, a 6A state qualifier, and I think the match wasn't near as close as the score suggested. He was in control and dominant the whole match. Aiden stepped up to the opportunity to make some noise for himself, and he could have easily let himself get defeated mentally, but he showed some great mental toughness in his matches.

"Ryan Owens ran into the #4 ranked wrestler in 321A, and although he lost 5-0, he was competitive the entire time. That match, while it was a loss, helped him pinpoint some important things to work on, and with his attitude this season, he'll be bouncing back with no problem. "

Sophomores A.J. Reed (182) and Johnathan Keegan-Childs (195) each finished fifth for Louisburg, while junior Jarrett Hoyle (132) and senior Sam Kratochivil (220) each placed sixth.

As a team, the Wildcats finished with 143.5 points to take fourth despite being open in four weight classes. Council Grove won the team title with 171 points, Topeka High was second with 169.5 and Gardner-Edgerton was third with 150.

Louisburg is back in action at 5:30 p.m. tonight when it hosts Lawrence for Alumni Night. The Wildcats will also travel to the Parsons Invitational on Friday.

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2019



It was a successful, and eventful, 2019 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2019, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account – whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site. There were stories that I had to leave off that normally would easily make it. 2019 was that successful of a year for Wildcat athletics.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As

much fun as it was, I can't wait for 2020 to begin. Looking forward to it!



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

Two Louisburg High

School weightlifters made their way to the top of the podium

in March during
the Class 4A State Powerlifting Meet at Basehor-Linwood High School.

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

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

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

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

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

Ratliff-Becher had a big day

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

definitely a little nerve-racking waiting for the scores to come in.”

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

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

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



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

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

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

A little more than four months later, Moore was on the medal stand with some of

the state's best
wrestlers in his weight class.

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

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

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

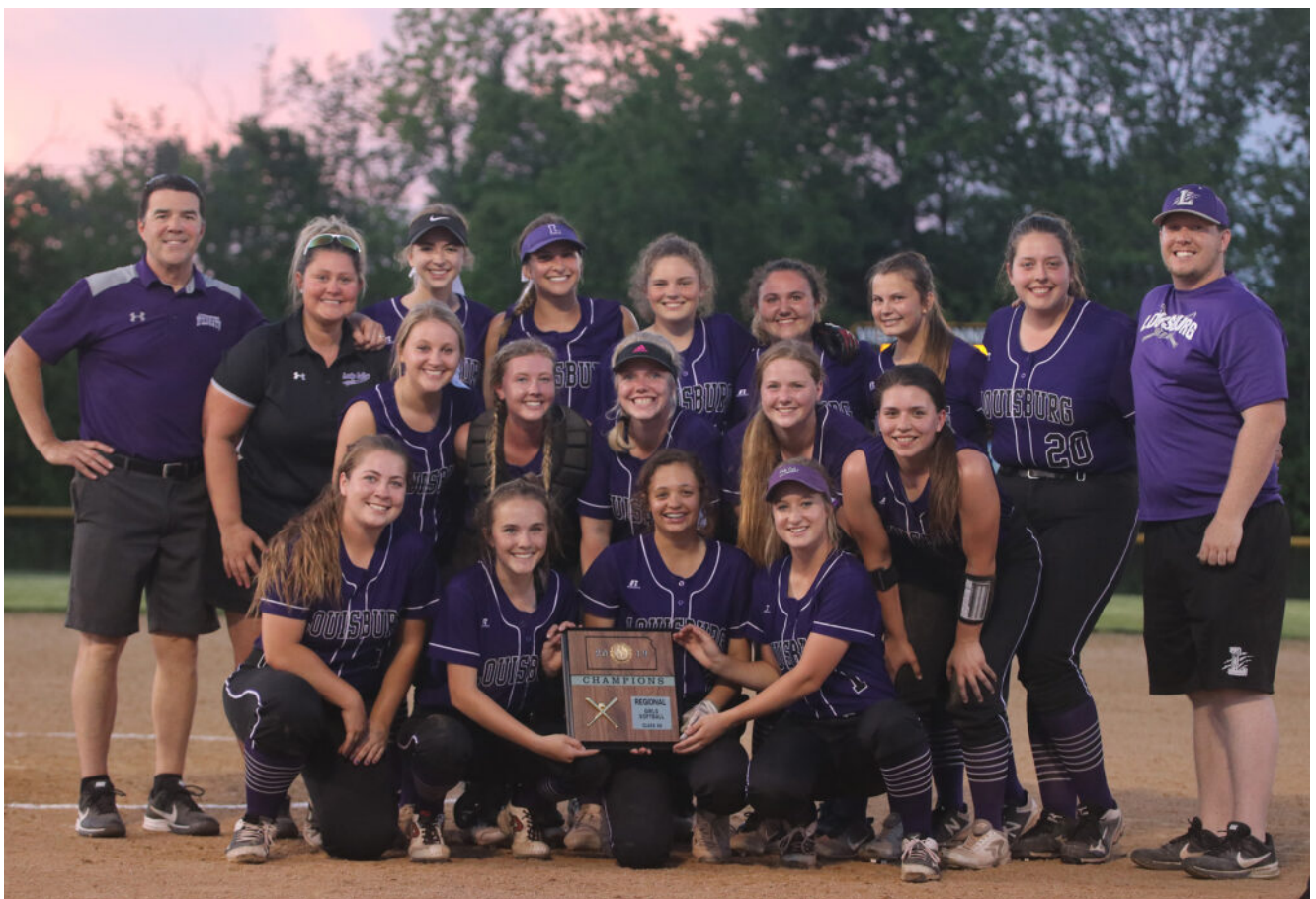
Louisburg's talent was certainly on full display during the two-day tournament. Brandon Doles, Blue Caplinger and Austin Moore won regional crowns, Cade Holtzen was a regional runner-up, while Gabe Bonham and Ryan Owens also qualified for state by placing third and fourth, respectively.

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

"The way these guys

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

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



7. Louisburg softball captures regional title

OTTAWA – Madison

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

Karson Griggs was a feeling a little nauseous.

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

Louisburg held a one run lead, but Chanute had the tying run on third, two outs, and a trip to the state tournament was on the line. On the mound was sophomore Brooklyn Diederich, and with two strikes, the Chanute batter fouled five straight pitches.

The tension was mounting.

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

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

"I want to cry, but at the same time I am just really happy," Griggs said. "It is exciting because I

never thought something like this could happen, especially this year. It feels really nice and now maybe people will actually start taking us seriously.”

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

As it turned out,

Reece didn't need to be so worried.

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

The team of Trinity

Moore, Carlee Gassman, Reese Johnson, Claire Brown, Ruth Minster, Kennady

Wilkerson and Bree Gassman competed for the Lady Cats at state.

"This group of girls runs

well, they race well and they train well together," coach Reece said. "They are

a good group and this is just as exciting as the other two times. The

competition was a lot tougher than the previous two times. We had to run our

races and we did. From our third to fifth runners was about an eight point

spread."

Trinity Moore has left a

lasting impression on the Louisburg cross country program over the last four

years, but she saved the best moment for her final act.

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

The Louisburg senior

recorded the program's best ever state finish as she eclipsed her fourth-place state

medal from a season ago.

“It meant so much to me to finish with such a great race for my high school career,” Moore said.

“Going into the race, I didn’t know how well I would finish. This race had the best competition that I have ran against all year and I think that is what really pushed me.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kyle Conley

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

"This team is special.

16 wins is a school record and only two losses is probably a school record.

This team is incredible, played so hard and did everything I asked them to do.

They were always there to pick each other up and that is what this soccer

family is all about. It will be tough to say goodbye to these kids."



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

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

Partially because a year ago, it was.

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

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

School – one they didn't expect.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



3. Louisburg cheer wins first state championship

The Wildcat

cheerleaders competed at the Class 4A KSHSAA Game Day Spirit Showcase

Competition on Nov. 23 at the Stormont Vail Events Center in Topeka and came back home with a big trophy in tow.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

racers were judged by
times with no preliminaries.

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

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

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

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

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



Wright won a regional title in the long jump and finished second in the 200 and 400-meter dashes. She also helped Carlee Gassman, Rain Pugh and Sydni Keagle to a second place finish in the 4x400-meter relay.

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

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

champions and qualified for state in 10 events.

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

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

Wildcats find individual success in Tonganoxie



Louisburg sophomore Brandon Doles works for some back points against Frontenac's Storm Niegsch on Saturday in Tongnaoxie. Doles upset Niegsch, the state's No. 5-ranked wrestler, in a 5-3 decision.

TONGANOXIE – The Louisburg wrestling team had one final meet before the end of 2019, and before it even started, the Wildcats were faced with several challenges.

Maybe the biggest was the fact the Wildcats had three open weight classes during the Randy Starcher Memorial Dual Tournament. That means, in some cases, the Wildcats would have to give up 18 points in every dual.

That was one of the reasons the Wildcats finished the Dec. 21 tournament with an 0-5 record at Tonganoxie High School.

Louisburg opened with a 57-21 loss to eventual champion Shawnee Heights. The Wildcats also came up short to Coffeyville-Field Kindley (48-28), Frontenac (48-33), Eudora (45-29) and Independence (45-24).

As tough as the team results were, the Wildcats still had several individuals who fared well in their final competition of the year.

Junior Ryan Owens (120 pounds) and Cade Holtzen (132) were each perfect with a 5-0 record on the day.

Owens picked up a big victory in his first match of the tournament as he pinned Shawnee Heights' Decker Stickelman, the No. 6-ranked wrestler in Class 5A, in just 28 seconds. Owens later went on to record two more pins and had another victory by major decision.

Holtzen also had a strong performance as he finished the day with three pins, but also recorded two close decisions. Holtzen outlasted Eudora's Will Schreiner by a 3-1 decision and then held on for a 2-1 victory over Independence's Zak Al-Bureni.



Sophomore A.J. Reed lifts his opponent and brings him to the mat Saturday in Tonganoxie.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett (113) and junior Ben Wiedenmann (170) each left Tonganoxie with only one loss.

Wiedenmann, who wrestled through a knee injury, recorded two pins and also won by technical fall and major decision. As for Bartlett, he finished with two pins and a 20-7 major decision.

Sophomore Brandon Doles (160) finished his day with a 3-2 record, but one of those wins were

a big one. Doles upset Frontenac's Storm Niegsch, who is ranked No. 5 in Class 4A, in a 5-3 decision. He also recorded a pair of major decisions.

Sophomore A.J. Reed (182) had a 2-3 record, while Jarrett Hoyle (138), Johnathan Keegan-Childs (195) and Cole Ewalt (220, 285) each had one win.

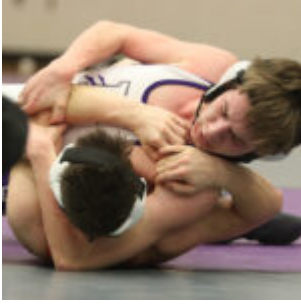
Louisburg will take a break from the dual competitions and will host the Louisburg Wildcat Classic on Jan. 11 in its first action back from the holiday break.

Wildcats fall to Olathe West

On Dec. 18, the Louisburg wrestling team traveled for a quick dual with Olathe West and the Wildcats left with a 54-29 loss to the Owls.

Ryan Owens (120 pounds), Cade Holtzen (132) and Xander Chennault (170) each won by pin, while Brandon Doles (160) picked up a victory by technical fall. Kaven Bartlett (113) won by forfeit.

Wildcats find positives after winless December Duals



Louisburg senior Harrison Laney works for a pin at 138 pounds Thursday during the Louisburg December Duals Tournament. Laney finished with two wins on the night.

The schedule ramped up for the Louisburg wrestling team last week as the Wildcats squared off with five teams during the Louisburg December Duals Tournament on Thursday.

The Wildcats faced off with several difficult squads and saw their day come to an end with an 0-5 record. Louisburg had to overcome obstacles before the tournament even started as junior captain Ben Wiedenmann was a late scratch at 170 pounds due to injury, and the Wildcats had to give up points at that spot.

Still, there were a few positives for the Wildcats to build on from their home opener.

“Although we went 0-5, the duals were pretty close,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Three of them came down to one match. Ben was out with an injured knee, and that was a last minute decision and we didn’t have a backup ready to go. With a healthy Ben in the lineup or a chance to plan ahead, we might have been able to do things a little differently team-wise, but it is what it is. The wrestlers stepped out there and competed tough. It was a long night and I’m proud of how they battled.”

Louisburg opened the tournament with a close loss to Prairie View (42-32), fell to Burlington (47-33) and then lost a close

match to Baldwin (42-36). The Wildcats lost to the tournament champion, Basehor-Linwood (54-25), and then to end the night they came up short to Independence (42-39).

Juniors Ryan Owens and Cade Holtzen provided with the Wildcats with a pair of perfect performances. Owens, who wrestles at 120 pounds, recorded three pins on the night to go along with a technical fall and a major decision.

Holtzen had a big night at 132 pounds as he also finished with a 5-0 record. He recorded two pins and won the other three by decision, including a close 2-1 decision to Independence's Zak Al-Bureni to end the night.



Senior Sam Kratochvil gets a pin over a Baldwin wrestler Thursday during the Wildcats' home opener.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett had just one loss at 113 pounds, including a pin of Burlington's Owen McManus and a 12-5 decision over Baldwin's Nakos Benton.

Sophomore Brandon Doles and Aiden Barker also had a winning record. Doles went 3-2 at 160 pounds and won by pin, a technical fall and a major decision. Barker was 3-2 at 182 pounds with two pins.

Harrison Laney (138 pounds), Xander Chennault (152), A.J. Reed (195) and Sam Kratochvil (220) each ended the night with two victories. Luke Kelly (126), A.J. Drew (145) and Elijah Eslinger (285) each

recorded a win for Louisburg.

The Wildcats will try and bounce back tonight when they travel to Olathe West for a dual. Matches are set to begin at 6 p.m.

Louisburg will then travel to Tonganoxie Saturday for another dual tournament.

Wildcats take first at Fort Scott to open season



Louisburg junior Ben Wiedenmann recorded a 5-0 record to go along with two pins Friday during the Fort Scott Dual Tournament. The Wildcats finished first overall with a 4-1 record.

FORT SCOTT – The Louisburg wrestling team put together an impressive showing in its season opener Friday at the Fort Scott Dual Tournament.

All the Wildcats did was leave Fort Scott with a 4-1 record and a first-place trophy for their efforts as they kicked their season off in high gear. They finished in a tie for first with Fort Scott, but Louisburg won the tiebreaker based on head-to-

head criteria.

Louisburg had just one open spot the entire tournament and the Wildcats even brought reserves to wrestle unattached, which would pay off later in the evening.

“One of the best things about Friday night was that we not only took a nearly full squad, but even when an injury happened, we were able to have a back-up there to fill in,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We’re starting to get our program back up with numbers after last season’s hiccup. With more bodies in the practice room, we’re able to embrace the ‘iron sharpens iron’ mentality.”

As it turned out, the Wildcats’ second dual of the night against Fort Scott turned out to be their biggest one. Louisburg edged Fort Scott for a 40-37 victory after opening the tournament with a 39-27 win over Blue Valley Southwest.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett (113 pounds) opened with a pin and junior Ryan Owens (120) followed with a 14-5 major decision. Sophomore Brandon Doles (160), junior Ben Wiedenmann (170) and sophomore Aiden Barker (182) each had pins to score key points for the Wildcats.

The biggest victory for Louisburg came at 220 pounds when senior

Sam Kratochvil

earned a first period pin to secure the win over Fort Scott.

To

end the night, the Wildcats also secured a 42-33 win over Anderson County in another close victory. Owens, Doles and Wiedenmann earned pins for Louisburg,

but it was another senior that stepped up again for the Wildcats.



Sophomore Aiden Barker works for a pin at 182 pounds Friday in Fort Scott.

With

sophomore A.J. Reed out with an injury, senior Hugh Staver filled in at 195

pounds and earned a first period pin to seal the win for the

Wildcats.

“We had two guys really step up big for us in two of the duals,” Bovaird said. “Against Fort Scott, Sam Kratochvil got a huge pin for us at 220, and against Anderson County, Hugh Staver won big by pinning his opponent at 195. AJ Reed had been wrestling varsity at 195, but he hurt his ribs against Glendale-Springfield. Hugh was there to fill in and he followed through with a big win. Our guys are gaining confidence every match, and that’s what I like to see.

“Xander Chennault had a great match against Fort Scott. He hasn’t wrestled since freshman year, but he worked hard to make 152 and when he wrestled the Fort Scott kid, who’s a pretty talented wrestler, he not only got the first takedown, but he locked up a cradle and nearly pinned him! Kaven Bartlett has also been doing great as a freshman at 113. His one loss was a 1-0 decision against a junior from Anderson County.”

The four team captains, junior Cade Holtzen (132), Owens, Doles and Wiedenmann, had just one loss between them as all four scored crucial points for the Wildcats throughout the night.

Owens was 5-0 with three pins and a major decision, while Doles had five wins and three pins and Wiedenmann was 5-0 with two pins. Holtzen was 4-1 with a pair of pins, and his lone

loss was a 3-1 decision to Fort Scott's Coby Burchett.

Barker also had a successful day at 182 pounds as he finished with a 4-1 record and two pins.

"All

four of them really stepped up and competed well," Bovaird said. "They had a

combined record of 19-1 on the evening. Ryan looked dominant in his matches,

and Ben looked like he was a lot closer to wrestling shape than he realized.

It's great to see both of them wrestling at their true weights this season,

rather than having to bump up.

"Brandon

is doing well at his higher weight class, and I'm pretty happy with how he's

adapted to that move. Cade also looked pretty solid. His lone loss was to the

returning state runner-up, and I liked how he competed. That's a winnable match

next time we see them."

Louisburg

also defeated an unattached team 51-24, while their only loss came in a 52-30

setback to Glendale-Springfield, out of Missouri.

The

Wildcats will kick off their home season Thursday when they host the December

Duals. Burlington, Prairie View, Basehor-Linwood, Independence and Baldwin will

all compete in the dual tournament. The first match is set for 4 p.m.

Wildcats return 3 state qualifiers to help lead the way in 2019-20



Junior Cade Holtzen returns to help lead the Wildcat wrestling program this season. Holtzen, along with juniors Ryan Owens, Ben Wiedenmann and sophomore Brandon Doles were all named team captains.

It was successful season for the Louisburg wrestling program last year as the Wildcats sent six wrestlers to state tournament and also brought home a medal.

The Wildcats are hoping for that same type of success, if not more, this time around as they return three state qualifiers to the mix for 2019-20 season. Those are just a few of the reasons why head coach Bobby Bovaird is looking forward to seeing what his team can accomplish.

“Practices have been going smoothly, and I’m excited for the season to get underway,”

Bovaird said. "We had our annual scrimmage last night and it was great to see the match-ups. The guys are anxious to get out there to compete, too. They keep asking about going live all the time at practice. I like that – they're chomping at the bit to wrestle.

"We'll have a solid core of wrestlers. I don't think we'll have as much of a problem this year with guys having to bump up to fill empty weight classes. We have more kids who are new to the sport than we've had in previous years, but they're some solid athletes. They've been picking up pretty quickly."

Juniors

Cade Holtzen and Ryan Owens, along with sophomore Brandon Doles, are returning state qualifiers who will lead the Wildcats this season and were named team captains along with junior Ben Wiedenmann.

Holtzen

earned a state medal his freshman season and was one win away from a second a year ago. Doles was a regional champion a year ago as a freshman, while Owens was also a state qualifier.

With

an early portion of their schedule that will be consisted of duals, Holtzen will wrestle at 132 pounds to start the season and Owens will remain at 120 from a year ago. Doles moves up a class to a 160 pounds and

Wiedenmann will
take the mat at 170.



Brandon Doles, who won a regional title as a freshman, returns to help the Wildcats at 160 pounds.

“They’ve been working hard in the off-season,” Bovaird said. “Last summer, Cade and Brandon were on the mat quite a bit, and Ben was hitting the weight room pretty hard. Ryan has been keeping active with working out at Louisburg Jiu Jitsu. These four were voted team captains this season, and I’m excited to see their leadership on and off the mat.”

Louisburg

will have two open weights to begin the season, 106 and 152, but Bovaird believes they might be able to fill the 152 slot later in the season.

Freshman Kaven Bartlett will wrestle at 113 pounds, while Luke Kelly will start the year at 126. Senior Harrison Laney (138 pounds), junior A.J. Drew (145), sophomore Aiden Barker (182), senior Hugh Staver (195), senior Sam Kratochvil (220) and freshman Elijah Eslinger (285) will complete the Wildcats' lineup.

Although he may be one of the youngest on the team, Bartlett provides a good deal of experience as he has wrestled in kids club for several years.

"Kaven is another kid coming into the program who's been wrestling since a young age," Bovaird said. "He's a competitive kid and is really coachable. This past summer, he's been getting into different practice rooms, getting exposure to new practice partners and coaches. He's got the right mindset to have a very successful high school career."

The Wildcats open their season at 3 p.m., Friday at the Fort Scott Dual Tournament.

As excited as Bovaird is for this season, he is just as optimistic about the future of his Wildcat program.

"Our overall numbers are back up again this year," Bovaird said. "Last year was a fluke with our low numbers, but we also had a very good retention rate. I'm looking to continue that retention and building our numbers back up to where they were

a couple years ago. There's the old saying 'Iron sharpens Iron,' and that's true. With more numbers, we'll find the program back on the growing track.

"In 2018-19, there were over 100 kids in Louisburg (grades K through 8) who were involved in wrestling. That includes the area clubs and the middle school program. There's a wave of strong wrestlers coming in the next few years, and I'm excited to see what this group establishes as a foundation for the future."

KSHSAA releases classifications for 2019-20 school year



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

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

Football classifications are determined based on enrollment

figures in ninth, 10th and 11th grade. Louisburg is still in 4A with 432 students and is toward the lower half of the classification.

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

Kansas State High School Activities Association

Football Classifications and Enrollments-Descending Order 2020 & 2021

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

6A		5A		4A		3A	
Member Schools - 32 Range: 1854 - 1092		Member Schools - 32 Range: 1083 - 655		Member Schools - 32 Range: 654 - 340		Member Schools - 48 Range: 324 - 168	
Wichita-East	1854	Liberal	1083	Lansing	654	Baldwin	324
Wichita-North	1691	Hutchinson	1049	Great Bend	651	Topeka-Hayden	314
Wichita-Southeast	1662	Wichita-Heights	1045	Lenexa-St. James Academy	649	Parsons	286
Derby	1638	Shawnee-Mill Valley	982	Bonner Springs	640	Andale	279
Garden City	1560	Leavenworth	977	Arkansas City	620	Pratt	275
Dodge City	1533	Wichita-Northwest	970	Andover Central	608	Clearwater	266
Olathe South	1503	Emporia	949	Basehor-Linwood	587	Iola	256
Olathe East	1477	Kansas City-Turner	902	McPherson	535	Girard	252
Olathe North	1469	Wichita-Bishop Carroll	890	Kansas City-Piper	518	Nickerson	252
Topeka-Washburn Rural	1449	Topeka West	882	Ottawa	507	Clay Center Community	247
Wichita-South	1438	Topeka-Seaman	881	Buhler	497	Holton	242
Lawrence-Free State	1411	Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights	876	SM-Bishop Miege	493	Concordia	241
Manhattan	1402	Maize	871	Augusta	491	Kansas City-Bishop Ward	240
Topeka	1364	Kansas City-Washington	850	Winfield	472	Garnett-Anderson County	234
Olathe Northwest	1356	Maize South	842	Tonganoxie	471	Chapman	224
Kansas City-Wyandotte	1355	OP-Blue Valley Southwest	811	Independence	461	St. George-Rock Creek	224
SM East	1353	Salina-South	800	Chanute	452	Baxter Springs	223
Gardner-Edgerton	1325	Newton	788	Paola	447	Osawatomie	221
Haysville Campus	1297	De Soto	758	Fort Scott	434	Columbus	220
SM West	1277	Salina-Central	758	Louisburg	432	Carbondale-Santa Fe Trail	217
SM Northwest	1266	Topeka-Highland Park	757	Towanda-Circle	429	Wichita-Trinity Academy	217
Olathe West	1256	Andover	733	Coffeyville-Field Kindley	409	Hoyt-Royal Valley	216
OP-Blue Valley Northwest	1233	Goddard-Eisenhower	725	El Dorado	400	Hugoton	216
SM North	1226	Valley Center	699	Eudora	391	LaCygne-Prairie View	214
Lawrence	1221	Kansas City-Sumner Acad.	698	Rose Hill	381	Hiawatha	213
OP-Blue Valley	1182	OP-St. Thomas Aquinas	693	Altamont-Labette County	377	Frontenac	211
OP-Blue Valley West	1182	Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel	693	Mulvane	375	Meriden-Jefferson West	211
Junction City	1136	Pittsburg	691	Atchison	355	Holcomb	210
Wichita-West	1129	Hays	687	Abilene	352	Burlington	203
Kansas City-JC Harmon	1110	Kansas City-FL Schlagle	687	Wamego	351	Hesston	202
SM South	1106	Spring Hill	668	Wellington	345	Colby	201
OP-Blue Valley North	1092	Goddard	655	Ulysses	340	Wichita Collegiate	201
						Lindsborg-Smoky Valley	200
						Galena	199
						Scott Community	198
						Caney Valley	192
						Perry-Lecompton	192
						Larned	188
						Cherryvale	186
						Marysville	183
						Cheney	182
						Goodland	182
						Riley County	182
						Russell	181
						Council Grove	180
						Sabetha	173
						Gypsum-Southeast of Saline	171
						Halstead	168

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

2A

Schools - 48	
Range: 168 - 112	
Cimarron	168
Lyons	168
Welleville	167
Haven	166
Hoisington	162
Osage City	161
Seneca-Nemaha Central	161
Fredonia	159
Silver Lake	158
Easton-Pleasant Ridge	156
Riverton	155
Neodesha	153
Norton Community	153
Beloit	150
Anthony/Harper-Chaparral	148
Kingman	148
Eureka	147
Pomona-West Franklin	144
Douglass	142
Kismet-Southwestern Hts.	141
Lakin	141
St. Marys	141
Hays-TMP-Marian	140
Oskaloosa	140
Minneapolis	139
Ellsworth	137
Atchison-Maur Hill-Mt Acad.	135
Rossville	135
Effingham- Atchinson Co Comm.	130
Erie	130
Hillsboro	129
Humboldt	129
Mound City-Jayhawk Linn	128
Phillipsburg	128
Wathena-Riverside	127
Belle Plaine	124
Syracuse	121
Garden Plain	120
Ellis	119
Cherokee-Southeast	118
Belleville-Republic County	117
McLouth	117
Eskridge-Mission Valley	116
Hutchinson-Trinity Catholic	116
Leon-Bluestem	112
Marion	112
Pittsburg-St. Mary's Colgan	112
Sterling	112

1A

Schools - 28	
Range: 111 - 62	
Whitewater-Remington	111
Conway Springs	110
Horton	110
Sedgwick	108
Arma-Northeast	106
Brookville-Eli-Saline	106
Richmond-Central Heights	106
Wabaunsee	105
Wichita-The Independent	102
Lyndon	99
Sublette	99
Ellinwood	98
Oakley	98
Salina-Sacred Heart	98
Uniontown	98
Johnson-Stanton County	96
Winchester- Jefferson Co. North	94
Inman	93
Elkhart	90
Plainville	89
Pleasanton	86
Allen-Northern Heights	85
Blue Rapids-Valley Heights	82
Smith Center	82
Holton-Jackson Heights	78
Troy	70
Olpe	69
Centralia	62

8-Player Division I

Schools - 48	
Range: 98 - 66	
Herington	98
Bennington	97
Hoxie	97
Yates Center	96
Medicine Lodge	95
Hill City	94
Howard-West Elk	93
Pratt-Skyline	93
Leoti-Wichita County	90
Spearville	90
WaKeeney-Trego Community	89
Moundridge	88
Sedan	88
Cottonwood Falls-Chase Co.	84
Stockton	84
Attica/Argonia	82
Valley Falls	82
Burlingame	80
Canton-Galva	79
Goessel	79
Meade	79
Ness City	79
Washington County	79
Little River	78
Shawnee-Maranaatha Christian Academy	77
Cedar Vale/Dexter	76
Burden-Central	75
Langdon-Fairfield	75
Madison/Hamilton	75
Solomon	75
Udall	74
Atwood-Rawlins County	72
Highland-Doniphan West	72
La Crosse	72
Oswego	72
Kinsley	71
Clyde-Clifton Clyde	70
Oberlin-Decatur Community	70
Rosalia-Flinthills	70
Jetmore-Hodgeman County	69
Lincoln	69
Macksville	69
Oxford	69
Moran-Marmaton Valley	68
Greensburg-Kiowa County	67
St. John-Hudson	67
Montezuma-South Gray	66
Pretty Prairie	66

8-Player Division II

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



Printing Department

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

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

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

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

2019-2020 Classifications and Enrollments					
Enrollment figures as of September 20, 2019 based on ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades.					
Note: Schools are listed in descending order					
School Moved Up in Class School Moved Down in Class					
Printable View		Sort By School			
6A	5A	4A			
Member Schools: 36	Member Schools: 36	Member Schools: 36			
Range: 2431-1312	Range: 1305-710	Range: 661-312			
Wichita-East HS	2431	Leavenworth HS	1305	Buhler HS	661
Wichita-North HS	2190	Wichita-Northwest HS	1260	Shawnee Mission-Bishop Miege HS	656
Wichita-Southeast HS	2164	Emporia HS	1245	Ottawa HS	653
Derby HS	2105	Maize HS	1194	Winfield HS	642
Dodge City HS	2010	Wichita-Bishop Carroll HS	1153	Kansas City-Piper HS	638
Olathe South HS	2005	Topeka-Seaman HS	1150	Augusta HS	632
Garden City HS	1985	Topeka West HS	1146	Paola HS	603
Olathe North HS	1976	Tecumseh-Shawnee Heights HS	1131	Tonganoxie HS	599
Topeka-Washburn Rural HS	1933	Overland Park-Blue Valley Southwest HS	1089	Fort Scott HS	592
Olathe East HS	1927	Kansas City-Washington HS	1084	Chanute HS	584
Olathe Northwest HS	1880	Kansas City-Turner HS	1076	Independence HS	581
Lawrence-Free State HS	1855	Maize South HS	1060	Louisburg HS	573
Wichita-South HS	1852	Salina-South HS	1046	Towanda-Circle HS	562
Manhattan HS	1823	Newton HS	1044	Coffeyville-Field Kindley HS	531
Shawnee Mission East HS	1758	Salina-Central HS	1001	El Dorado HS	528
Gardner-Edgerton HS	1729	De Soto HS	992	Mulvane HS	520
Topeka HS	1728	Andover HS	959	Eudora HS	493
Wichita-Haysville Campus HS	1712	Topeka-Highland Park HS	959	Altamont-Labelle County HS	490
Shawnee Mission West HS	1638	Goddard-Eisenhower HS	952	Rose Hill HS	485
Kansas City-Wyandotte HS	1637	Overland Park-St. Thomas Aquinas HS	925	Atchison HS	472
Shawnee Mission Northwest HS	1624	Kansas City-FL Schlegle HS	909	Wellington HS	465
Overland Park-Blue Valley Northwest HS	1619	Valley Center HS	904	Abilene HS	460
Lawrence HS	1601	Lenexa-St. James Academy	902	Warrego HS	446
Overland Park-Blue Valley HS	1600	Great Bend HS	884	Ulysses HS	433
Overland Park-Blue Valley West HS	1582	Wichita-Kapaun Mt. Carmel HS	880	Baldwin HS	421
Shawnee Mission North HS	1557	Kansas City-Sumner Academy	871	Topeka-Hayden HS	408
Olathe West HS	1535	Pittsburg HS	867	Andale HS	375
Overland Park-Blue Valley North HS	1498	Hays HS	863	Clearwater HS	367
Shawnee Mission South HS	1469	Lansing HS	859	Parsons HS	363
Junction City HS	1440	Goddard HS	848	Pratt HS	355
Wichita-West HS	1421	Spring Hill HS	825	Iola HS	339
Kansas City-JC Harmon HS	1399	Andover Central HS	810	Nickerson HS	323
Hutchinson HS	1386	Bonner Springs HS	793	Holton HS	322
Liberal HS	1371	Basehor-Linwood HS	791	Girard HS	315
Wichita-Heights HS	1357	Arkansas City HS	765	Chapman HS	314
Shawnee-Mill Valley HS	1312	McPherson HS	710	Clay Center Community HS	312

3A**Member Schools: 64****Range: 305-172**

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

2A**Member Schools: 64****Range: 171-109**

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

1A**Member Schools: 117****Range: 108-14**

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

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

Frontier League sends proposal to KSHSAA to separate private schools



A big change to the Kansas High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) postseason could be coming sooner rather than later if a proposal, submitted by the Frontier League, passes the KSHSAA Board of Directors and its member schools.

Last month the Frontier League, led by Paola High School principal Jeff Hines and Louisburg superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann, petitioned KSHSAA to separate public and private schools into their own postseason competitions.

In order for it pass, the petition must be signed by 20 percent of the 355 member schools

according to KSHSAA
bi-laws. The Frontier League got the 71 needed petitions and
have now submitted
this to appear in front of the KSHSAA Board of Directors for
vote in their
Sept. 18 meeting.

The board of directors would then
have to pass it by simple majority of those in attendance to
bring the proposal
to a vote from all the member schools.

“Kansas needs to catch up with
the rest of the country and get this competitive imbalance
under control in our
state,” Hines said. “The longer we wait then more students
will be negatively
impacted. We have a responsibility as educators to create the
best
opportunities possible for our students. No one can honestly
say we have
the best system possible right now. It can definitely be
improved.”

The proposal submitted by the Frontier League is the same one
the state of Texas uses that keeps the schools in their same
classification, but only separates the schools come
postseason.

Other options were discussed
before submitting the proposal, such as implementing a
multiplier on all
private schools like Missouri currently does. In fact, it is
the most popular
proposal among the schools that were surveyed by Hines last
January.

They also talked about the “Oklahoma

model" where schools are bumped up a classification based on success for competitive balance.

Seventy-four percent of the schools said they would support a population multiplier, 64 percent would support competitive balance factors and 51 percent would support separate divisions.

However, KSHSAA would not be able to make this change with a multiplier due to state statute K.S.A. 72-130 that states a high school association "must establish a system of classification of member high schools according to student attendance."

KSHSAA would not be able to pass a new bi-law that goes against state statute, and therefore, the Kansas State Legislature would have reword the statute to allow the association to make those changes.

The Frontier League believes the Texas model, or separate postseason divisions, does not deal with classifications. Also, this model had more support from 5A and 6A schools as neither classification would likely vote for a multiplier.

"We don't view that as a classification decision as we are not affecting classification, but KSHSAA and their lawyers view that it is," Biermann said. "5A and 6A schools that we talked to really wanted us to push for the Texas model because they don't want to play them (private schools) either. The biggest thing for me is if 5 and 6A schools don't want to play them, then why do we? As a superintendent, I am supposed to create opportunities for kids. We had four teams last year in both

soccer teams, football and volleyball that all saw their season end to Bishop Miege. It is not right that we have kids and coaches that work their tails off and they don't have the opportunity to win.

"Am I all about state championships? Absolutely not. But we also know the reality of it in the current system. Winning state championships is important for communities and is always a goal. I am not ever going to give up on this idea and neither will the Frontier League."

The public versus private school debate has been going on for the last several years and Hines has been leading the charge since 2015 when he put together a study that displayed the disparity of state championships won by private schools.

In 2018-19, private schools won 32 percent of the state championships in Classes 5A through 1A. There are currently no private schools in 6A. Twenty-one of those 24 state titles were won by private schools in Class 4A and 5A.

That is a high number considering that out of the 355 member schools, only 27 of them are private.

The Frontier League wanted to see change, so Hines surveyed the 355 member schools late last year and presented his findings to KSHSAA in January. More than 88 percent of the schools responded, that included 22 private institutions, and 87 percent said they want the current system changed.

**Presentation of Public/Private School Survey Results
to The KSHSAA Executive Board**

January 10, 2019

Results from Survey

313 of the 355 KSHSAA Member Schools Responded – 88.2%

291 Public Schools Responded

22 Private Schools Responded

273 Member Schools voted YES to support a change in the current structure

271 Public Schools Voted Yes for Change

2 Private Schools Voted for Change

40 Member Schools voted NO to support a change in the current structure

20 Public Schools Voted No for Change

20 Private Schools Voted No for Change

87.2% voted that they want the current system changed.

	Survey Response Rate	Support Change
1A	82.9%	92.8%
2A	89.0%	84.2%
3A	98.4%	85.6%
4A	100.0%	88.9%
5A	88.8%	81.3%
6A	77.7%	82.1%
Total	88.2%	87.2%

School Superintendent Response Rate

175 School Superintendents Responded

169 out of 175 Support Change

96.6% Support Change

Principal Response Rate

182 Principals Responded

84.6% Support Change

Activities Director Response Rate

200 Activities Directors Responded

85% Support Change

Although most schools said they would support the multiplier model more, Hines and the rest of the league schools, believe it is the best way to proceed at this time.

“Our survey indicated that separate divisions was the least popular option among member schools, however as a league we feel like it is the most appropriate option,” Hines said. “A multiplier will pass through and will be our next option if this does not go through. A multiplier will impact many private schools that are not quasi sports academies that are not very successful in athletics. The separate divisions avoids this situation.”

If the proposal does pass the board of directors, KSHSAA will then put it to a vote with all 355 member schools and it must pass by a simple majority and by four of the six classes.

From there, KSHSAA executive director Bill Faflick would take it to the Kansas Legislature before change could be implemented.

“We know it won’t happen overnight,” Biermann said. “Even if this passes, nothing will change this year and probably not the following year. It could be three years out with the way football schedules take shape. We are honestly ok with that if we knew that there was light at the end of the tunnel. If this would not pass, we would turn right around and do the multiplier one.”

Despite what happens at the

upcoming board of directors meeting, Hines believes changes to the system will happen sooner rather than later.

“I am now confident something will get done,” Hines said. “I think it will ultimately take a multiplier to get something done. If the separate divisions fails then we will propose a multiplier for the spring board of directors meeting.”

A lot of obstacles are still in the way for change to happen, whether it has to deal with state statues or member votes, but none of the schools in the nine-member Frontier League are going to stop until they see a more even playing field.

“I am very proud of the Frontier League, and even though we compete against each other, we are very unified on this,” Biermann said. “It is about fairness and equality and I am tired of having my kids at Louisburg High School not having the same opportunity as some others. The throttle is down and it is going to stay down.”

USD 416 to offer new sports for upcoming year



The Louisburg High School cross country team will have some

company this season as Louisburg Middle School is offering cross country for the first time this year and the younger Wildcats will attend many of the same meets as the high school. LHS will also offer boys and girls swimming this year and have discussed girls wrestling for the future.

There are always changes with every incoming school year, but Louisburg residents will see a couple major ones for the 2019-20 school year on the activities side.

Late last spring, the USD 416 Board of Education approved to add three new activities to the Wildcat sports slate in middle school cross county and boys and girls swimming. All three will give students opportunities to try something different for the upcoming year.

Middle school cross country will coincide with the high school season in the fall and those athletes will attend many of the same meets in 2019. Louisburg will open its season on Sept. 5 at the Anderson County Invitational in Garnett.

The Wildcats will then travel to Wellsville and Prairie View on Sept. 19 and 26, respectively, before wrapping its season on Oct. 10 in Eudora for the Frontier League meet.

There will be separate seventh and eighth-grade divisions for the meets and the middle school runners will run two miles, while the high school will continue to run its usual 5-kilometer course.

Current high school coach John Reece will also serve as the middle school head coach, while Paul Restivo takes over assistant coach duties. It is an exciting time for Reece and the Wildcat program.

“Having a feeder program at the middle school level feeding into the high school level is invaluable,” LHS activities director Scott Hinkle said. “Having a feeder program is what builds and sustains successful programs.”

Louisburg will also participate in boys swimming, which takes place during the winter season, along with girls swimming that competes in the spring. USD 416 approved to co-op with the current Osawatomie-Paola team during the season, and if any swimmers should qualify for the state meet, they will compete on their own for Louisburg.

USD 416 superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann met with interested swim parents last year and worked with the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) in getting the approval to join the Osawatomie-Paola team for this school year.

Hinkle conducted interest meetings late in the spring with current high school students and eighth-graders moving up into high school.

“The students that attended the initial organizational meeting were very excited and inquisitive,” Hinkle said. “We had approximately 24 at the high school meeting – 12 boys and 12 girls. We probably had 10 or 12 show up for the middle school meeting. Usually when you introduce a new sport a lot of kids are interested in hearing about the new opportunity

and what options are available to them.”

Due to the possible increased numbers for the Osawatomie, Paola and Louisburg team, there was also a new hire made as Maddie Carrigan, who is in her first year as a para at LHS, will be the assistant coach and will help out current head coach Gerri Hart.

When the addition of swimming was first announced, there was talk of how to get the swimmers to and from practice every day at the Miami County YMCA in Osawatomie. If the numbers worked, the parents were going to be allowed to take a school van and do a rotation schedule to take the athletes to practice.

However, due to what could be bigger numbers than anticipated, the district might have to come up with a different option.

“We have explored many options in regard to transportation,” Hinkle said. “We may have gotten real lucky in hiring an assistant swim coach who could help with the transportation. If numbers dictate more than a van, then the district is committed to transport the swimmers in a district school bus. The logistics of all of those factors will have to be worked out.”

Another activity that the district considered adding was girls wrestling. The sport was approved by KSHSAA as a sanctioned sport last April and it became the 23rd championship sport in Kansas.

Although some schools will begin programs right away, Louisburg head wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird knows it might

take a little time to get a team put together here.

“I’m pretty excited for girls wrestling to finally become a sanctioned sport in Kansas,” Bovaird said. “I’m on the state board of directors for USA Wrestling – Kansas, and we’ve been seeing huge numbers out for girls wrestling at the youth level. Because of that, we’ve known for a while that it was bound to happen at the high school level. Neighboring schools have been seeing a big interest in girls wrestling, and I hope we’re able to see some of that same interest here.

“Last year, we had five girls join the Wildcat Wrestling Club, and I think it was a great experience for them. As they get older and continue with the sport, I hope to see them bringing their friends to try it out.”

Louisburg won’t be the only district in Kansas where girls wrestling will take time to develop, but Bovaird has a plan in place for current female athletes to begin their journey into wrestling.

“I plan on working with our AD (Hinkle) to set a plan in place to accommodate interest in girls wrestling at the high school,” Bovaird said. “For the next two seasons, if a tournament only offers a boys division, then girls will be allowed to compete against male wrestlers. If there is a girls division, then they will compete against females only. After the 2020-21 season, all competitions will be separated by gender. For the time being, we’re going to operate as a single program – one practice, one

coaching staff, one team, regardless of gender. As numbers grow and we get closer to the 2021-22 season, we'll need to restructure to accommodate the state's requirement for separation.

"We have a history of solid female athletics in Louisburg, and I think the timing is just right for us to expand our wrestling program to include more females. Since I've been here, we've had girls join the team, but never in big numbers. I hope to be able to build a foundation for a solid girls program, especially since I have a 7-year-old daughter whom I'd love to see get the benefits of the sport of wrestling."

Blue Caplinger selected as 2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year



Blue Caplinger made history in a few different ways for Louisburg High School during the 2018-19 season.

Caplinger, along with fellow LHS student Alyse Moore, became the first Wildcat athlete in recent memory – if ever – to participate in two sports during the same season. All that led up to what was a spectacular finish to his senior year.

Caplinger helped the 4×400-meter relay to a state championship in late May, which was the school's first individual track title since 2015. When all was said and done, Caplinger lettered in four sports this past year.

These are just a couple of the reasons why Caplinger was chosen as the 2019 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year.

The award, which is in its second year, is to recognize an outstanding LHS student athlete. Louisburg Sports Zone asked the head coaches at LHS to submit nominations and those nominations were then organized and submitted back to the coaches for a vote.

The coaches then submitted their top three choices and the number of votes were added up, which decided the winner.

Caplinger was one of the leaders of the Wildcat football team that reeled off 10 straight wins to start the season and captured a regional championship before falling to eventual state champion Bishop Miege.

He was an All-Frontier League player on both sides of the ball as he earned first team defensive honors from the safety spot with 31 tackles, two fumble recoveries and an interception.



Blue Caplinger poses for picture with his coaches (from left), boys track coach Andy Wright, head football coach Robert Ebenstein and baseball coach Joel McGhee. Not pictured is wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird.

Caplinger played a couple different positions offensively and earned second team all-league honors as a multi-purpose player. He had 310 yards rushing and four touchdowns to go along 234 yards receiving and two more scores.

He was also the lead blocker on a lot of the big runs that teammate Austin Moore – who was a first-team all-league and all-state running back – had during the season.

“Blue was the most all-purpose player we had,” Louisburg football coach Robert Ebenstein said. “He was the ideal teammate who put the team first all the time. He always did anything that was asked of him. He was a tough competitor and a great all-around person.”

During the wrestling season, Caplinger was a state-ranked wrestler at 170 pounds for much of the year. He ended his season with a team-high

33-5 record and was a regional champion.

At the Class 4A state tournament, Caplinger finished one win shy of his first state medal. In all, Caplinger finished with a team high in wins and also holds the school record for most career reversals (72) and most career escapes (86). He ended his Wildcat career with a 111-57 record.

“Anyone who knows Blue understands what a great young man he is,” Louisburg wrestling coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Blue embodies so much about what wrestling is all about. I wanted him to get that state medal so badly, and he came so close not once, but twice. With these sorts of setbacks, Blue has demonstrated that he’s gained the resilience to be a champion in life.”

In the spring, Caplinger became a dual-sport athlete as he participated in both baseball and track and field.

Although his focus was on track, Caplinger helped out the Wildcat baseball team as a pinch-runner as he stole five bases in eight games.

However, Caplinger did a lot of his damage on the track as he was one of the Wildcats’ top sprinters. He joined Justin Collins, Ben Wiedenmann and Chris Williams to win the Class 4A state title in the 4×400-meter relay.

Caplinger, along with Charlie Koontz, Wiedenmann and Collins, also medaled fifth at state in the 4×100 relay. Both relays broke school records this past season in the Frontier League and regional meets.

Caplinger will continue his athletic career this fall as he plans to attend Benedictine College on a football scholarship.