

Louisburg girls wrestling has historic day at league meet



Louisburg freshman Brooklyn DeWeese finished second overall Saturday at the Frontier League Invitational in Ottawa.

OTTAWA – It was an historic outing for the Louisburg girls wrestling team Saturday at the Frontier League Invitational.

In the program's short existence, the Wildcats recorded three medalists for the first time in school history and had their first wrestler make the league finals. It was a strong start to their postseason journey at Ottawa High School for a team that consists of only freshmen and sophomores.

"It was an emotional day with a lot of highs and lows," coach Heather Eslinger said. "First of all it was rough having my girls split into two gyms and therefore I wasn't able to watch all of their matches. Thank goodness (coaches) Bobby (Bovaird)

and Shawn (Crossley) are so great.

"I was thrilled with our showing at league from our three girls who placed. It's great to see their confidence on the mat."

Freshman Brooklyn DeWeese had a finish to remember as she became the first Wildcat to earn a spot in the league finals and did so at 115 pounds.

DeWeese (29-8) advanced to the semifinals where she pinned Bonner Springs' Kyle Enriquez in the second period. In the finals, DeWeese faced off with the No. 3 ranked wrestler in the state – Tonganoxie's Stella Bradley – and lost by pin the second period.



Louisburg freshman Brianna Caraway took third at 130 pounds Saturday at the league meet in Ottawa.

Another freshman, Brianna Caraway, also found her way to the medal stand as she put together a 3-1 day and finished third

at 130 pounds.

Caraway (14-6) opened with a pin of Ottawa's Kylea Brewing, but lost in the semifinals when she was pinned by Spring Hill's Kendall Anderson.

On the back side of the bracket, Caraway pinned Baldwin's Keziah Moses in the consolation semifinals and then pinned Paola's Kylie Parke in the third place match.

Sophomore Maliya Collins earned her first league medal as she took fourth at 140 pounds. She finished the day with a 2-2 record.

Collins (22-13) earned a spot in the third place match with an overtime victory over Spring Hill's Morgan Hinton in the consolation semifinals. In that third place match, Collins fell by pin to Paola's Layla Anthony.



Louisburg sophomore Maliya Collins earned a fourth place medal Saturday at the league meet in Ottawa.

“Brooklyn is making quite a mark her freshman year and I’m excited to see what regionals holds for her,” Eslinger said. “Brianna has had a rough start to the season missing a lot of practices and I’m happy that she didn’t let that hold her back at league.”

Louisburg also suffered some injuries in the tournament as freshman Bella Pickman, Emma Duckworth and Allison Martin all had to exit the tournament early. Pickman and Duckworth saw their seasons come to a close.

Martin ended up finishing sixth at 135 pounds, while sophomore Leola Eslinger was fifth at 145 pounds.

“We had a lot of obstacles at league,” coach Eslinger said. “We had some injuries that ended the season for Emma and Bella. Emma suffered a concussion from an illegal mat return and Bella had a shoulder injury aggravated at league and was decided it was best to end her season rather than injure herself in a way that takes her out next season.

“Allison and Leola both struggled with some issues at league and didn’t have the showing I had hoped for, however I’m confident this week before regionals will be a time for rest and rejuvenation.”

This postseason does ramp up for the Wildcats on Friday as they take part in the 2-day regional tournament at Paola High School. Action begins at 1 p.m. and will continue into Saturday.

Wildcats finish third at Frontier League tourney; medal 9 overall



Louisburg senior Ashton Moore won the 215-pound Frontier League title Saturday in Ottawa.

OTTAWA – The Louisburg boys wrestling team showed why it is one of the top teams in the Frontier League last Saturday in Ottawa.

The Wildcats finished third out of eight teams at the Frontier League Invitational with 163 points. Paola won the league title with 232 points and Tonganoxie was second with 188.5.

Louisburg also had nine league medalists and had five wrestlers in the finals. Senior Ashton Moore won an individual league crown at 215 pounds as the Wildcats put together one of

their better league performances in recent memory.

"The league continues to be tough-as-nails, and with teams like Tonganoxie, Paola and Spring Hill, it's going to continue to be tough every year," Bovaird said. "There was a while when we were really pushing Tonganoxie for second place. Our finals round didn't quite work out how we wanted it to be, but I know we had them nervous."

"There were some years when we had the dual tournament for league, and we ended up with lots of champs and runners-up. Since we moved back to the individual tournament format, this is the most finalists we've had since 1998. Putting that many in the finals and bringing home so many medals feels pretty good. This is the best we've done in the last eight years, which was the last year we had a dual tournament format."

Moore (34-2) won his fifth tournament title in a month as he took care of business in the 215-pound bracket. The Louisburg senior, and the No. 2 wrestler in Class 4A, won all three of his matches.

He opened with a pin of Tonganoxie's Jaxon Dominic, and in the semifinals, he pinned Spring Hill's Logan Alexander in the third period. In the finals, Moore won by medical forfeit over Ottawa's Seth Ferguson.

Sophomore Levi Cotter (106 pounds), senior Mika McKittrick (132), senior Jay McCaskill (165), junior Vance Hahn (175) and senior Brayden Yoder also made the league finals, but each finished second.

Cotter (32-10) finished with a 2-1 record including a pair of pins, but squared off with Paola's Sawyer Blue, who is ranked No. 6 in the state and lost by a 16-5 major decision.



Louisburg junior Vance Hahn finished second at 175 pounds Saturday at the Frontier League Invitational.

McKitrick (29-15) was 1-1 on the day, including a pin of Spring Hill's Braden Cannally in the semis, but was pinned by Tonganoxie's Silas McCloy in the finals.

McCaskill (27-8) opened the day with a pair of dominant performances with two wins by technical fall and set up match with Baldwin's Max Harvey in the finals. The Louisburg senior fell 14-3 to take second overall.

As for Hahn (26-16), he also opened the tournament with a tech fall win and then won a 6-4 decision over Paola's Elijah Younger in the semis. Hahn would get pinned in the finals by Baldwin's Keldyn Cox.

Yoder (31-10) received a bye in the quarterfinals, but got a pin of Baldwin's Hank Beard in the semis. He squared off with Paola's Maxwell Worden in the finals, but was pinned in the third period.

Louisburg senior Canaan Clayton medaled third for the Wildcats at 120 pounds, while sophomore Spencer Mattison (144) and senior Miles Meek (285) finished fourth overall.

Clayton (23-13) finished the day 1-2, but won his final match with a pin over Ottawa's Mason Ingram to earn the third place medal.

Mattison (15-22) ended with a 2-2 day that included a pair of pins. He fell to Spring Hill's Chase Wilson in the third place match by a 13-2 major decision.

Meek (16-22) went 1-3 in the heavyweight division, including a pin of Ottawa's Will McCombs in his first match of the day.



Louisburg sophomore Spencer Mattison medaled fourth at 144 pounds Saturday at the Frontier League Invitational.

"It seems like we've struggled to be at full strength as a team for the league tournament the last few years," Bovaird said. "We had 2-3 guys out last year with injuries and

illness, and the previous years we just couldn't rise up and compete how I wanted us to do.

"This year, it was a different story. Guys like Levi, Mika and Vance making the finals was a great step. Then we had Jay, Brayden and Ashton perform pretty well, too, making the finals in their weights. On the back side of the brackets, Canaan, Spencer, and Miles all stepped up their game."

Louisburg will now prepare for its quest to earn a state tournament bid. The Wildcats have this week off before traveling to Labette County on Feb. 22 for the Class 4A regional tournament.

The top four finishers in each weight class will secure a spot at state.

"Getting some time off will be nice," Bovaird said. "The guys need to heal up and recover a little, and there are lots of little things we need to work on refining. Jay suffered a nasty sprain in his lower leg, but he should be good to go by regionals. Recovery time is always a nice thing – we just need to make sure we're not getting complacent with how we've been doing. If we go into regionals with the right mindset, we can really achieve some phenomenal things as a team."

Week 8 Athlete of the Week: Brooklyn DeWeese



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week eight of the winter sports season, sponsored by Dr. Laura's Orthodontics.

BROOKLYN DEWEESE, FRESHMAN, WRESTLING

Louisburg freshman Brooklyn DeWeese has put together a memorable season so far for the Wildcat girls wrestling team. Last Saturday at Ottawa, DeWeese became the first girls wrestler to earn a spot in the Frontier League finals and she finished second overall at 115 pounds.

DeWeese got a pin of Bonner Springs' Kyle Enriquez in the semifinals. She then faced the Class 4A No. 3 ranked wrestler in Tonganoxie's Stella Bradley in the championship and lost by pin. On the season, DeWeese has a 29-8 record with 23 of those coming by pin.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday

morning during the winter season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners:

Week 1: Gavin Lohse

Week 2: Colin Brown

Week 3: Jay McCaskill

Week 4: Brayden Yoder

Week 5: Andrew Jamison

Week 6: Ashlyn Kuhlman

Week 7: Ashton Moore



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Wildcats take third, medal five at Baldwin Invite



The Louisburg wrestling team finished third Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational and medaled five overall.

BALDWIN CITY – In what is one of the toughest tournaments on its schedule, the Louisburg boys wrestling team found a lot of success Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational Tournament.

Not only did the Wildcats medal five, but found themselves in the top three of the team standings. Louisburg finished third overall with 152 points. Tonganoxie won the 19-team tournament with 231 points and Santa Fe Trail was second with 159.

“Once again, the Baldwin Invitational didn’t disappoint with how tough a tournament it ended up being,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “The thing I love about this tournament is

the fact that we get to see so many teams we don't typically see during the regular season – Wamego, Goodland, Buhler, and Rock Creek to name a few. We had a great run on the back side of the bracket, and in the finals we were able to hold off a very strong Holton team to keep us in third place.

“We had Logan Henry out with a knee injury, and he's a returning state qualifier. Also, Canaan Clayton hurt his shoulder in his first match, which was a big blow for us. He still battled in that match and went out for his next match, but you could tell he was hurting. He's such a tough kid, though. Never complains.”

Louisburg put two wrestlers in the championship round in seniors Ashton Moore and Jay McCaskill. Moore went on to win his 215-pound bracket, while McCaskill was second at 165 pounds.



Louisburg senior Ashton Moore won the 215-pound bracket to improve his record to 28-2 on the season.

Moore finished 3-0 on the day with a pin over Tonganoxie's Jaxon Dominic in the quarterfinals and then earned a 12-1 major decision over Baldwin's Brenden O'Connor in the semis.

His biggest test came in the finals in a battle of state-ranked wrestlers. Moore, who is ranked No. 2 in Class 4A, squared off with No. 3 Taven Dick of Holton.

Moore found himself in a hole early as he was down 4-0, but battled back to eventually get a 10-6 decision and won his fourth tournament title in a month. He also improved his record to 28-2 on the season.

"That sort of mental toughness is something that everyone can benefit from watching," Bovaird said of Moore. "Ashton kept his head and didn't panic. He was focused and ready to score points, which is what we needed from him."

McCaskill earned a spot in the championship round with a quarterfinal pin of Santa Fe Trail's Dale Kirby and then pinned Chance Gray of Perry-Lecompton in the second period of the semifinals.



Louisburg senior Jay McCaskill earned win No. 100 Saturday in

the semifinals of the Baldwin Invitational.

That victory earned McCaskill career win No. 100 in what was a memorable moment for the Louisburg senior. He battled in his championship match, but lost a 7-1 decision to Buhler's Luke Kerns.

"The past two years especially, Jay has been laser-focused, both at practice and at competitions," Bovaird said. "He's really stepped up as a leader, too. He'll work with all levels of kids at practice, and he's more vocal this year than before. He's also a leader by example and he's tough as can be.

"Jay came up against a tough kid from Buhler in the finals. He really wrestled well, but his opponent was pretty slick and solid with his positioning, which helped him take advantage of any mistake Jay might have made."

Sophomore Levi Cotter also had a solid day at 106 pounds for the Wildcats as he took third with a 3-1 record on the day. His lone loss came in the semifinals in a 12-10 decision to Holton's Tyson Carlson.

Cotter responded to win two in the consolation bracket, including a technical fall over Labette County's Gavin Myers to take third place.



Louisburg freshman Parker Showalter medaled fourth at 113 pounds Saturday in Baldwin.

Freshman Parker Showalter (113 pounds) and senior Brayden Yoder (190) both left Baldwin with medals as they finished fourth overall.

Yoder battled in a tough 190-pound weight class. He opened with two wins before falling to the eventual champion, Holton's Kyler Jackson, in the semifinals in an 8-3 decision.

He advanced to the third place match against Goodland's Logan Franz, where he lost by pin. Yoder finished his day with a 3-2 record.

At 113 pounds, Showalter recorded his first varsity medal of the season after earning a spot in the third place match, but fell to Eudora's Gabe Campbell in a 7-3 decision.

Seniors Will Showalter (125) and Mika McKitrick (132) each finished in fifth place and sophomore Spencer Mattison (144) was sixth. Sophomore Bryce Thompson (157) and junior Vance Hahn (175) took seventh overall.

Louisburg is back in action Saturday as the Wildcats travel to Ottawa for the Frontier League Invitational.

**DeWeese medals at Baldwin to
lead Louisburg girls
wrestling**



(Submitted Photo)

Louisburg freshman Brooklyn DeWeese (left) finished third at 115 pounds Friday at the Baldwin Invitational.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg girls wrestling team competed in its third tournament of the season Friday at the Baldwin Invitational and one Wildcat found her way to the medal stand.

Freshman Brooklyn DeWeese medaled in her third consecutive tournament as she took third overall at 115 pounds in the 23-team tournament.

“There was some great competition in all weight classes,” Louisburg coach Heather Eslinger said. “I was really proud of Brooklyn going out there and placing third. She’s got a lot of potential and I hope she continues just grinding through the rest of the season.”

DeWeese battled her way through the 115-pound bracket. She opened the tournament with a pin of Blue Valley West's Charlotte Hargrove and then defeated Holton's Khloe Black by a 11-3 major decision.

In the semifinals, DeWeese went up against Fort Scott's Jerri Smith and lost by pin. DeWeese came through the back part of the bracket as she won by technical fall over Bishop Miege's Lucy Herrold and then pinned Frontenac's Abby Albright in the third place match.

Three other Wildcats also found their way to the placing matches. Allison Martin (135 pounds) and Leola Eslinger (145) each finished seventh overall, while Ashlyn Spradling (110) was eighth.

Martin finished with a 3-2 record, including a pin of Perry-Lecompton's Kaylie Thorne in the seventh place match. Eslinger finished 2-2, and ended her day with a pin of Wellsville's Addison Gardner for seventh.

"I was especially proud of Allison placing seventh," Eslinger said. "She's a wrestler that only started wrestling last year. She and I were joking around that last year at Baldwin she lost two matches and that was it. But she ended up placing seventh and she looked like a completely different wrestler from last year. I've seen huge improvements in her mat awareness, her wrestling intelligence and speed and reaction time on the mat, which definitely felt like it peaked on Friday."

Louisburg will look to find its way to the medal stand again Saturday as the Wildcats travel to Ottawa for the Frontier League Invitational.

Week 7 Athlete of the Week: Ashton Moore



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week seven of the winter sports season, sponsored by IronHorse Family and Cosmetic Dentistry.

ASHTON MOORE, SENIOR, WRESTLING

Louisburg senior Ashton Moore has had a wrestling season to remember, especially when it came to the past month. On Saturday, Moore won the 215-pound title at the Baldwin Invitational, which was his fourth tournament victory since the new year. Moore, who is currently ranked No. 2 in Class 4A, defeated No. 3 Taven Dick from Holton in a 10-6 decision to win the Baldwin title.

Moore's win in the championship was the fourth victory over a state ranked opponent in the last month. On Thursday, he

earned a major decision win over No. 4 Seth Ferguson of Ottawa. Earlier this year, defeated No. 5 Parker Schwarz of Prairie View and Andover's Tate Hutchinson, who is No. 3 in Class 5A. After last week's performance, Moore improved his record to 28-2 on the season. In January, Moore also won the Louisburg, Wellsville and Blue Valley Northwest Invitational crowns.

The athlete of the week award is announced every Wednesday morning during the winter season and the winner is selected by Louisburg Sports Zone with the help of nominations from coaches.

Previous winners:

Week 1: Gavin Lohse

Week 2: Colin Brown

Week 3: Jay McCaskill

Week 4: Brayden Yoder

Week 5: Andrew Jamison

Week 6: Ashlyn Kuhlman



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Wildcat wrestling earns split on Senior Night



Louisburg senior Will Showalter dives in on an opponent Thursday against Ottawa on Senior Night.

The home part of the Louisburg wrestling schedule came to an end Thursday as the Wildcats hosted both Emporia and Ottawa in a double dual.

Despite a loss to Emporia to start the night, the Wildcats bounced back and ended their home contest with a 74-6 victory over Ottawa.

It also happened to be Senior Night as the Wildcats honored 11 wrestlers and two managers during what was a special night on the mat.

Seniors Blake Oliphant, Greysen Dixon, Logan Henry, Will Showalter, Canaan Clayton, Mika McKitrick, Brayden Yoder, Ashton Moore, Miles Meek, Jay McCaskill and Jonas Briley, along with managers Lacy Burton and Kaylee Crooks, were all

recognized in-between the duals with their families.

“I feel like every class is special to me, and that’s no different with this group,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “What a phenomenal group of young men. They’ve truly set a high bar for expectations – on the mat, in the classroom, in other sports, and in life. Several of these guys have been wrestling continually since a young age, and some of them started as freshmen in high school. It’s a very diverse group, experience-wise, but that changes nothing about how proud I am of them.”

In the first dual of the night, Emporia jumped out to a big lead on the Wildcats and they nearly made a 30-plus point comeback, but fell just short, 40-36.

The Wildcats trailed 37-6, but sophomore Bryce Thompson (157 pounds) and senior Jay McCaskill (165) each earned pins. Emporia was then open in the next three weight and set up a winner-take-all in the heavyweight match.



Louisburg honored 13 seniors during Thursday's double dual against Emporia and Ottawa. Pictured (front row, from left) are Senior managers Lacy Burton, Kaylee Crooks, along with wrestlers Blake Oliphant, Greysen Dixon, Logan Henry, Will Showalter, (back row) Canaan Clayton, Mika McKitrick, Brayden Yoder, Ashton Moore, Miles Meek, Jay McCaskill and Jonas Briley

Louisburg senior Miles Meek forced his opponent to overtime in the 285-pond match, but lost by decision.

"Historically, Emporia has always been a tough-as-nails program," Bovaird said. "Their coaching staff includes a couple of guys that I knew from when I was in school, and they are Emporia alumni (head coach Brook Medrano, who won multiple state medals for Emporia, and Dusty Spaulding, a 4-time state champion for Emporia). I knew heading into this dual that their program would be tough.

"I felt like a couple things could have gone differently, which would have changed the outcome of the dual, but at the

same time, we got out there and competed with them. Almost got the dual win at the end, too. Exciting to say the least, but it gave us a chance to reflect and learn a few things about what we need to focus on doing for the final stretch of the season."



Louisburg senior Jonas Briley gets a pin during his Senior Night match against Ottawa.

Against Ottawa, the Wildcats put together a dominating performance as they lost just one match in the 74-6 victory.

The highlight of the dual came at 215 pounds, when Louisburg's Ashton Moore, who is ranked No. 2 in Class 4A, squared off with No. 4 Seth Ferguson. Moore dominated the match as he won by a 9-1 major decision.

"I was a little uneasy about that match going into it," Moore said. "Ashton had been sick on Wednesday, so I didn't know how

that would impact his performance. The good thing is that Ashton is the kind of kid who doesn't let a little illness impact his efforts.

"In his match, he looked like he'd been feeling absolutely great the day before. You couldn't tell any different. He was conservative when he needed to be, and he opened up when there was a window of opportunity. He's been laser-focused this season, and I'm excited to see where it takes him the next few weeks."



Louisburg senior Brayden Yoder earned career win No. 100 Thursday on Senior Night at Louisburg High School.

The final dual also brought about a special moment for Brayden Yoder. The Louisburg senior recorded career win No. 100 with a pin at 190 pounds, and improved his record to 25-6 on the year.

“How special is that, to earn your 100th career win at home on senior night?,” Bovaird said. “I’m so proud of Brayden, who is a great kid with a solid head on his shoulders. He gets the job done in the classroom, on the football field, and on the wrestling mat. He truly is an incredible leader with a very bright future.”

Yoder, Moore lead Wildcats with titles at Husky Invitational



Louisburg seniors (kneeling from left) Brayden Yoder and

Ashton Moore won individual titles last Saturday at the Husky Invitational at Blue Valley Northwest.

OVERLAND PARK – In what was one of their toughest tournaments on the season, a pair of Louisburg wrestlers brought home top honors.

Seniors Brayden Yoder and Ashton Moore earned individual titles at the 2-day Husky Invitational last Friday and Saturday at Blue Valley Northwest High School.

In all, the Wildcats medaled four wrestlers in the 21-team tournament that included three state-ranked programs. Louisburg finished eighth overall with 307 points.

“Once again, the Husky Invitational didn’t disappoint,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We got into this tournament because we needed some tough competition to help prepare us for the post-season. That’s exactly what we needed, and it’s exactly what we got. All of our guys got some great competition that was at the level they needed.

“Overall, we had a pretty strong performance. We tied our highest performance with eight place, but we also scored an all-time high with our team points. Also, based on the records I got when I took over as head coach, this was the first time we’ve ever had two champions, which is a pretty nice accomplishment.”

Yoder entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed at 190 pounds and he showed why. The Louisburg senior won his first five matches of the day by pin, including a semifinal pin over Rockhurst’s Chase Quinn.

That set up a match with Lawrence Free State’s Zane Shaw in the championship, and Yoder battled to a 2-1 sudden victory to improve his record to 25-6 on the season.

“In the championship match, Brayden was solid and disciplined with his neutral wrestling, which resulted in him getting a

couple of great stall calls against his opponent,” Bovaird said. “He was very smart on his feet, and when they went into overtime and his opponent was trying to avoid wrestling him, that ‘fleeing the mat’ call was pretty indisputable.”

As for Moore, he picked up a big victory of his own, but his came in the semifinals at 215 pounds. He squared off with Andover’s Tate Hutchinson, who is ranked No. 3 in Class 5A.

Moore, who was ranked No. 3 in the state in Class 4A coming into the tournament, got a 6-3 decision over Hutchinson to advance to the championship. It set up a rematch with Topeka-Seaman’s Deyton Mentzer, and Moore got the third period pin to win the title and improve his record to 25-2.

“Ashton did great throughout the tournament,” Bovaird said. “The big match was actually the semifinals against Tate Hutchinson of Andover. That kid had beaten Ashton at this tournament every year since their freshman year – last year was a 3-0 decision in the finals. This year, Ashton had his number and stepped up big-time in the semis.

“In the finals, he had a rematch with a kid he’d beaten earlier in the tournament. Ashton did a remarkable job keeping his head and his focus against an opponent who was obviously trying to get him distracted and off his game.”

The Wildcats also had two other medalists as sophomore Levi Cotter (106 pounds) and Mika McKitrick (132) had top six finishes.

Cotter finished in fifth place with a 4-3 record and had to battle his way to through the consolation bracket. In his fifth place match, Cotter earned second period pin in what was a revenge win over Andover’s Jace Dryden.

McKitrick posted three wins in the tournament as he squared off with Blue Valley West’s Scott Fohlmeister in the fifth place match. Although he was eventually pinned, it was still a

successful run for the Wildcat senior.

Louisburg seniors Jay McCaskill (165) and Miles Meek (285) each finished just outside medal contention as they took seventh and eighth, respectively.

“Levi finished the tournament with a revenge win against an Andover kid who’d beaten him by a major decision earlier in the tournament,” Bovaird said. “Mika is having a great senior season, making huge strides from last year. He’s really looking strong on his feet and on top.

“Jay had a very tough bracket, but he’s showing that he’s a dynamic and dangerous wrestler in any position, whether it’s on his feet, on top, or on bottom. Miles is an under-sized 285-pounder, but he’s doing a great job with his strength, work ethic, and athleticism. He’s a very coachable kid, and he’ll have a great conclusion to his senior year.”

Louisburg is back in action Thursday as it hosts Emporia and Ottawa for Senior Night as the Wildcats honor their 11 seniors. Matches begin at 6 p.m.

Louisburg girls medal three at Wellsville tournament



Louisburg freshman Brianna Caraway finished third overall at 130 pounds last Friday at the Aaron Patton Memorial Tournament in Wellsville.

WELLSVILLE – It was just its second true tournament of the season, but the Louisburg girls wrestling team left the Aaron Patton Memorial Tournament with its fair share of hardware.

Three Wildcats earned medals as Brooklyn DeWeese, Brianna Caraway and Leola Eslinger all finished in the top four Friday at the tournament at Wellsville High School.

In the team standings, Louisburg finished ninth with 65 points in the 22-team tournament.

“I was really proud of all the girls overall with how hard they battled,” Louisburg coach Heather Eslinger said. “One of our obstacles this season is we have a team of only 11 girls, which isn’t even a full team. So we take our girls to any girl wrestling events that we can. Some of those are labeled JV, and some are varsity, and so we might have a JV wrestler

wrestling in a varsity event, which was what Wellsville was. There was a hard battle for a lot of these girls, who were wrestling way above their skill level.”

Freshmen Brooklyn DeWeese (115 pounds) and Brianna Caraway (130) each finished third overall, and DeWeese earned her second varsity medal of the season.

DeWeese battled back from a first round loss to Jayhawk-Linn’s Rowan Day. She rattled off four straight pins, including one in a rematch with Day in the third place match.

As for Caraway, she had a busy day with six matches, but she finished 5-1 in the competition and all five of her wins came by pin.

Caraway lost her quarterfinal match to Baldwin’s Keziah Moses, but reeled off four straight wins, including a second period pin over Wellsville’s Ava Yanez in the third place match.

“I was especially proud of Brooklyn and Brianna,” Eslinger said. “Even though both of these girls are freshmen, they are at a varsity skill level, but they still had some tough battles. I was really proud of how Brooklyn didn’t let that first loss in the morning get to her head and she overcame and won that match for third place.

“Brianna had even a little bit more of a tough day. She ended up having six matches, which even for a seasoned wrestler, is a lot of matches. She had some really tough situations that she had to battle back from. At one point she was on her back and coach Bovaird and I both thought that she was done for and she was going to get pinned. In a split second she had moved position and she came out on top with the win for third place.”



Freshman Evelyn Rue tries to put an opponent on her back Friday in Wellsville.

Sophomore Leola Eslinger took fourth place at 145 pounds as she recorded a 2-2 day. After losing in the semifinals, Eslinger battled back to get a pin over Wellsville's Addy Gardner to reach the third place match.

In that match, Eslinger lost by pin to Jayhawk-Linn's Gracee Willard to end up in fourth.

Coach Eslinger saw a lot from her team as the young Wildcat group gained some much-needed experience.

"Some of the other girls that I was really proud of wrestling Friday at Wellsville was Nora Smith, who even though she went 0-2, she scored her first points, which is a great thing," coach Eslinger said. "It's always great to see progress even if it doesn't come out as a win. I was also really proud of Evelyn Rue. She was a brand new wrestler this year, came in November not knowing anything. On Friday she ended up having

her first two wins, which were both pins.

“I was just so proud that I could see those skills starting to click with Nora and Evelyn and they’re starting to understand what wrestling is and where they need to be on the mat to score. It’s only going to go up from here.”

Wildcats capture Wellsville title to win second straight tourney



Louisburg senior Canaan Clayton gets a takedown during his 120-pound match last Friday at Wellsville. Clayton and the Wildcats won the Wellsville Tournament.

WELLSVILLE – The Louisburg wrestling team has done nothing but win in 2025 and that continued Friday at the Aaron Patton Memorial Tournament at Wellsville High School.

The Wildcats won their second straight competition to start the new year as they cruised to the team title with 210.5 points and beat runner-up Santa Fe Trail by more than 80 points in the 24-team tournament.

On top of that, the Wildcats also had three individual champions and eight finish in the top four of their respective weight classes. It was the second straight time Louisburg has won the Wellsville tournament.

“This year was a big improvement from last year,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “In 2024, there were a lot of smaller teams, smaller brackets, and mismatches in the finals. This year, the semifinals, finals, and consolation finals were much more exciting. Winning it last year was pretty neat, but this year it felt a whole lot better.

“The most significant element was that we went undefeated in the first round of the tournament, and in the second round we lost maybe three matches. That meant we went into the semifinals with quite a few wrestlers. You don’t get to that point unless you step up to perform.”

Seniors Canaan Clayton (120 pounds), Brayden Yoder (190) and Ashton Moore (215) all earned individual titles as all three dominated their weight class.

Clayton won all three of his matches by pin and did so in a minute or less. In the championship, Clayton pinned Santa Fe Trail’s Bryce Combes in 59 seconds to improve to 17-6 on the season. It was also his first career tournament championship on the varsity level.

As for Yoder (19-6), he won two of his first three matches by pin and then squared off with Gardner-Edgerton’s Dawson

Cassida in the first place match. Yoder battled Cassidy to a 10-5 decision to win the 190-pound bracket.

Moore (19-2) controlled the 215-pound weight class as all four of his wins came by pin, including a second period pin of West Elk's Joshua Patteson in the championship match.

"All three of them are really stepping up and performing well," Bovaird said. "Canaan got his first varsity championship of his career in style, winning all three matches by a first-period pin. Brayden wrestled so many solid matches, just being smart and staying in solid position. He really gave a lot of great examples of his wrestling IQ with those matches. He didn't force anything, he was smart by holding off some solid attacks, and with his positioning he made sure to capitalize on his opponents' mistakes.

"Ashton was an animal in his bracket. He took the time to work some new techniques and try some unfamiliar techniques. He's such a smart athlete, and he gets it. He's not afraid of making mistakes, and he's willing to use these live matches as a chance to work things to help him win those close matches in February when we get to the postseason."



Louisburg senior Jay McCaskill lifts an opponent Friday at Wellsville. McCaskill finished third at 165 pounds.

Sophomore Levi Cotter (106) and senior Jay McCaskill (165) each finished third in their weight class, while freshman Parker Showalter (113), senior Mika McKitrick and junior Vance Hahn (175) took fourth.

Cotter (20-5) went 3-1 on the day, with his lone loss coming by pin in the semifinals to Onaga's Jesse Miller. He battled back and won his third place match by pin over Jayhawk-Linn's Aedin McGregor.

McCaskill (17-3) was 4-1, with his only setback coming in the semifinals in a 10-4 loss to Shawnee Mission East's Noah Jewell. He bounced back and earned a pin over Burlington's Kyzer Lehmann in the third place match.

Showalter (10-15) went 2-2 on the day with a pair of pins. Both McKitrick and Hahn were 3-2, while McKitrick had three pins and Hahn had two.

Bryce Thompson (157) and Greysen Dixon (138) each took sixth overall. It was a good ending to a tournament that lasted nine hours before all was said and done.



Louisburg sophomore Bryce Thompson works for a pin Friday at Wellsville.

"Without a doubt, it was a long day," Bovaird said. "We're not used to wrestling that late at night, but that's a good thing. It's all about the physical conditioning and the psychological conditioning. I was really impressed with a lot of our wrestlers' performances. Parker placed at his first varsity tournament. Mika bounced back from a controversial semi-finals loss to make it to the third place match. In the semis, the official called a defensive pin while Mika was leading by quite a bit, and the thing that impressed me the most was how he kept his composure throughout the whole thing. I told him, 'You handled that loss much better than I did.'

"In the third place match, he was in control of his opponent

on the scoreboard going into the second period. We chose down, and the kid hit him with an illegal suplex. Mika was cleared by the trainer to continue, but after another flurry of action, I saw that he wasn't right, and I chose to default the match rather than risk any further injury."

Louisburg is back in action Friday and Saturday as the Wildcat take part in the 2-day Blue Valley Northwest Invitational.