

Bartlett excited to continue wrestling career at Newman University



Louisburg senior Kaven Bartlett, who is currently 15-0 on the season and ranked No. 3 in Class 4A at 138 pounds, signed his letter of intent last month to wrestle at Newman University.

His high school wrestling career might be coming to an end, but Kaven Bartlett wasn't about to leave a sport behind that he loved since he could remember.

Bartlett, a state medalist for the Louisburg wrestling team, has always dreamed to wrestle in college and that came true last month when the Wildcat senior decided to make it official.

Bartlett signed his letter of intent to wrestle for Newman University – an NCAA Division II program in Wichita. It was a difficult decision at times for the Louisburg senior, but he couldn't be more excited to get started.

"Officially signing to wrestle in college has been a dream of mine since I was 4 years old," Bartlett said. "Being able to achieve this dream, and continue my wrestling career after high school, means the world to me. I don't believe that I will ever be able to get away from the sport of wrestling.

"The past year I visited several colleges to see how their programs for academics and athletics were. One of the most

important things I was looking for was which community felt most like home. I eventually over time got my options down to two colleges. After several visits and watching both teams compete I chose Newman University.”

Newman provided the perfect outlet for Bartlett and his love for the sport. It all started with the coaching staff.



Louisburg senior Kaven Bartlett signed his letter of intent to wrestle at Newman University. Sitting next to Kaven is his mother Angela and his sister Kallee. Standing is his father, Jason.

Newman head coach Ryan Smith has been a big part of the Jets program as he is in his 15th season as the team’s leader and his 19th year overall.

Smith has coached 13 national qualifiers and had five MIAA individual champions over that time. Bartlett is excited to work under an experienced coach with a young roster.

“Newman University has several national All-Americans and national champions,” Bartlett said. “Coach Smith invited me to a camp in Maize with the team where I got to meet the whole coaching staff. A lot of the staff is young and have wrestled

for Newman themselves. They welcomed me and made me feel comfortable straight away.”

It also helped that Newman fit his academic style as well. Bartlett plans to have a double major in Radiology Technician and Sonography.

Now that the decision process is over, Bartlett is hoping to end his high school career on a good note as he is currently 15-0 on the season and ranked No. 3 in Class 4A at 138 pounds.

He also has high goals for himself wants he gets to college.

“When I first arrive on campus I plan on getting to know the team and find a place to fit in,” Bartlett said. “My athletic goals are to better my wrestling skills and contribute as much as I can to the team.”

Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2022



It was a successful, and eventful, 2022 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 a few programs brought back state hardware.

Below are the top stories from 2022, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the writeup 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.

This year was a blast to cover and I am looking forward to seeing what 2023 will bring. Thank you to everyone for their support and can't wait for it all to begin again.



10. Louisburg golf qualifies for state

FORT SCOTT – As the scores were rolling in, the Louisburg golf team was a little worried.

The Wildcats were in jeopardy of not qualifying for state after a few of the golfers didn't have the scores they were hoping for in the Class 4A regional tournament in Fort Scott.

Chanute and Independence had already assured themselves of a spot, but the third place team was up in the air as the top three teams automatically qualify for state.

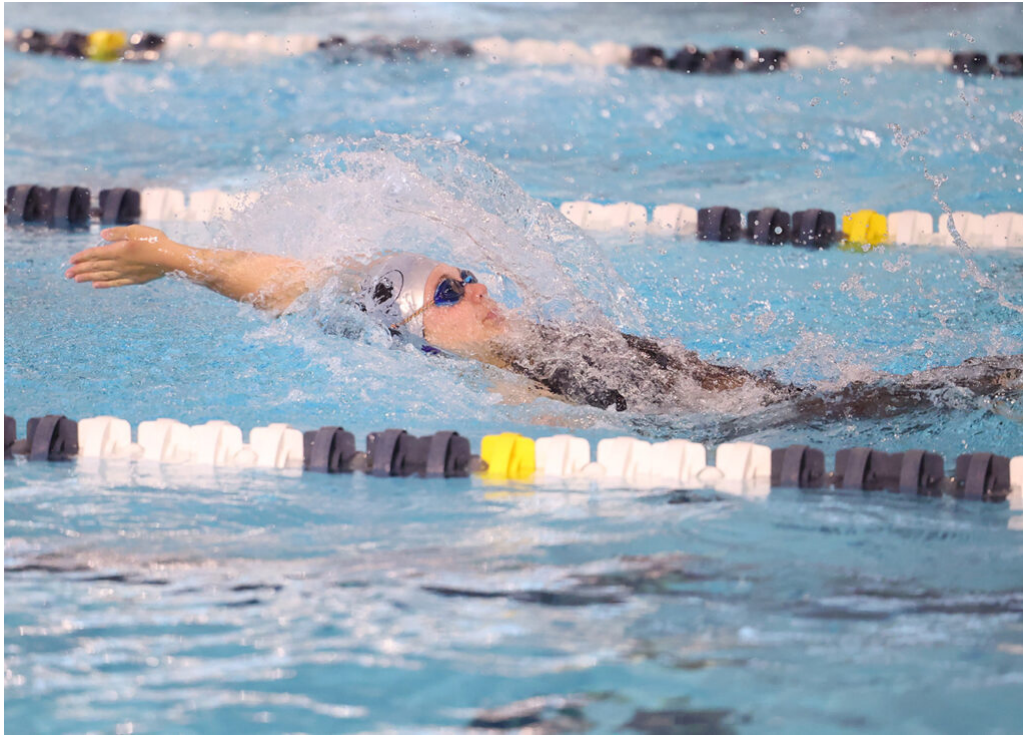
As it turned out, the Wildcats had nothing to worry about as they edged Paola by four strokes to finish in third with a 357 to secure their third consecutive spot in the 4A state tournament.

Seniors A.J. Arriola, Sam Wheeler, Ian Kirkpatrick, Johnny Thompson, along with juniors Jackson Olson and Nick Lancaster, advanced to the state tournament.

Arriola carded a 78 and finished as a regional runner-up, as he was just two strokes behind regional champion Drayton Cleaver of Chanute.

As for Olson, the Louisburg junior set a personal record by six strokes to shoot an 81 and took fourth overall. Those personal bests were enough to get the Wildcats into that third place spot.

At state, Arriola and Wheeler finished as the team's top two golfers. Arriola carded a 97 to take 59th overall, while Wheeler finished with a 98 and came in 66th.



9. Brueggen's earns school's first state swim medal

LENEXA – Even though she is just a freshman, Sabra Brueggen is already putting a stamp on her high school swim career at Louisburg High School.

It all came to a rousing end on May 21 as Brueggen earned her first state medal at the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Diving Championships at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center.

Brueggen became the first swimmer in school history to earn a state medal as she finished fifth in the 100-yard backstroke in 1:00.58.

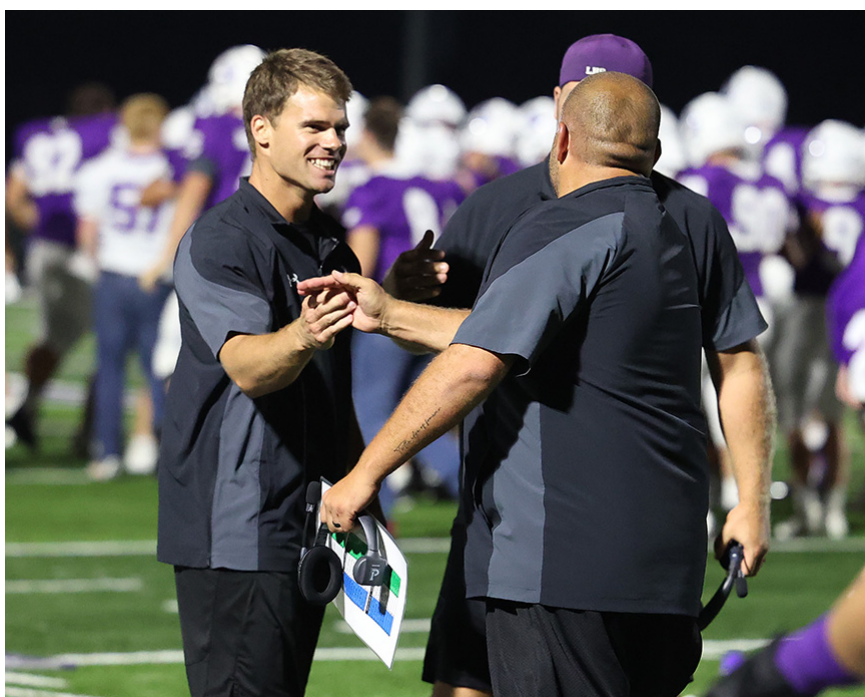
On the day before in the preliminaries, Brueggen also took fifth in a season-best time of 1:00.15.

“Medaling as freshman means the world to me, and it proves to me that all of my hard work for all of these years, has paid off,” Brueggen said. “I feel like I performed my absolute best

at state, and I was very happy with the results. It gives me confidence that I will have a bright future representing OzPaLou at the state swim meets.”

She nearly had a second medal in the 50 freestyle. Brueggen put together a season-best time of 25.26 seconds, but finished ninth overall. It was the same finish she had the in the preliminaries.

The top eight in each event earn a state medal as she was just .06 away from earning another spot on the medal stand.



8. Harding takes over as Wildcat football coach

The Louisburg football program had a different leader on the sidelines this past season.

The USD 416 Board of Education approved the hire of LHS assistant coach Drew Harding to be the team’s new head coach in January after the district decided not to renew the contract of former coach Robert Ebenstein.

Harding spent the last five seasons as a Wildcat assistant coach, including time as a defensive coordinator. He is a 2010 Louisburg graduate and was a big part of the Wildcat program during his time as a student-athlete at Louisburg High School.

However, Harding didn't see himself be a head coach of any sport coming out of college.

"It means a lot," Harding said. "When I got out of school, I didn't get into education right away and started somewhere else. I decided to get into education because of the impact my former coaches at Louisburg had on me. To come full circle and to be in the position that I am in now, is pretty surreal. I am really excited for the opportunity and hopefully I can have the same type of impact on student athletes as they come through the program."

Ebenstein has the been the head coach the last five seasons and helped the Wildcats to a 30-18 record during that time, including a Frontier League and regional title in 2018. He had a winning record three of those five seasons.

He was also named the KFCA Coach of the Year during that season and was selected to be an assistant coach for the Kansas Shrine Bowl. He was an assistant coach for the Wildcat program for five years before earning the head coaching job.



7. Conley resigns a Louisburg head boys and girls soccer coach

Louisburg High School head boys and girls soccer coach Kyle Conley stepped down from his position after seven years.

He was recently hired to lead the boys and girls soccer programs at Blue Valley West, where he will serve as the head coach of both teams.

Conley, who also taught social studies at LHS, informed the players and parents of his decision on May 4. The Blue Valley Board of Education approved his hire on May 9.

“Making the decision to leave Louisburg was extremely difficult,” Conley said. “The players and parents, both past and present, made this decision tough. No parents or players caused this decision. I am very thankful to Mr. (Dave) Tappan and Mr. (Darin) Gagnebin for giving me this opportunity to coach and teach at Louisburg. The amount of support that my

teams, my family and I received from Louisburg soccer parents and the community was incredible.”

Bobby Bovaird was hired as the new boys head coach, while Ben York returned to the program as the new assistant. York was also named the girls head coach after serving 13 years as the boys head coach previous to Conley.

Conley has the been head girls coach at Louisburg since its inception in 2016 and has led that program to four consecutive state final fours.

Twice, the Wildcats made the state championship game and finished runner-up on both occasions. He has guided the program to an 82-34-3 record.

Conley took over the boys program in 2016 and finished with a 77-32-3 record. He led the Wildcats to two state final fours during that span, including a third place finish in 2020.

“I am so proud of the things that our student athletes in the soccer programs have accomplished both on and off the soccer field,” Conley said. “I will always cherish the memories that we have made here with the Louisburg soccer programs.”



6. Girls cross country qualifies for state, Vohs earns state medal

WAMEGO – For the second consecutive season, Emma Vohs left the Class 4A state cross country meet with more than was she arrived with.

Vohs earned her second state medal at Wamego Country Club as she finished 10th overall with a time of 20 minutes and 51 seconds. The Louisburg junior did what she set out to accomplish.

“I was so excited to win another state medal this season and couldn’t be happier that I reached my goal for that race, which was placing top 10,” Vohs said. “The race was a tougher course, as was the competition this year, but I am blessed to run with such talented girls that push me to do better each race.”

Vohs led the Lady Cat team that qualified for state for the sixth consecutive season. As a team, Louisburg finished eighth overall with 208 points.

A week earlier at regionals, the team of Vohs, Maddy Rhamy, Lola Edwards, Nova Ptacek, Bree Gassman, Erin Apple and Madison Huggins finished third to punch their ticket to state

“It never gets old seeing the joy in the team’s eyes when they hear they qualified for state,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “The girls work hard to accomplish this goal each year, and because of their dedication to their sport, they achieve great things even if they might not make it, but they did.

“The program has built itself and I’m just glad to be a part of it. Yes, we put together a training plan to accomplish great things at the end of the season, but the runners do the work to get there. It takes self discipline, motivation and

guts to be there at the end of the season.”



5. Wildcat wrestling medals 3 at state

Louisburg wrestling has had its fair share of state medalists in its long history, but what the Wildcats accomplished in February at the Tony’s Pizza Events Center in Salina was something the program had never seen before.

The Wildcats left the Class 4A state tournament with three state medalists, the most for one year in program history.

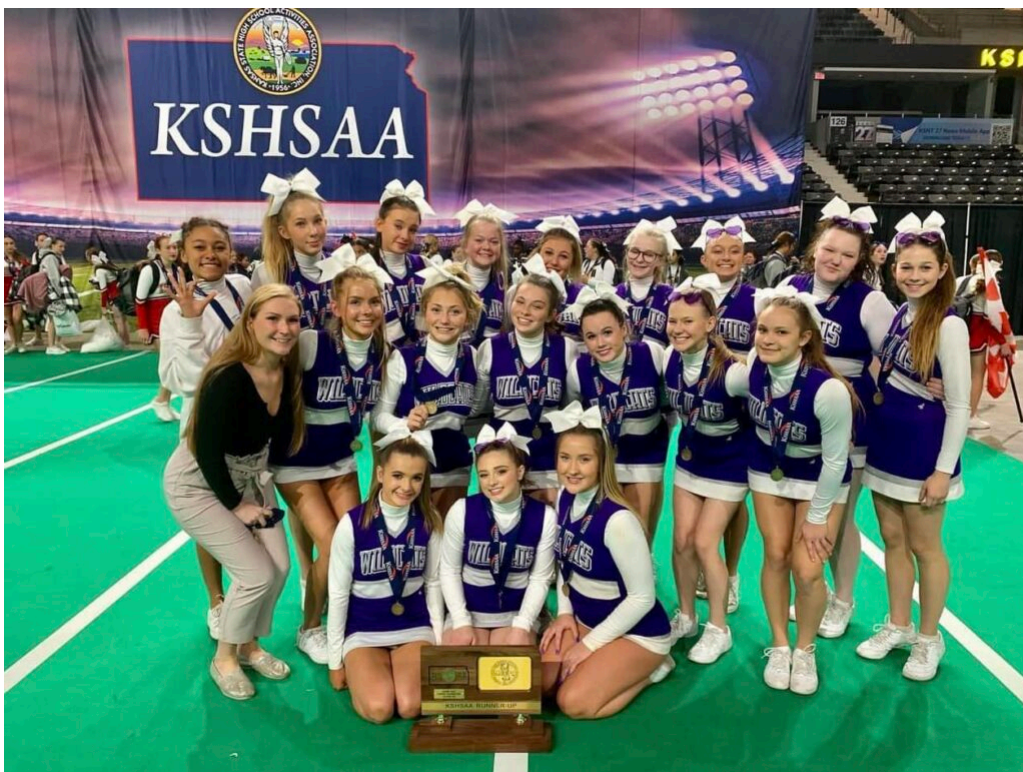
Aiden Barker (195 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126) and Elijah Eslinger (285) each finished in the top six in their respective weight classes and put together their best performances of the season. It was also the first time each of them earned a state medal.

“This season was the most state placers we’ve had in a single year in program history,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Prior to 1992, KSHSAA only medaled the top 4 in each weight. In both 1988 and 1989, we had two top-4 placers and one top-6 placer, but this really shows how the program is progressing

and developing. We nearly had four medalists, too.”

Barker, a senior, was a favorite for a medal heading into Salina and finished fifth overall with a 13-1 major decision over Ottawa’s Jared Ferguson in the fifth-place match.

Bartlett and Eslinger also left lasting impressions on the Wildcat program as each medaled sixth overall after both nearly turned their brackets upside down as they advanced to the semifinals on Friday. They both guaranteed themselves a medal on the first day.



4. Louisburg cheer earns state runner-up performance

TOPEKA – It has almost become commonplace to see the Louisburg High School cheer squad in the finals of the Class 4A Gameday Spirit Showcase.

However, that doesn’t mean the cheerleaders are any less excited about it.

For the second straight season, the Wildcats finished as the state runner-up in the Class 4A competition at the Stormont-Vail Events Center. They finished with a score of 79.45 and were one point behind champion Paola.

It is the fourth straight season that the Wildcats have finished in the top three, which included a state championship in 2019.

"I am so unbelievably and incredibly proud of this team," Louisburg coach Marissa Morrow said. "This positivity and attitude that these girls have shown this year have been the key to our success. I had no doubt that the material and performances we brought on Saturday had the potential to do well, but it was the girls who made it possible to pull it together. They were all such competitors and left it all out on the mat, and I couldn't ask for more. We also could not have done it without the support of our amazing cheer families."

Members of the team are Sydney Dudzik, Bella Feikert, Zoe Cutshaw, Caroline Dugger, Elizabeth George, Addison Drake, Brooklyn Harmon, Adison Vargo, Maddy Carpenter-Ross, Sienna Finch, Alayna Stohs, Alaina Dudzik, Maddie O'Keefe, Liz Willming, Kayleigh Ramsey, Taryn Osborn, Anna Brizendine and Jocelyn Burk.



3. LHS football secures Frontier League title

With just over a minute left in regulation, Louisburg was staring at the possibility of their first league loss and was watching an outright Frontier League title slip away.

Spring Hill scored a touchdown and took a four-point lead with 1 minute and 12 seconds left. Things were looking bleak for the Wildcats.

As it turned out, 52 seconds was all the Wildcats needed to pull off one of the season's most memorable moments. Louisburg quarterback Declan Battle found junior Caden Caplinger in the endzone on an 18-yard touchdown pass with 20 seconds remaining to give the Wildcats a 20-17 victory.

The win was the Wildcats' seventh straight on the season and clinched the team's first Frontier League championship since 2018.

“There weren’t a lot of people who thought we could be league champions,” Louisburg coach Drew Harding said. “I don’t think it was anything that people expected out of us, and the Frontier League is really good. For this group to come to work, get better every day and to see success is pretty sweet.”

The win was extra special for 16 Louisburg seniors as they were also able to celebrate that league title on Senior Night.

Jackson Kush, Nathan Apple, Carson Wade, Isaiah Whitley, Riley Van Eaton, J.R. Rooney, Will Hutsell, Brayton Brueggen, Christian Golladay, Nathan Vincent, Jase Hovey, Mack Newell, Hunter Moore, Mason Dobbins, Corbin Hamman and Layne Ryals all got to end their final regular season home game with a win.

“The Frontier League title means so much to me and this team,” Rooney said. “As a team before the season, the seniors wrote down our goals, and league champs was on everyone’s list. To clinch it on senior night was amazing. Going undefeated at home, to win it on our field in front of our town – it was an indescribable feeling.”



2. Wildcat volleyball finishes fourth at state

HUTCHINSON – The state tournament ended the way it started for the Louisburg volleyball team – with a loss to Towanda-Circle.

Still, it was everything that happened in between that made for a lot of lasting memories for the Wildcat players.

Louisburg went 2-1 in pool play at the Hutchinson Sports Arena, which included a revenge win over Tonganoxie in the final match of the day. That gave the Lady Cats a spot in the state semifinals Saturday, where they finished fourth in Class 4A.

The Wildcats suffered a 2-0 loss to both Bishop Miege and Circle, but they still ended their season as one of the state's top teams.

"I am extremely proud of this team," Louisburg coach Leanna Willer said. "Looking at how we started this season, and our ups and downs along the way, it is a huge accomplishment for them to have come together as a team at the end of the season and play our best volleyball yet. It was apparent in the last couple of weeks that they really started playing for each other and capitalizing on the strong team bonds they built throughout the year."

It was all thanks to an upset the previous week. Louisburg defeated the state's No. 1 seed, Baldwin, in the sub-state championship match to earn the state berth.

The Wildcats, the No. 9 seed, knocked off No. 1 seed Baldwin, 25-18 and 25-19, at Baldwin High School in the finals of the Class 4A sub-state tournament. That win puts Louisburg in the state tournament for the first time since 2019.

Members of the team are Emma Prettyman, Adyson Ross, Claire

Brown, Allie Kennedy, Ashlyn Berck, Delaney Nelson, Izzy Moreland, Bronwynn Williams, Caileigh Kilgore, Megan Quinn, Hailey Sword and Madelyn Williams.



1. Wildcat boys take third at state track; Koontz, Caplinger win state titles; Lady Cats medal nine

WICHITA – For the second consecutive season, the Louisburg boys track and field team brought home hardware from the Class 4A state meet.

After winning the state championship in 2021, the Wildcats once again found their way to the podium in Wichita as they finished third overall with 67 points.

Andale won the state championship with 101 points and Chanute was the state runner-up with 71.

Louisburg got points from a lot of different areas as the Wildcats medaled in 10 events and had 12 medalists overall, including all three of their relays.

Louisburg senior Tom Koontz won a pair of state titles in the hurdles, while sophomore Caden Caplinger captured the gold medal in the pole vault.



“I am not going to complain at all,” Koontz said. “I believe we came here with less people than we did last year and everyone did their best. Even though we didn’t get exactly what we wanted, third place is still a great achievement.”

What he couldn’t believe was he had just won his first state title in the 300 hurdles and Koontz did so by breaking a 14-year-old school record. Koontz ran a time of 38.98 seconds to break R.J. Saunders’ record of 39.16 set in 2008 to earn the gold.

It turned out to be his second state title of the day as he also earned the gold medal in the 110-meter high hurdles with a time of 14.61 seconds. Koontz won the state in that event last season as well.

Caplinger cleared a lot of his marks in the pole vault and did so in convincing fashion as he was able to win a state title in just his second year with the program.



Last season at state, Caplinger medaled eighth after he cleared 12-6. A year later, the Louisburg sophomore improved his mark by two feet and is a state champion.

It was an impressive showing from Caplinger as he didn't miss an attempt until he tried for 15 feet at the end. He entered the competition at 12-6 and had five straight successful clearances.

"At first I was really nervous, but then it just kind of turned into a routine thing," Caplinger said. "I started going over heights consistently and the rest just kind of fell into place. I cleared 14-6 earlier this week twice in a row, so I knew I could do it. I was still a little nervous though."

As for the Lady Cats, Delaney Wright left the state meet with three medals. Wright, who has been coming back from a severe injury for most of the season, finished as the state runner-up

in the 400-meter dash, third place in the 200 dash and fifth in the long jump.

A season ago, Wright was the state champion in all three events, but couldn't get the repeat she was hoping for.



"Going into state I knew I still wasn't where I want to be due to my injury a couple months ago," Wright said. "But I wanted to attack it still and give it all I had. I am blessed I was there to compete and earn three medals cause in the beginning I didn't even know if I was going to compete my senior year."

In all, the Lady Cats put together a strong state performance as they medaled in nine events and finished with 40 team points and took sixth overall. They were just eight points away from the third place spot, and a plaque.

"Once again the state qualifiers did an amazing job," Louisburg girls coach John Reece said. "They all performed well and most beyond expectations. To leave the meet finishing in sixth place was outstanding. We left with lots of medals and great memories."

Wildcats place fourth at Tongie; Bartlett wins 138-pound title



Louisburg senior Kaven Bartlett works for a pin Saturday during the Randy Starcher Invitational at Tongnaoxie High School. Bartlett won the 138-pound class.

TONGANOXIE – The Louisburg wrestling team competed in its first individual bracket tournament of the season Saturday at the Randy Starcher Invitational.

It was a strong showing for the Wildcats as they finished fourth in the team standings with 174.5 points in the 11-team tournament at Tonganoxie High School. Louisburg also had three wrestlers earn spots in the championship match.

Tonganoxie won the tournament with 251.5 points and Clay Center was second at 225. Savannah (Mo.) was third with 176.

“I was pretty pleased with everything on Saturday,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We were in and out of second place throughout the day, but in the end a few things just didn’t go our way. Tonganoxie is a strong team, and they held the lead for most of the tournament.

“The great thing is that the teams finishing in third through

sixth place were only three points apart from one another. We even finished ahead of a state-ranked team, Independence, that was at full strength with its lineup.”

Wildcat senior Kaven Bartlett, who is currently ranked No. 3 in Class 4A at 138 pounds, lived up to his ranking as he finished the day with five wins. He opened the tournament with a win by tech fall, but then recorded three straight pins.

Bartlett squared off with Independence’s Josh Lawrie in the final and scored a 3-0 decision. He is now currently 15-0 on the season.

“Kaven is showing so much confidence and determination this season,” Bovaird said. “He’s on a mission, that’s for sure, and he’s emerging as an incredible leader for the team. Whether it’s at practice or in between matches at tournaments, he does a phenomenal job working with his teammates. He was solid on the mat this weekend, especially on his feet.”



Louisburg senior Elijah Eslinger put his opponent from Independence on his back Saturday. Eslinger finished second at 285 pounds.

Another senior, Elijah Eslinger, also entered the tournament

undefeated and was ranked No. 5 at 285 pounds in Class 4A. He breezed through his first four matches as he won all four by pin in under a minute.

Eslinger then squared off with Clay Center's Luke Young in the championship. Young, who is ranked No. 3 in Class 4A, pinned Eslinger in the first period and the Louisburg senior finished second overall. He is 14-1 on the year.

Sophomore Jay McCaskill also found himself in the top two at 157 pounds. After he received a bye in the first round, he recorded three straight pins to advance to the first place match.

McCaskill faced off with Clay Center's Talyn Pfizenmaier in the championship and McCaskill fell in a 6-0 decision to take second. McCaskill is currently 11-3 on the season.



Louisburg sophomore Jay McCaskill finished second at 157 pounds.

"Elijah and Jay both ran into a couple of ranked kids from Clay Center in their finals match," Bovaird said. "Jay was able to hang with his opponent for most of the match. He's showing a lot of smoothness and confidence on the mat, which

is great for a sophomore to be showing. Elijah has grown so much from last season to this one, and I'm seeing a lot of diversity with his wrestling. He's opened up his repertoire of moves, which is going to be huge for the postseason."

Five other Wildcats also left Tonganoxie with some hardware. Sophomore Will Showalter (106 pounds), junior J'Lee Collins (126), sophomore Logan Henry (132), senior Jesse Murphy (144) and senior Trace Eslinger (215) all earned fourth place medals.

"With this being our first tournament of the year with individual brackets, it was nice to see the guys win some hardware," Bovaird said. "They won their first medals of the season, and it was the first ever varsity medal for several of them. Our younger guys are showing so much growth this season, and it's pretty exciting to see their progress."



Louisburg junior J'Lee Collins was one of five Wildcats to earn fourth place medals Saturday in Tonganoxie.

Now the Wildcats are off for the rest of 2022 and will open the 2023 part of their schedule at home on Jan. 7 when they host the Louisburg Invitational.

Bovaird has liked what he has seen so far and is looking forward to what the rest of the season has in store.

"We're entering the break with a 5-5 dual record and a fourth place finish at a pretty tough tournament," Bovaird said. "Over half of our varsity wrestlers have .500 records or better, and we've been able to field a full lineup at most of our competitions. We're missing a key returner with Ashton Moore, who's certified to wrestle at 175 this season. We'll know more soon about when he's going to be back for us. There's still a bunch of newer wrestlers who are filling it at varsity, and I love the mindset that they're bringing to the mats."

106

Myke McKitrick (0-3) placed 6th.

- Round 1 – Mason Gibbons (Independence) 11-0 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 3:55)
- Round 2 – Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 3 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 2:37)
- 5th Place Match – Myles Curry (Topeka-Highland Park) 7-3 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 3:32)

106

Will Showalter (6-7) placed 4th and scored 9.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 2 – Mason Gibbons (Independence) 11-0 won by tech fall over Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 (TF-1.5 3:02)

(16-1))

- Round 3 – Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 won by fall over Myke McKitrick (Louisburg) 0-3 (Fall 2:37)
- 3rd Place Match – Miller Coffman (Clay Center Community) 5-4 won by fall over Will Showalter (Louisburg) 6-7 (Fall 0:00)

113

Broden Vargo (1-3) placed 6th and scored 8.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 won by forfeit over SCRATCH-Christopher SCRATCH-Switzer (East (Kansas City)) 2-6 (For.)
- Round 3 – Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 4 – Kayden Chance (Frontenac) 9-4 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 0:23)
- Round 5 – Jordan Bauswell (Tonganoxie) 5-6 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 3:52)
- 5th Place Match – Kyle Sloan (Frontenac) 4-2 won by fall over Broden Vargo (Louisburg) 1-3 (Fall 0:29)

120

Keegan Rogers (3-8) placed 9th and scored 2.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Cash Wilderman (Frontenac) 14-0 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 1:36)
- Round 2 – Hawken Andrews (Eudora) 12-4 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 1:25)
- Round 3 – Clayton Crookham (Tonganoxie) 7-5 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 0:57)
- Round 4 – Jack Fairbank (Independence) 4-8 won by fall over Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 (Fall 2:58)

- 9th Place Match – Keegan Rogers (Louisburg) 3-8 won by fall over Chris Switzer (East (Kansas City)) 0-5 (Fall 4:24)

126

J`Lee Collins (7-6) placed 4th and scored 11.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Dax Duffett (Tonganoxie) 3-2 won by fall over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Fall 4:35)
- Round 2 – J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 won by fall over Owen Leffert (Tonganoxie) 5-11 (Fall 0:34)
- Round 3 – JT Alton (Clay Center Community) 8-4 won by decision over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Dec 8-6)
- Round 4 – J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 won by fall over Noah Van Foeken (Eudora) 7-9 (Fall 1:01)
- Round 5 – Gage Schottel (Savannah) 8-3 won by fall over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) 7-6 (Fall 1:54)

132

Mika McKitrick (5-8) placed 5th.

- Round 1 – Kohen Wright (Independence) 12-0 won by tech fall over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 (TF-1.5 3:09 (24-8))
- Round 2 – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by major decision over Tanner Yankovich (Eudora) 9-7 (MD 10-2)
- Round 3 – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by decision over Caiben Shaffner (Clay Center Community) 0-4 (Dec 8-3)
- Round 4 – Jomar Pero (Frontenac) 7-4 won by fall over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 (Fall 3:12)
- 5th Place Match – Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) 5-8 won by fall over Payton Coleman (Tonganoxie) 2-9 (Fall 0:33)

132

Logan Henry (4-3) placed 4th and scored 16.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 won by fall over Payton Coleman (Tonganoxie) 2-9 (Fall 0:40)
- Round 2 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 3 – Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 won by fall over Bryson Jeffers (Savannah) 2-11 (Fall 0:29)
- Round 5 – Bergen Souder (Frontenac) 4-1 won by fall over Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 (Fall 1:27)
- 3rd Place Match – Jomar Pero (Frontenac) 7-4 won by fall over Logan Henry (Louisburg) 4-3 (Fall 2:47)

138

Kaven Bartlett (15-0) placed 1st and scored 32.5 team points.

- Round 1 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by tech fall over Scott Sloan (Frontenac) 1-4 (TF-1.5 3:11 (16-0))
- Round 2 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Wesley Borger (Eudora) 8-8 (Fall 0:49)
- Round 4 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Aiden Lessard (Lansing) 2-8 (Fall 1:14)
- Round 5 – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by fall over Deagen Pasley (Savannah) 10-7 (Fall 0:55)
- 1st Place Match – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) 15-0 won by decision over Josh Lawrie (Independence) 9-3 (Dec 3-0)

144

Jesse Murphy (10-5) placed 4th and scored 18.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Todd Brown (Tonganoxie) 3-2 (Fall 2:36)
- Round 3 – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Chase Davis (Frontenac) 9-5 (Fall 1:31)
- Quarterfinal – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Taylor Dumas (Clay Center Community) 10-7 (Fall 4:30)
- Semifinal – Justin Shields (Lansing) 15-1 won by fall over Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 (Fall 1:47)
- 3rd Place Match – Lincoln LaFave (Savannah) 11-3 won by fall over Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) 10-5 (Fall 2:43)

150

Colin Robinson (0-7) placed 10th and scored 0.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Braeden VanDonge (Eudora) 9-2 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 1:10)
- Round 2 – Wyatt Frazier (Frontenac) 11-3 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 3:16)
- Round 3 – Tommy Messersmith (Tonganoxie) 13-2 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 0:50)
- Round 4 – Juma Byaombe (East (Kansas City)) 4-8 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 0:50)
- 9th Place Match – Austin Howell (Lansing) 6-9 won by fall over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) 0-7 (Fall 1:11)

157

Jay McCaskill (11-3) placed 2nd and scored 26.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 2 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Justice Rockhold (Lansing) 2-2 (Fall 0:53)

- Round 3 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Jack Messersmith (Tonganoxie) 6-7 (Fall 2:23)
- Round 5 – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 won by fall over Mikia Hill (East (Kansas City)) 6-5 (Fall 0:57)
- 1st Place Match – Talyn Pfizenmaier (Clay Center Community) 9-1 won by decision over Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) 11-3 (Dec 6-0)

165

Vance Hahn (0-15) placed 6th and scored 3.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Alex Williams (Frontenac) 8-6 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:05)
- Round 2 – Colton Brusven (Tonganoxie) 7-2 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:14)
- Round 3 – Chance Phillips (Savannah) 9-4 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 0:48)
- Round 4 – Brett Loader (Clay Center Community) 14-2 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 0:59)
- Round 5 – Thomas Romero (Eudora) 1-4 won by fall over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) 0-15 (Fall 1:08)

175

Brecon Klugman (2-8) placed 9th and scored 0.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Braedon Speer (Eudora) 14-2 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:49)
- Round 3 – Robert Ragland (Savannah) 3-9 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:27)
- Round 4 – Tucker Jackson (Clay Center Community) 9-1 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 1:29)
- Round 5 – Adrian Burney (Topeka-Highland Park) 8-4 won by fall over Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 (Fall 0:38)

- 9th Place Match – Brecon Klugman (Louisburg) 2-8 received a bye () (Bye)

190

Brayden Yoder (10-5) placed 5th and scored 11.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by decision over Cael Dye (Tonganoxie) 13-3 (Dec 4-3)
- Round 3 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by decision over Thomas Ramsey (East (Kansas City)) 8-4 (Dec 9-6)
- Quarterfinal – Isaiah Melugin (Independence) 6-6 won in sudden victory – 1 over Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 (SV-1 11-9)
- Cons. Round 1 – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by fall over Jacob Holt (Frontenac) 8-5 (Fall 5:14)
- 5th Place Match – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) 10-5 won by injury default over Ethan Tiers (Clay Center Community) 12-4 (Inj. 0:00)

215

Trace Eslinger (10-3) placed 4th and scored 18.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Branden Gregory (Eudora) 2-9 (Fall 1:25)
- Round 2 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Isaiah White (East (Kansas City)) 0-5 (Fall 0:40)
- Round 3 – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 won by fall over Angel Contraras (Kansas City-JC Harmon) 5-3 (Fall 2:47)
- Round 5 – Caden Baragary (Lansing) 11-1 won by fall over Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3 (Fall 1:04)
- 3rd Place Match – Braylon Berry (Clay Center Community) 14-3 won by fall over Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) 10-3

(Fall 1:52)

215

Kyle Oram (3-3) placed 6th.

- Round 1 – Braylon Berry (Clay Center Community) 14-3 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 0:47)
- Round 3 – Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 received a bye () (Bye)
- Round 4 – Hunter Benedict (Tonganoxie) 8-2 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 0:13)
- Round 5 – Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 won by fall over Jacob Lorraine (Savannah) 3-8 (Fall 2:32)
- 5th Place Match – Angel Contraras (Kansas City-JC Harmon) 5-3 won by fall over Kyle Oram (Louisburg) 3-3 (Fall 1:29)

285

Elijah Eslinger (14-1) placed 2nd and scored 20.0 team points.

- Round 1 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Jake Garris (Independence) 4-8 (Fall 0:39)
- Round 2 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Brandon Collins (Topeka-Highland Park) 3-11 (Fall 0:36)
- Round 3 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Kevin Whitten (Eudora) 7-9 (Fall 0:11)
- Round 4 – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 won by fall over Gavin Rhoads (Tonganoxie) 7-4 (Fall 0:38)
- Round 5 – Luke Young (Clay Center Community) 16-1 won by fall over Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) 14-1 (Fall 0:17)

Five Wildcats earn all-tournament team honors at December Duals



Louisburg senior Jesse Murphy works for a pin Friday during the December Duals, held at Louisburg High School. Murphy was one of five Wildcats to earn all-tournament team honors.

The Louisburg wrestling team had its home opener Friday as it hosted the December Duals, which brought four strong wrestling programs to town.

Baldwin, Burlington, Concordia and Independence provided a competitive round robin dual tournament.

Although Louisburg finished fourth overall, the Wildcats had several individuals who had a big night.

Seniors Kaven Bartlett, Elijah Eslinger and sophomore Jay McCaskill each finished the tournament undefeated. Seniors Jesse Murphy and Trace Eslinger went 3-1 in their respective weight classes.

All five Wildcat wrestlers were named to the December Duals All-Tournament Team.

Bartlett, who jumped up to No. 3 in the KWCA Class 4A state

rankings at 138 pounds, took care of business with three pins and a major decision of Independence's Josh Lawrie.

Elijah Eslinger, who is currently ranked as the No. 5 heavyweight in Class 4A, also had a strong showing with four pins – three of which were under a minute.

McCaskill thrived at 157 pounds on Friday. The Louisburg sophomore finished with three pins and a 16-4 major decision of Concordia's Bergun Kindel.

At 150 pounds, Murphy suffered just one loss, which was by pin to Baldwin's Jaiden Michael. Murphy went on to record three pins of his own.



Louisburg senior Trace Eslinger works for a pin during a 215-pound match. Eslinger earned all-tournament team honors.

Trace Eslinger also put together a strong performance at 215 pounds. Trace finished with two pins, before falling by pin to Baldwin's Conner Murry.

As a team, the Wildcats with a 54-30 victory over Burlington, but the competition grew as the night went on. Louisburg would fall to Concordia (53-28), Baldwin (60-21) and Independence (48-32) to take fourth place.

Also earning multiple wins on the night for Louisburg was

junior J'Lee Collins at 126 pounds and sophomore Brayden Yoder at 190 pounds.

The Wildcats are back in action at 6 p.m. tonight as they host Olathe West in dual at Louisburg Middle School. Louisburg will then travel to Tonganoxie for a tournament Saturday in its final action before the holiday break.

Match #1 Round 1

Louisburg defeated Burlington 54-30

- **106** – Will Showalter (Louisburg) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **113** – Ryan Hoyt (Burlington) over Hayden Heffernon (Louisburg) Fall 1:59
- **120** – Greysen Dixon (Louisburg) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **126** – J'Lee Collins (Louisburg) over Ethan Bartley (Burlington) Fall 1:28
- **132** – Owen McManus (Burlington) over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) Fall 1:23
- **138** – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) over Lincoln Wright (Burlington) Fall 0:53
- **144** – Tucker Williams (Burlington) over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) Fall 2:25
- **150** – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) over Aden McManus (Burlington) Fall 0:25
- **157** – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) over Hunter Cole (Burlington) Fall 1:33
- **165** – Karson Bangs (Burlington) over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) Fall 1:38
- **175** – Sabian Mann (Burlington) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **190** – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) over Brayden Riggs (Burlington) Fall 5:48
- **215** – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) over Unknown

(Unattached) Forf

- **285** – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) over Mason Neff (Burlington) Fall 0:38

Match #2 Round 2

Concordia defeated Louisburg 53-28

- **106** – Christian Belden (Concordia) over Will Showalter (Louisburg) Fall 0:57
- **113** – Ashton Dooley (Concordia) over Hayden Heffernon (Louisburg) Fall 0:35
- **120** – Koby Tyler (Concordia) over Greysen Dixon (Louisburg) Fall 1:00
- **126** – Drew Sterrett (Concordia) over J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) Fall 4:18
- **132** – Daniel Vines (Concordia) over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) Fall 1:57
- **138** – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) over Easton Swihart (Concordia) Fall 2:22
- **144** – Torxsten Kindel (Concordia) over Jonas Briley (Louisburg) Fall 1:38
- **150** – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) over Dustin Sterrett (Concordia) Fall 2:37
- **157** – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) over Bergun Kindel (Concordia) Maj 16-4
- **165** – Mason Eickmann (Concordia) over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) Fall 0:17
- **175** – Caleb Hanson (Concordia) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **190** – Tracer Murdock (Concordia) over Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) Fall 0:50
- **215** – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) over Max Johnson (Concordia) Fall 1:20
- **285** – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) over Michael Ashland (Concordia) Fall 0:39

- Concordia's team score was adjusted by -1.0 for unsportsman like

Match #3 Round 3

Baldwin defeated Louisburg 60-21

- **106** – Asher Englert (Baldwin) over Will Showalter (Louisburg) Fall 2:26
- **113** – Jayden Westgate (Baldwin) over Hayden Heffernon (Louisburg) Fall 0:19
- **120** – Ayedin Johnson (Baldwin) over Greysen Dixon (Louisburg) Fall 1:08
- **126** – J`Lee Collins (Louisburg) over Gunnar Reichard (Baldwin) Dec 12-5
- **132** – Dalton Dempsey (Baldwin) over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) Fall 1:51
- **138** – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) over Dayton Peterson (Baldwin) Fall 3:21
- **144** – Jesse Hopper (Baldwin) over Jonas Briley (Louisburg) Fall 1:18
- **150** – Jaiden Michael (Baldwin) over Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) Fall 1:00
- **157** – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) over Ian Bryan (Baldwin) Fall 1:58
- **165** – Dylan Williams (Baldwin) over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) Fall 0:33
- **175** – Wesley Martin (Baldwin) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **190** – Jack Harvey (Baldwin) over Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) Fall 1:11
- **215** – Conner Murry (Baldwin) over Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) Fall 1:13
- **285** – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) over Jonathan Wren (Baldwin) Fall 3:28

Match #4 Round 4

Louisburg received a Bye

Match #5 Round 5

Independence defeated Louisburg 48-32

- **106** – Mason Gibbons (Independence) over Will Showalter (Louisburg) Fall 1:53
- **113** – Keith Sanders (Independence) over Hayden Heffernon (Louisburg) Fall 0:45
- **120** – Jack Fairbank (Independence) over Greysen Dixon (Louisburg) Fall 5:59
- **126** – Javius Gullick (Independence) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **132** – Kohen Wright (Independence) over Mika McKitrick (Louisburg) Fall 2:21
- **138** – Kaven Bartlett (Louisburg) over Josh Lawrie (Independence) Maj 10-2
- **144** – Bryson Fulk (Independence) over Colin Robinson (Louisburg) Fall 1:30
- **150** – Jesse Murphy (Louisburg) over Michael Williams (Independence) Fall 0:31
- **157** – Jay McCaskill (Louisburg) over Josh Hogge (Independence) Fall 0:43
- **165** – Luke Benedict (Independence) over Vance Hahn (Louisburg) Fall 1:49
- **175** – Josh Foreman (Independence) over Unknown (Unattached) Forf
- **190** – Brayden Yoder (Louisburg) over Isaiah Melugin (Independence) Maj 18-5
- **215** – Trace Eslinger (Louisburg) over Copeland Musgrove (Independence) Fall 1:03
- **285** – Elijah Eslinger (Louisburg) over Jake Garris (Independence) Fall 0:35

Wildcats finish third at Fort Scott to open season



FORT SCOTT – With about half of the team competing in its first varsity action, the Louisburg wrestling team put together a strong showing in its season debut.

The Wildcats traveled to the Fort Scott Dual Tournament last Friday and left with a third place finish and a 3-2 record on the day.

Louisburg got wins over Blue Valley Southwest, Gardner-Edgerton and Anderson County and suffered a pair of close losses to Atchison County and Fort Scott.

“We have a relatively young team, but I’d say they did an awesome job battling on the mat Friday night,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Our veteran wrestlers were scrappy and competitive, and our younger guys did their best to follow that lead.”

Seniors Kaven Bartlett and Elijah Eslinger led the Wildcats as both finished with a 5-0 record after each of them were ranked in the Class 4A preseason rankings.

Bartlett, who is ranked No. 6 at 138 pounds, recorded a pair of major decisions and a pin. He also battled Anderson County’s A.J. Schaffer to a 9-8 decision – an opponent he lost

to a year ago.

As for Eslinger, who is the No. 5 heavyweight in Class 4A, he also won all five matches. He earned three pins and one major decision.

"This season, we're going to see a lot more confidence from those two guys," Bovaird said. "They've been very driven since last season ended, and I feel like they're both on a mission to take things up a level from last year. Kaven had a great match against an Anderson County kid who'd beaten him last year.

"After getting a couple of quick takedowns and looking very strong on his feet, Kaven got caught in a weird move and found himself on his back, battling to stay alive. After fighting back to safety, he was then down 7-4, but he kept his composure and chipped away at that lead, one point at a time. He took the lead and held on for a 9-8 decision."

Sophomore Will Showalter was next on the team with four wins, including a pair of pins, at 106 pounds. Freshman Hayden Heffernon (113 pounds), junior J'Lee Collins (126), senior Jesse Murphy (152), sophomore Jay McCaskill (157), sophomore Braden Yoder (190) and senior Trace Eslinger (215) each finished with three wins

Senior Kyle Oram, who also wrestled at 215, won both of his matches. Freshman Keegan Rogers (120) and sophomore Mika McKitrick (132) both finished with a pair of wins.

Sophomore Logan Henry (132), senior Aidan Robinson (144) and senior Brecon Klugman (175) also won a match.

In its three victories, Louisburg defeated Blue Valley Southwest (56-23), Gardner Edgerton (60-24) and Anderson County (45-36). The Wildcats also suffered close losses to Atchison County (48-34) and Fort Scott (39-38).

Against Fort Scott, the Wildcats needed a pin from Elijah Eslinger in the final match to get the win. However, Fort Scott heavyweight Jaden Garcia kept fighting off Eslinger and he was only able to get the 11-1 major decision.

“He fought and fought, but that Fort Scott heavyweight was stubborn as can be,” Bovaird said. “Elijah couldn’t quite get the pin, but he came away with a solid 11-1 major decision. That dual came down to bonus points – Fort Scott scored more bonus points than we did. It’s a tough lesson to learn, but one match can make the difference. If we give up fewer pins and we earn more, then that affects the team score.”

The Wildcats will try and improve its dual record Friday when it hosts the December Duals for its home opener. Louisburg will square off with Baldwin, Burlington, Concordia, Independence and Prairie View. Matches are set to begin at 4 p.m.

Wildcat wrestling ready to build on last season’s historic finish



Louisburg seniors Kaven Bartlett (pictured) and Elijah Eslinger return to lead the Wildcat wrestling team this season after both earned state medals a year ago.

The Louisburg wrestling team had an historic finish to its season last year.

For the first time in school history, the Wildcats finished with three state medalists. The good news for Louisburg, two of them are back for another run at a state title.

Seniors Kaven Bartlett (138 pounds) and Elijah Eslinger (285) return to lead the Wildcats for the 2022-23 season. The two seniors are a part of a 10-member senior class on a team that currently has 40 wrestlers.

Throw in the fact that the wrestlers have a new practice room to work out in, and they are excited for what this season has in store.

“Practices are great,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We are loving the new wrestling room, and the guys have been working their tails off already. We started off with 45 kids and are down to 40 so far, but I love the wrestlers’ attitudes.”

Bartlett and Eslinger both finished sixth in the state after both made the state semifinals. Eslinger is currently ranked No. 5 in the preseason 4A rankings, while Bartlett is No. 6.



Louisburg senior Elijah Eslinger is currently ranked No. 5 in the Class 4A 285-pound division.

“Both guys have put in a lot of time in the offseason,” Bovaird said. “Kaven and Elijah both had strong finishes to their junior seasons, and the great thing is that they’ve been motivated to improve all throughout the offseason. They both want to wrestle in college and I love the examples they’re setting for the program.”

The Wildcats also return another state qualifier to lead the group in Ashton Moore. The Louisburg sophomore made it to the state tournament as a freshman, but will have to wait a little longer to get on the mat.

Moore is currently out with an injury he sustained during the football season, but Bovaird hopes to have him back after the new year.

“Sitting out is eating away at Ashton, you can tell,” Bovaird said. “Once he gets the all-clear to get back on the mat, he’s going to be a voracious competitor. He’ll need to overcome the obstacle of lost mat time, but with that kid’s work ethic and competitive nature, combined with his strength and athleticism, it’ll be a great season for him.”



Louisburg sophomore Ashton Moore was a state qualifier as a freshman last season.

Louisburg will have a mix of veterans and newcomers as it begins its journey for the 22-23 season.

Junior J'lee Collins (126 pounds), sophomore Mika McKitrick (132), senior Jesse Murphy (150), sophomore Jay McCaskill (157), sophomore Brayden Yoder (190), senior Trace Eslinger (190/215) and senior Kyle Oram (215) return with at least some varsity experience from a year ago.

The Wildcats will also lean on newcomers Will Showalter (106), freshman Hayden Heffernon (113), freshman Keegan Rogers (120), sophomore Logan Henry (126), senior Aidan Robinson (144), freshman Vance Hahn (165) and senior Brecon Klugman (175) as they will compete for time on the varsity level.

"We'll have some new faces on the mat this season, along with some veterans," Bovaird said. "Will Showalter is a strong athlete and he's finally filling his weight at 106. J'Lee Collins, Mika McKitrick and Logan Henry are going to be battling for spots at 126-132 early on. Jesse Murphy will be a solid guy at 144 or 150. A couple of sophomores in the higher weights are also going to make some waves in Jay McCaskill at

157 and Brayden Yoder at 190. Also, I've got two seniors at 215 with Trace Eslinger and Kyle Oram."

The Wildcats have high expectations for themselves this season, but Bovaird knows it is all about having the right frame of mind.

"One of our biggest focuses this year will be on our mindset," Bovaird said. "The season motto is 'It's a Psychological Thing,' from the legendary Dan Gable. Gable once said, 'It's a psychological thing. They fear it, but they know they can do it.' This season, we've got lots of experienced kids, but we want to be sure that we peak in February when we're supposed to peak, and we're going to work on overcoming all the psychological obstacles we possibly can."

Louisburg opens its season this Friday as it travels to the Fort Scott Dual Tournament. Matches are set to begin at 3 p.m.

2022 Louisburg Sports Zone Male Athlete of the Year Nominees



For the past six years, Louisburg Sports Zone has given out Athlete of the Week awards during each of the three sports seasons. I do it to recognize special athletic achievements

and to highlight the athletes.

For the fifth consecutive year, Louisburg Sports Zone will be handing out an Athlete of the Year honor to a male and female athlete at Louisburg High School. I wanted the opportunity to recognize those who exemplify what it means to be an "athlete."

Although I am giving out the award, I wanted the process to be subjective, so I asked the head coaches at LHS to help me out. I asked each coach to send me nominations of who they thought exemplified the Athlete of the Year honor. They will then vote for their top 3 male and female athletes and then I will tabulate the results and determine the winner. The winner will be announced in the coming days.

Below are the nominees for the Male Athlete of the Year award in alphabetical order by last name. Congrats to all those who were nominated and best of luck!



Aiden Barker, Senior, Football and Wrestling

Aiden Barker played big roles on both the Louisburg football and wrestling teams this past season. Barker was a starting lineman for the Wildcat football program and wrestled at 195 pounds for the wrestling team.

Barker was a key fixture on both sides of the ball for the Wildcat football team, but his biggest impact came on the defensive side. He was a first team All-Frontier League selection on the defensive line, where he finished with 58 tackles on the season to go along with 11 tackles for a loss and 5.5 sacks.

On the wrestling mat, Barker finished his season with a 31-8

record and earned a fifth place medal at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. He was named the Wildcats' wrestler of the year and is a two-time first team KWCA Academic all-state winner. He finished with titles at the December Duals, Tonganoxie and Louisburg Invitationals. He finished his career with a program record of career reversals with 74. He will continue his athletic and academic career as a member of the MidAmerica Nazarene University football program this fall.



Brandon Doles, Senior, Football, Wrestling and Baseball

Brandon was a starter on three Wildcat programs during the 2021-22 school year. Doles was the starting linebacker on the football team, he was a varsity captain and 182-pound wrestler

on the wrestling team and played the outfield and pitched for the Louisburg baseball program.

In football, Doles was a key part of the Wildcat defense as he earned first team all-league honors from the linebacker spot. He finished the season with 90 tackles and averaged 11 stops per contest. He also forced two fumbles and had 11 tackles for a loss during the Wildcats' 4-5 season.

Injuries hampered most of Doles' wrestling season, but he was able to make a comeback late in the season and made his way to his third state tournament. At 182 pounds, Doles was win one short of a medal and finished the year with a 9-5 record. Doles ended his career as a two-time team captain and first team KWCA Academic All-State recipient.

On the baseball diamond, Doles was one of the Wildcats' top hitters during the 2022 season that saw them end with an 8-14 record and a spot in the regional championship game. Doles, who started in left field, finished with a .338 average and a .969 OPS. He also had 24 hits, seven doubles and two home runs to go along with 17 RBIs and 22 runs scored. Doles also earned second team All-Frontier League honors.



Kolby Kattau, Senior, Football and Baseball

Kolby was a senior starter for both the Louisburg football and baseball teams this past season. Kattau was the starting first baseman and pitcher for the baseball program that reached the regional championship. He was a two-way starter on the football team at running back and safety.

On the baseball diamond, Kattau thrived for the 2022 season as he was named as a first-team All-Frontier and all-state selection for his play at first base. Kattau had a team-high .471 average in 82 plate appearances. He had an OPS of 1.294 and had 33 hits on the season with seven doubles, five triples and a home run. He also scored 24 runs and had 13 RBIs from the leadoff spot. He started five games for the Wildcats and

earned three wins with 25 strikeouts. Kattau was also selected to participate in the KABC all-star game.

On the football field, Kattau was one of the team's starting running backs and recorded two touchdowns with more than 200 yards of total offense. He also started at safety for much of the season as well, and finished with 27 tackles and three deflections.



Tom Koontz, Senior, Football and Track and Field

Tom was a starting defensive back for the Wildcat football team that finished with a 4-5 record, along with being a hurdler and sprinter on the Louisburg track team.

On the track, Koontz helped the Wildcats to a third place team finish at the Class 4A state meet as he earned a pair of state titles in the hurdles and two more medals on relays. Koontz won the 300-meter hurdles with a school record time of 38.98 seconds and also won the state title in the 110 hurdles for the second straight year in 14.61 seconds.

He also helped the 4×400 relay to a fourth place state finish and the 4×100 relay to a sixth place medal. Koontz was also a part of the 4×100 team that broke the school record earlier in the year. He ends his Wildcat career as a 3-time state champion in the hurdles and garnered eight state medals. He was also a member of the 2021 state championship team.

Koontz also made his presence known on the football field as he was a starting cornerback for the Wildcats. He finished the year with 46 tackles, four deflections and a forced fumble.



Maverick Rockers, Senior, Basketball and Baseball

Maverick played key roles for the Wildcat basketball and baseball teams this season. Rockers was the starting point guard in basketball and made an impact on the baseball team as the starting shortstop.

On the baseball diamond, Rockers helped the Wildcats to their second straight regional championship game and had a big year at the plate. Rockers finished with a .406 batting average with a 1.111 OPS. He recorded 28 hits, seven doubles and two home runs to go along with 22 runs scored and 16 RBIs. He also had just six errors from his shortstop position. Following the season, he was named as a second team All-Frontier League player.

Rockers also had a big year on the basketball court as the team's starting point guard. He averaged 11 points a game to go along with three rebounds, two assists and 1.5 steals a game.



Michael Seuferling, Senior, Soccer and Basketball

Michael had big seasons for the Louisburg soccer and basketball teams in 2021-22. Seuferling was a starting defender for the Wildcat soccer team that made it to the regional championship game and was a starting guard for the Wildcat basketball program.

On the soccer field, Seuferling was one of the best outside backs in the Frontier League and was a first team all-league performer for Louisburg. He was also a first-team all-state player as he helped the Wildcats to a No. 1 seed in the Class 4-1A state playoffs.

Seuferling was also one of the top basketball players in the

Frontier League as earned honorable mention honors after leading the Wildcats in scoring. He averaged 13.3 points per contest to go along with 3.4 rebounds and 2.5 assists per game.



Braden Yows, Senior, Soccer

Braden had a big season for the Louisburg boys soccer team as he helped lead the Wildcats to the No. 1 seed in the Class 4-1A state playoffs and a spot in the regional championship game.

Yows was named as a first-team All-Frontier League and all-state player from his midfield spot and was named team captain. He ended his season with a 17 goals and 11 assists. He will continue his soccer career this fall at the University

of Missouri-Kansas City.

Wildcats earn three state medals for first time in program history



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker puts Ottawa's Jarod Ferguson to the mat during the fifth-place match Saturday at the Class 4A State Wrestling Championships in Salina.

Louisburg wrestling has had its fair share of state medalists in its long history, but what the Wildcats accomplished last weekend at the Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina was something the program had never seen before.

The Wildcats left the Class 4A state tournament with three state medalists, the most for one year in program history.

Aiden Barker (195 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126) and Elijah Eslinger (285) each finished in the top six in their respective weight classes and put together their best performances of the season. It was also the first time each of them earned a state medal.

"This season was the most state placers we've had in a single year in program history," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said.

“Prior to 1992, KSHSAA only medaled the top 4 in each weight. In both 1988 and 1989, we had two top-4 placers and one top-6 placer, but this really shows how the program is progressing and developing. We nearly had four medalists, too.”

Barker, a senior, was a favorite for a medal heading into Salina and finished fifth overall with a 13-1 major decision over Ottawa’s Jared Ferguson in the fifth-place match.



Aiden Barker hugs coach Bobby Bovaird after winning his fifth place match Saturday in Salina.

He opened the tournament with a quick pin of Independence’s Isaiah Melugin and advanced to the quarterfinals against the tournament favorite, Wamego’s Hayden Oviatt, who was undefeated heading into state.

Oviatt, who had pinned Barker earlier in the season, got an unexpected test for the Louisburg senior. Barker battled Oviatt for three period and nearly pulled off the upset of the tournament, but lost a close 7-6 decision.

"With Oviatt I had a lot to prepare for," Barker said. "It's always tough when you go against an opponent who has an undefeated record and previously beaten you in a decisive fashion. I really had to get my head straight and see that match as just another match against another good kid."

"Honestly going into it, I didn't think I was going to win, but once I stepped out onto the mat I thought 'why not me?' As the match progressed, I just believed in myself more and more and honestly I don't think I've wrestled a match as good as I did in that match."

The loss forced Barker to wrestle on the back side of the bracket and reeled off a pin over Baldwin's Zayne Nowak in his first match Saturday. He then followed it up with a pin of Tonganoxie's Wyatt Harris in the first period to secure a state medal.



Louisburg assistant coach Shawn Crossley and Elijah Eslinger were all smiles after Aiden Barker secured his first state

medal.

In the consolation semis, Barker suffered a difficult 8-6 loss to Rose Hill's Cade Evans, which set up a rematch with Ferguson, who defeated Barker in the regional championship a week before.

"Wrestling for third would have been great, but getting that revenge match against Ferguson to end it all was all I could ask for," Barker said. "The season overall I couldn't have asked for anything better than having some new coaches stepping in and doing a great job. It really meant a lot to me to finish off my career with coaches as great as coach Crossley, coach Miller and coach Bovaird in my corner and to walk out of my last ever match with a win and feel the emotions of the coaches and the Louisburg wrestling community it was like none other."

Late in the match against Ferguson, up 13-0, Barker did something that caught Bovaird's eye and it left him more proud of his senior wrestler than he already was.

"Aiden wrestled tough and smart, and in the final seconds of that fifth place match, he did something that gave me chills," Bovaird said. "He saw the final seconds ticking away and gave his opponent the escape. As they walked back to the center of the mat, Aiden raised his opponent's hand. I asked him later what was going on, and he answered that he didn't want the kid to go scoreless in the last match of his senior year. Talk about character right there – sportsmanship like that and the small gesture of respect goes a long way in my book."



Kaven Bartlett works for a pin against Holcomb's Greg Martinez in the first round Friday at Salina.

Bartlett and Eslinger also left lasting impressions on the Wildcat program as each medaled sixth overall after both nearly turned their brackets upside down as they advanced to the semifinals on Friday. They both guaranteed themselves a medal on the first day.

However, Bartlett's journey didn't look all the optimistic as he found himself on his back in his first round match against Holcomb's Greg Martinez. The Louisburg junior had to battle off his back for the final minute of the first period.

After surviving the scare, Bartlett would go on to pin Martinez in the second period and put his special weekend into motion.

"One centimeter made the difference for Kaven and his state tournament," Bovaird said. "Had he been pinned in the first period of that opening match, it would have been an entirely

different tournament for him. Regardless, he battled through the rest of that match to get the pin, and he fought every second of the rest of his matches. He's proven that he can compete with the top wrestlers in the state – in fact, he's now one of them. He's made incredible strides this season, and I'm excited for next year."



Head coach Bobby Bovaird (left) and assistant Shawn Crossley let out some emotion following Bartlett's quarterfinal win Friday.

Bartlett would use that momentum to upset No. 5 Cooper Wuthnow from Abilene in a 4-2 decision in overtime. Bartlett nearly earned another upset in the semifinals, but couldn't get past Concordia's Daniel Vines in a 3-1 loss.

Bartlett would have to wrestle Tonganoxie's Braeden Moore, who was the No. 1 ranked wrestler coming into the tournament, in the consolation semifinals and lost a tough 4-1 decision. He

then wrestled McPherson's Treyton Pelnar for fifth and fell 2-0 in the final seconds of overtime.

"Saturday was a very tough day as I started off against the number 1 ranked kid in 4A and ranked second in all classes in my first match," Bartlett said. "This guy has been one of the only people to pin me in my high school career but I made the match way closer at state as I lost 4-1.

"I have a lot of great plans for next season as I have chose to focus on just wrestling. I have plans to do a lot of tournaments and camps around the nation this summer to get me prepared for next season."



Kaven Bartlett was pumped following his quarterfinal win in overtime Friday.

Eslinger provided some memorable moments of his own as he upset two state-ranked wrestlers in his first two matches of

the day. He pinned No. 5 Willy Jon Morales of Augusta and No. 6 Jake Eddington of Columbus in the first period to advance to the quarterfinals.

“I knew going into the state tournament that Elijah would have perhaps the toughest path to a state medal – that a couple things would have to go his way early in the tournament,” Bovaird said. That’s exactly what happened. In the 285 weight class, sometimes it just takes a little bit of faith and a whole lot of stubbornness, and that’s what Elijah did. He went out there and wrestled hard, but he had some fun and believed in himself.”

Eslinger was later pinned by Rose Hill’s Milan Colvin in the semifinals, and would fall to Morales in the consolation semifinals by a 5-0 decision and then was pinned by Clay Center’s Luke Young in the fifth-place match.



Louisburg's Elijah Eslinger puts Columbus' Jake Eddington on his back for a pin Friday during the state quarterfinal round.

"I feel that I wrestled good and was allowed to run my preferred move on my opponents," Eslinger said. "I was extremely surprised to learn that they were both ranked wrestlers after the matches.

"Getting a state medal does make me excited for next season as the team focuses on the phrase, 'Continuous Improvement.' However high I got this year, I'm going to do better next year."



Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird and Elijah Eslinger were all smiles after earning his first state medal Friday.

Amidst all the excitement, the Wildcats also watched two wrestlers leave Salina without a medal, including senior Brandon Doles.

Doles, who missed all of last season with a leg injury and missed the first half of this season with a shoulder problem, found himself one victory away from earning his first state medal.

After a tough first round loss in a 2-1 ultimate tie-breaker setback to Burlington's Brock Zimmerman, Doles had to wrestle on the consolation side and got a win Friday in a close 4-3 decision over Clearwater's Alec Beasley.

Doles then put together some more dramatics as he scored two points in the final seconds to pull off a 7-5 decision over Augusta's Thomas Johnson. That set up a rematch between Doles and Jeff West's Keaton Shelman.

The two met in the third-place match at regionals the week before, with Doles winning 3-1 in overtime.

It was the same score, but different result, as Shelman got a late takedown in the third period to end Doles' hopes of a medal.



Louisburg senior Brandon Doles scrambles to try and get a reversal late in his consolation quarterfinal match.

“Brandon’s final match was heart-breaking for us all, most of all him,” Bovaird said. “He’s overcome so much – losing his entire junior season to his broken leg from football and missing more than half of his senior season to that nagging shoulder injury. When I think about the determination, courage, and focus he showed by getting back in as good a wrestling shape as he possibly could, getting recertified after getting cleared to return to the mat, and battling it out with kids who’d already wrestled in 30-plus matches this season, I’m so proud of him.

“He nearly got in the back side of the bracket to earn a state medal. I think a fully healthy Brandon Doles with a full senior season would have been right there in contention for a state medal. The majority of wrestlers coming back from that much time away from competition would have struggled to get as far as Brandon did.”

Freshman Ashton Moore put together two strong showings in his state matches, but lost a 7-4 decision to El Dorado's Terek White and was pinned by McPherson's Jase Fitzmorris in the first round of consolation.

"Ashton had a great season as a freshman in an upper-middle weight class," Bovaird said. "He was one win shy of hitting the 30-win mark this season, too. He's shown that he's a coachable kid who can get physical when he needs to and can exercise some mental discipline that is pretty uncanny for someone his age. Throw in the fact that he's been battling at practice with teammate Brayden Yoder all season. Those two, once we get them in separate weight classes, will be scoring a lot of points for the program the next three years."

Wildcat wrestlers eye medal stand at state tournament



SALINA – The five members of the Louisa County wrestling team will be more than hungry to try and get to the medal stand this weekend at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina.

Kaven Bartlett (126 pounds), Ashton Moore (170), Brandon Doles (182), Aiden Barker (195) and Elijah Eslinger (285) will represent Louisa County and they have all set goals for themselves.

The biggest of which is that coveted state medal, something that none of the five have been able to garner during their high school career. Although Moore is a freshman, the other four have been eying a trip to the medal stand for the last couple of years.

Now, they are as close as ever to achieving that milestone.

"In all honesty, each of our wrestlers has a legitimate chance of bringing home a state medal this year," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "I've gone through the brackets, and even before I shared the brackets with the guys, I can tell that they're shooting for their next goal. Making it to state was one goal; they've turned the page and are focusing on the next one.

"They're not just happy with making it to Salina; they all want to bring home some hardware. Aiden and Brandon have been especially driven this year. They've been leaders on and off the mat, in the classroom and in other sports, and I'm excited to see what they're capable of doing this weekend."

Barker is the lone Wildcat that is ranked by the Kansas Wrestling Coaches Association and is the No. 4 wrestler at 195 pounds and one of the favorites to finish in the top six and get a medal.

Barker (27-6) opens against Independence's Isaiah Melugin (15-14). Should Barker advance, he will very well could see the state's No. 1 wrestler, Hayden Oviatt from Wamego, in the next round.

As for Doles, who missed the state tournament last season with an injury, this is his third state appearance.

Doles (7-3) opens against Burlington's Brock Zimmerman (27-10), who he has lost two twice this season when Doles was just coming back from an injury.

Bartlett (26-8), who will wrestle for the first time out in Salina, is coming off a big regional performance where he finished second. He will square off with Holcomb's Greg Martinez (23-11) in his first match.

Moore (25-11) will enter the state tournament as a young 170-pounder and is the only freshman in the bracket after taking second at regionals. He will face off with El Dorado's Terek White (20-10) to begin tournament action.

Eslinger (26-8) will also be making his first trip to Salina after the Wildcat heavyweight took third at regionals. He will wrestle Augusta's Willy Jon Morales (33-8), who is ranked No. 5 in the state.

The Wildcats have spent the last three days of practice preparing for all the obstacles the state tournament as in store for them.

"Practices have been pretty solid this week," Bovaird said. "We've have our state qualifiers plus several practice partners who volunteered to come in to help them get ready for state. The atmosphere has been focused and positive.

"The guys have come in ready to work, gotten that work finished, and put in a lot of smart work over the last three days. The goal is to maintain our upward trajectory so that we get our highest peak at the state tournament."

To view all the state tournament brackets, [click here](#).

Matches will begin at 10 a.m. on Friday at the Tony's Pizza Events Center in Salina, and the tournament will run through Saturday.

FANTASTIC FIVE: Wildcats qualify 5 for state tournament



Louisburg's (from left) Kaven Bartlett, Brandon Doles, Elijah Eslinger, Aiden Barker and Ashton Moore each qualified for the state tournament following Saturday's Class 4A regional tournament in Paola.

PAOLA – The roller coaster that was the Class 4A regional tournament had several highs and lows for the Louisburg wrestling team.

However, when the ride was done, five Wildcats punched their ticket to the Class 4A state tournament this weekend in Salina.

Senior Aiden Barker, junior Kaven Bartlett and freshman Ashton Moore finished as regional runners-up, while senior Brandon Doles and junior Elijah Eslinger both took third overall Saturday in Paola.

"On paper, I thought we had a shot to get 7-8 qualified," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "I just felt pretty good about how the guys have been practicing and competing. A few things would have had to go our way, but that's the way it goes sometimes. It's a pretty good feeling to have gotten three into the finals and to have the other two win their 3rd place matches at the end of the day."

Barker, who was ranked third the state at 195 pounds, squared off with No. 6 Jared Ferguson from Ottawa after pinning his way to the finals. The Louisburg senior had beaten him twice already this season, and looked like he was going to do it again.



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker finished second at 195 pounds.

Barker (27-6) built an 8-2 lead into the second period after putting Ferguson on his back on a couple of different occasions. Unfortunately, Ferguson caught Barker and pinned him in the second to prevent him from getting a regional title.

“Aiden looked dominant for 98 percent of that match,” Bovaird said. “He got a great takedown and then was having his way on top. Aiden got in a scramble and did the one thing we were yelling for him not to do, and it ended up costing him. (Ferguson) is a pinner – when he gets kids on their back, it’s tough for them to get off.”

Bartlett got some revenge of his own at 126 pounds. He squared off with Paola’s Ryan Pankov in the semifinals, who he lost to

twice earlier this season and Pankov was No. 3 in the state going into the tournament.

The Louisburg junior scored some big points late as he held on for a 7-6 decision to defeat Pankov and advance to the finals. Unfortunately, Bartlett ran up against No. 1 Braeden Moore of Tonganoxie and was pinned in the first period of the championship match.



Louisburg junior Kaven Bartlett works for some back points Saturday at the 4A regional tournament.

“Kaven’s semifinal match is one that I’ll remember for a long time,” Bovaird said. “He’d lost to that kid twice before, and it’s always been a physical match and really close. Kaven stuck to his game plan and kept his cool through a very physical match, and he never stopped wrestling.

“It paid off big-time as he got the reversal and the winning back points to get a 7-6 revenge win. He was on a mission, and his regional performance really put him in a great place for state.”

Moore (25-11), who was wrestling in his first regional tournament, put together three strong wins to get to the finals at 170 pounds.

He opened with a wild 15-9 win over Ottawa's John Sink and then won by decision over Topeka-Hayden's Broderick Desch and Perry-Lecompton's Christian Conklin.

Moore squared off with Tonganoxie's Tyler Pankey, who is ranked No. 4 in the state, and was pinned in the first period.

"Ashton really stepped up," Bovaird said. "For a freshman to be a regional finalist at a middle-weight like 170 pounds is a pretty impressive feat. He kept his head and withstood whatever pressure he might have been feeling."



Louisburg senior Brandon Doles celebrates his overtime victory Saturday in his third-place match.

As for Doles (7-3), the Louisburg senior has been wrestling less than half a season after coming off an injury, but came

through with a strong performance to send him to his third state tournament.

He opened with a 3-0 decision over Santa Fe Trail's Aidan Slavin, before meeting Tonganoxie's Gabriel Bailey in the semifinals, who is the No. 1 ranked wrestler at 182 pounds, and lost 9-3.

Doles bounced back win a pin over Paola's Bryson Schull in the consolation semifinals, and then outlasted Jeff West's Keaton Shelman for a 3-1 overtime victory to finish third.

"We're really starting to get some glimpses of the old Brandon, and it's exciting to see," Bovaird said. "He has been getting closer and closer to wrestling shape, and that was evident in his semifinals loss to the No. 1 wrestler in the state. On the back side, he pulled out an overtime win against a Jeff West wrestler who has 32 wins on the season and was the third seed in the tournament."

Eslinger also had a big tournament at 285 pounds as the Louisburg junior put together a 4-1 record. He opened with a pair of pins over Hayden's Hunter Diederich and Tonganoxie's Cooper Jones.

After getting pinned by Bishop Miege's Baker North in the semifinals, Eslinger (26-8) responded with a 4-1 decision over Diederich in the consolation semis to secure his spot at state. He then followed it up with a 53 second pin of Baldwin's Jake Van Horn in the third place match.

"Elijah had beaten most of the other guys in his bracket throughout the season, but regionals is always a crazy tournament," Bovaird said. "It's tough to beat a good wrestler once, let alone multiple times, and Elijah did just that – he had rematches with Tonganoxie and Baldwin, and he also had to beat the Topeka-Hayden kid twice."

Junior Jesse Murphy (152 pounds) and freshman Jay McCaskill

(138) found themselves one victory away from earning a spot at state as both reach the consolation semifinals.

Murphy was pinned by an opponent from Eudora, but McCaskill's match had more drama.

McCaskill led Royal Valley's Quinton Nelson 4-1 with 15 seconds left and the wrestlers had to restart at the center of the mat. Unfortunately, McCaskill got caught in a scramble and gave up reversal and back points in a 5-4 loss.

All five qualifiers will compete at the Class 4A state tournament beginning at 10 a.m. on Friday in Salina and the top six in each weight class will earn a medal.

"With the strong finishes at regionals, all five of our guys are in good positions in their brackets at state," Bovaird said. "They're all going to have great chances not just to win some matches, but to bring home state medals."