

Week 10 Athlete of the Week: Brandon Doles



Here is the Louisburg Sports Zone Athlete of the Week for week 10 of the winter sports season, sponsored by Louisburg Family Dental.

BRANDON DOLES, SENIOR, BOYS WRESTLING

Louisburg senior Brandon Doles put together a strong regional tournament Saturday in Paola. Doles finished third overall at 182 pounds and qualified for state for the third time in his high school career. He missed all of last season with an injury, and missed the first half of this season, before coming back to post a 7-3 record.

Doles opened the regional tournament with a 3-0 decision, before falling to the eventual regional champion. He battled back on the consolation side and eventually wrestled for third. Doles won this third-place match by a 3-1 decision in overtime.

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: Elijah Eslinger

Week 2: Maverick Rockers

Week 3: Aiden Barker

Week 4: Kaven Bartlett

Week 5: Michael Seuferling

Week 6: Cole Brown

Week 7: Jordan Mynsted

Week 8: Adyson Ross

Week 9: Bailey Hallas

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Wildcats sweep Leavenworth, Piper on Senior Night



Louisburg senior Aidan Cannon works for a pin against his Piper opponent last Thursday during the Wildcats' dual on Senior Night at Louisburg High School.

Before entering its most important tournament of the season, the Louisburg wrestling team had a chance to honor its senior class and did so in style.

Louisburg hosted Piper and Leavenworth in a double dual last Thursday for Senior Night at Louisburg High School and the Wildcats took care of business in impressive fashion.

The Wildcats downed Leavenworth 54-27 and then followed it up with a 54-16 victory over Piper to end their regular season on a good note. It also sent seniors Aiden Barker, Brandon Doles, Aidan Cannon, Bailey Hallas, along with managers Toni Caplinger and Amber Pritchett, out as winners on their home mat.

The seniors, and the rest of the team, have come a long way since their freshmen season.



(From left) Brandon Doles, Amber Pritchett, Aiden Barker, Toni Caplinger, Bailey Hallas and Aidan Cannon were honored on Senior Night last Thursday.

“When Aiden and Brandon were freshmen, we only had four kids in that class, and the team only had 17 kids on it,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “That was an abnormally small group, but look at what we’ve grown to. We have 46 kids out this year, and the senior class picked up two more wrestlers (Bailey Hallas and Aidan Cannon), and they’ve done an awesome job of contributing to the program.”

Against Leavenworth, sophomore Noah Cotter opened with a pin at 106 pounds and Kaven Bartlett won by forfeit to give Louisburg an early 12-10 lead. Sophomore J’Lee Collins got a pin at 132 and junior Jesse Murphy rallied back to get a pin at 152 to help give the Wildcats a two-point advantage.

Then, the Wildcats got on a roll. Louisburg got pins in five of its next six matches from Lucas Swartz, Ashton Moore, Doles, Barker and Elijah Eslinger to secure the 54-28 win.

Louisburg continued that dominance against Piper. Freshmen Colton Blue (113) and Mike McKitrick (120) each got pins, as did Bartlett at 126 to take an 18-4 lead.

Freshman Jay McCaskill got a pin at 138 pounds, while Cannon got a win by pin in his lone match of the night at 145 pounds.



Senior Brandon Doles picks up his Leavenworth opponent and sends him to the mat last Thursday during his 182 pound match.

Moore and Doles followed that up with wins by decision, while Barker and Eslinger got victories by pins and Cameron McClellan won by forfeit at 220.

The Wildcats hope to use that momentum into postseason action. Louisburg will travel to Paola on Saturday for the Class 4A regional tournament as the top four finishes in each weight class will qualify for the state tournament.

“We’re definitely excited for it,” Bovaird said. “Regionals is a weird time each year, and I think we’ve got the ability to hit our peak at the right time so that we achieve our goals at state.”

Wildcats medal six at Frontier League meet



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker works for a pin last Wednesday during the league meet at Eudora High School. Barker finished second at 195 pounds.

EUDORA –The first postseason test for the Louisburg wrestling team came last Wednesday as the Wildcats competed in the Frontier League Tournament.

Louisburg more than made its mark as six Wildcats earned league medals – four of which made the finals at Eudora High School.

Colton Blue (113 pounds), Ashton Moore (170), Brandon Doles (182), Aiden Barker (195) each made the finals and all

finished second at league. Kaven Bartlett (126) was third and Elijah Eslinger (285) took fourth.

As a team, the Wildcats were sixth overall with 134 points. Tonganoxie won the league title with 197 points and Paola was second with 176.

“In all honesty, I wanted to finish higher as a team,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “I wanted to have multiple league champs, and I wanted to win several of those matches that were either rematches from previous meets or regional match-ups we’d need to win. It was a bitter-sweet night because we didn’t have any league champs, and we lost several of those key matches. But at the same time, we had several matches that we battled from start to finish. We may not have won them, but I’m so proud of the fight we gave.

“The Frontier League has been getting tougher and tougher every year I’ve been here. This year alone, we’ve got 17 state-ranked wrestlers in our league and 11 who have been ranked previously in the year. We’ve got 27 returning state / substate qualifiers as well. The Frontier League is awesome competition – just what we need to take our final strides of improvement to regionals.”

Barker, who is ranked No. 3 at 195 pounds in Class 4A, squared off with Spring Hill’s Draven Pipkin (No. 4 in 5A) and fell in a 10-5 decision in the championship match. Prior to that, Barker had two pins, including one of Tonganoxie’s Wyatt Harris in the semifinals.



Louisburg senior Brandon Doles gets some back points last week at Eudora.

As for Doles, he defeated Bonner Springs' Dakota Mortell by a 10-0 major decision in the semifinals and then met Baldwin's Jack Harvey in the finals. Harvey, who is a state-ranked wrestler himself, pinned Doles in the first period.

In his first league tournament, Blue had a big day at 113 pounds as he won by major decision in his first match and then pinned Spring Hill's James Sheldon to reach the finals.

Blue then went up against fellow freshman Xander Meinig of Paola. In what was a back-and-forth match, Meinig defeated Blue by a 13-9 decision in what could have gone either way.



Louisburg freshman Colton Blue finished second at 113 pounds last week during the league meet in Eudora.

Moore, who also participated in his first league tourney, earned a pin in his first match and then defeated Piper's Sawyer Vas, 3-0, in the semifinals. He then faced Tyler Pankey, who is ranked No. 4 in 4A, and was pinned in the first period.

“Everyone had pretty legit opponents in the finals,” Bovaird said. “Blue lost 9-13 to a Paola kid who’s ranked 6th at state, Moore lost by pin to the 4th ranked kid from Tonganoxie, Doles lost by pin to the #3 ranked kid from Baldwin, and Barker lost 5-10 to the #4 ranked kid in 5A from Spring Hill. Bartlett lost 5-3 to the #3 ranked kid from Paola in the semifinals as well.

“That’s just how it is – the league is tough as nails, and you’ve got to credit the other programs for elevating our league to that level. It’s good all-around – we battle each other at league and get each other ready for regionals and state.”



Louisburg freshman Ashton Moore was second at 170 pounds at the Frontier League meet.

Bartlett squared off with Paola’s Ryan Pankov in the

semifinals at 126 pounds and lost a close 5-3 decision. The Louisburg junior bounced back as he pinned Piper's Payton Mills in the consolation semifinals, before pinning Ottawa's Trevor Kaub for third overall.

Eslinger, the team's heavyweight, recorded a pair of pins on the day, but lost his third place match to Piper's Chris Craig in a tough 4-3 decision to take fourth overall.

Sophomore Noah Cotter (106) took fifth overall, while freshman Mika McKitrick (120) and freshman Lucas Swartz (160) finished sixth. Sophomore J'Lee Collins (132) and freshman Jay McCaskill (138) were seventh and senior Aidan Cannon (145) took eighth.

Week 9 Athlete of the Week: Bailey Hallas



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

BAILEY HALLAS, SENIOR, GIRLS

WRESTLING

Louisburg senior Bailey Hallas made Louisburg history earlier this month as she became the first Lady Cat to earn a Frontier League medal as she finished fourth at 109 pounds at the league tournament in Eudora. This was her second year as a member of the Louisburg girls wrestling team.

Hallas was the lone member of the team this year and saw her season come to an end last Saturday at regionals. Still, the Louisburg senior played a big part of the Louisburg program.

“Although her season ended this past weekend, she’s the first girl wrestler to finish 2 complete seasons,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “She’s the foundation upon which the success of every girl wrestler who competes for LHS will be built. Every record that will be set has begun with her. Every placement that our girls will achieve will be based on the precedent she set.”

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Hallas earns first league medal for Louisburg girls wrestling



Louisburg senior Bailey Hallas took fourth at the Frontier League Girls Tournament on Feb. 4 and become the first Wildcat girls wrestler to earn a league medal. On Saturday, Hallas finished 0-2 at regionals to end her season.

Girls wrestling has taken off in some parts of the state, but in Louisburg, that momentum is slowly building.

Senior Bailey Hallas is the lone member of the Wildcat girls wrestling team, but that didn't stop her from making some

history.

On Feb. 4, Hallas competed in the Frontier League Girls Tournament in Eudora and earned the program's first ever league medal in girls wrestling. Hallas finished fourth at 109 pounds.

"The whole program is very proud of how Bailey has been doing, and we were all excited to see her give it her best shot in the postseason," Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. "She's our first league medalist, and she's doing an awesome job of laying a strong foundation for girls wrestling at Louisburg High School."

Hallas finished 1-3 on the league tournament, but won her first match of the day with a pin of Bonner Springs' Kylie Enriquez, which allowed her to place fourth and get on the medal stand.

Hallas tried to become the first Louisburg girls wrestler to earn a spot at the state tournament Saturday at the Class 4-1A regional tournament in Chanute, but finished the day with an 0-2 record.

The Louisburg senior finished her season with a 7-13 record, but didn't get to have the normal season that a lot of female wrestlers were fortunate to have.

"It's been tough trying to get her matches," Bovaird said. "Many of the schools on our schedule have separate schedules for their girls teams, so when we've hosted teams, their girls have been competing elsewhere. We were supposed to get Bailey into the Topeka Invitational since they were going to have a girls bracket, but that tournament ended up getting canceled due to inclement weather.

"We have been able to get her more matches this year than last year. She's been right in there with the guys all season long, doing the work they've been doing. She doesn't ask for special

treatment, nor does she expect it. She's paying her dues with the rest of the team."

Although Hallas' season is over, she laying the groundwork for what Boviard hopes becomes a bigger program in the future.

"Girls wrestling is on the rise in our part of the state – Baldwin, Spring Hill, Paola, Ottawa, Fort Scott – they're all pushing toward the front of girls wrestling in Kansas," Boviard said. "We'll be right up there soon. We've got girls with our youth wrestling club who are seeing a great deal of success, and they're bringing their friends into the mix. The girls are the best recruiters for the sport. Louisburg has a culture of strong female athletes, and that's evident every year with our volleyball, basketball, soccer, and track success.

"Unfortunately, along with that success comes the expectation for club or year-round participation in those sports. I've talked to countless high school girls who would have given wrestling a shot, but their schedules are pretty full with other activities. Bailey has been a great asset to the laying of the foundation for future generations of girls wrestlers though. Already, Bailey, Heather Eslinger (one of our Wildcat Wrestling Club coaches and mother of a 7th grade girl wrestler), and I have been talking strategy for recruiting and building."

LHS winter homecoming royalty to be crowned Friday



Members of the 2022 Louisburg High School winter homecoming court are (from left) Aubryn Berck, Aiden Barker, Chase Kallevig, A.J. Arriola, Corinna McMullen, Carson Kern, Reese Johnson and Isaac Guetterman.

Homecoming week at Louisburg High School kicked off Monday and events are in full swing. With something going on every day this week, it will be a busy time for students. All of it is, of course, centered around the crowning of the 2022 winter king and queen. Eight students were selected as nominees and here are their names and profiles.

The crowning will take place on Friday during halftime of the Wildcat boys' basketball game with Spring Hill. Tipoff for that game is set for approximately 7:30 p.m. Good luck to all the participants and make sure to come out on Friday to support both the Wildcat girls and boys basketball teams.



Aubryn Berck and Aiden Barker

Aubryn is the daughter of Dave and Amanda Berck. Aubryn has been involved with high school volleyball for three years, member of National Honor Society for two years, FCA for two years. She has been a part of FCCLA for one year, track for one year and volleyball manager for one year. Aubryn has

played club volleyball for eight years, shown horses for 10 years and a leader in Life Church's youth classroom for two years. Following graduation, Aubryn is planning to study nutrition sciences to become a registered dietician. She is undecided on her school at this time.

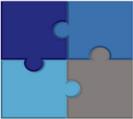
Aiden is the son of David and Gail Barker. Aiden has participated in football for four years, wrestling for four years and National Honor Society for two years. He is currently undecided on his plans following graduation.



Chase Kallevig and A.J. Arriola

Chase is the daughter of Eric and Kara Kallevig. Chase has participated in volleyball for four years, FFA for three year, National Honor Society for two years, FBLA for two years and basketball for one year. Chase is currently undecided on her plans following graduation.

A.J. is the son of Juan Arriola and Shelly Gibson. A.J. has participated in golf for four years, FCA for two years, musical for two years, choir for two years and FBLA for one year. A.J. plans to major in accounting in college, but is undecided on his destination.



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Corinna McMullen and Carson Kern

Corinna is the daughter of Scott and Sarah McMullen. Corinna has participated in volleyball for four years, National Honor Society for two years, Interact Club for one year and FBLA for one year. After graduation, Corinna will attend Washburn University on a volleyball scholarship and major in nursing

with a specialization in pediatrics.

Carson is the son of Matthew and Veronica Kern. Carson has participated in basketball for three years and golf for two years. After graduation, Carson plans to attend Pittsburg State University.



Reese Johnson and Isaac Guetterman

Reese is the daughter of Matthew and Tiffany Johnson. Reese has participated in soccer for four years, cross country for four years, National Honor Society for two years, band for two years and FFA for one year. Reese plans to attend the University of Central Missouri after graduation, but is undecided on a major.

Isaac is the son of Ted and Lisa Guetterman. Isaac has participated in FFA for four years, soccer for four years and basketball for four years. He has been a part of National Honor Society for two years and participated in track for one. Following graduation, Isaac plans to attend Iowa State University and major in Agricultural Engineering.









Wildcats medal six at Baldwin Invitational



Louisburg senior Brandon Doles works for some back points during a match Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational. Doles, who finished fourth at 182 pounds, competed in his first tournament action in almost a season-and-a-half.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg wrestling team found itself in a very competitive tournament for the second straight week.

This time the Wildcats competed in the Baldwin Invitational Tournament that featured several state-ranked wrestlers and teams. Louisburg more than held its own.

Louisburg took eighth overall with 105 points in the 16-team tournament. The Wildcats also had several find the medal stand.

Senior Aiden Barker took second at 195 pounds, while freshman Ashton Moore was third at 170. Colton Blue (113 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126), Brayden Yoder (170) and Brandon Doles (182) each finished fourth.

“We could take the route of nothing but easy tournaments and inflate our records, but eventually we’re going to need to see these tough opponents,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “A tough schedule tests us and prepares us for the end stretch –

league, regionals, and state. Last week, we talked about how an athlete needs to look at a test. A test isn't something that is definitive; it's an assessment of where we're at now, what we need to improve on, and what we're doing right."

Barker has been doing a lot right this season as he is currently the No. 4 ranked wrestler in Class 4A with a 24-5 record, with many of those losses coming against higher-ranked opponents.



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker works for a pin Saturday at the Baldwin Invitational.

One of those case in the championship match Saturday as Barker squared off with Wamego's Hayden Oviatt, who is currently the the No. 1 wrestler in 4A.

Oviatt pinned Barker in the first period, but had a strong day up to that point. He opened with a pain in the quarterfinals

and then squared off with No. 6-ranked Jared Ferguson out of Ottawa, for the second time this week.

Barker controlled the match to take the 9-5 decision, which put him in the 195-pound finals.

“Aiden had a great tournament, but that Wamego kid is just plain unreal,” Bovaird said. “He’s only a junior, but at state he took 4th as a freshman at 160 and 3rd as a sophomore. Aiden will see him again at state.

“Overall, Aiden wrestled well. He opened with a solid win against a strong Goodland wrestler, and then had a rematch with Ferguson from Ottawa in the semifinals. He was in pretty good control that whole match.”

Saturday also marked the first tournament action in a year-and-a-half for Doles. The Louisburg senior missed last season due to a leg injury, and a shoulder injury sideline him for the first half of this season.

After getting his first win of the season last Thursday in a dual against Ottawa, Doles responded with a fourth-place finish at 182 pounds. Both of his losses came against Burlington’s Brock Zimmerman in what were close decisions.

Doles earned a pin in his first match of the day, and then followed with victories over Labette County’s Austin Ourada and Osawatomie’s Seth Carrow.

“Brandon has been missed on the mat this last year and a half, but he’s had a great presence as a sort of assistant coach in the meantime,” Bovaird said. “I loved getting to sit in his corner again this weekend. He’s got some things to overcome in regards to conditioning and confidence, but that’s understandable. He’s gotten through the hard part of having his first tournament back, so now it’s time to focus on getting in shape and knocking off the rust.”

Louisburg was also able to snag a pair of medals at 170 pounds as Moore and Yoder squared off with each other on two different occasions, with Moore winning both close matches.

“One pretty neat thing was that we had two freshmen place,” Bovaird said. “Ashton Moore had to wrestle his teammate Brayden Yoder twice, winning 3-1 and 1-0 both times. Those two are really going to push each other the next three years, and I’m excited to see what sort of a power-punch they’re going to give our line-up. We’re just pretty solid in that weight range.”

Blue finished with a 3-2 record at 113 pounds as he recorded a pair of pins in the consolation bracket, before falling in a 10-4 decision to Osawatomie’s Parker Layman in the third-place match.

Bartlett also had a 3-2 record at 126 pounds as he reached the semifinals, before losing a 4-1 decision to Prairie View’s Hagen Blanck. In the consolation side, he won a 5-0 decision over Rock Creek’s Spencer Bard, then lost a tough 3-2 decision to Goodland’s Octavio Gonzalez in the third-place match.

Baldwin hosted a girls invitational tournament Friday and senior Bailey Hallas battled to take fourth overall at 109 pounds.

Hallas finished the day with a 2-3 record and recorded two pins in the process.

Louisburg will now have some time off as the Wildcats won’t compete again until Feb. 9 when they travel to Eudora for the Frontier League Invitational.

Ottawa edges Louisburg in dual

Despite winning its last three matches of the night, Louisburg came up just short last Thursday in its home dual with Ottawa.

The Cyclones topped the Wildcats, 37-34, but won some close matches.

The final match of the night came down to 195 pounds when Aiden Barker, who is ranked No. 4 at 195, defeated No. 6 ranked Jared Ferguson in a big victory.



Louisburg junior Elijah Eslinger gets a pin against his Ottawa opponent last Thursday in a league dual at Louisburg.

At 182 pounds, senior Brandon Doles won by decision as he wrestled in his first match back from injury and freshman Ashton Moore won by major decision at 170.

Kaven Bartlett won by decision at 126, Jay McCaskill recorded a pin a 138, Colton Blue won by pin at 113 pound and Elijah Eslinger won his heavyweight match by pin.

Bartlett wins 126-pound title at Husky Invitational



Louisburg senior Kaven Bartlett went 4-0 last weekend at the Husky Invitational held at Blue Valley Northwest High School.

OVERLAND PARK – For being a last minute addition to its schedule, the Louisburg wrestling team was more than happy to take part in the Husky Invitational last weekend.

However, maybe no one was more elated than Kaven Bartlett.

The Louisburg junior won the 126-pound title at the tournament held at Blue Valley Northwest High School. Over two days on Friday and Saturday, Bartlett proved the best in his class as he put together a 4-0 record, including a victory over a state-ranked wrestler.

Bartlett opened with a first period pin of Topeka-Seaman's Draven Bennett, then followed it up with another pin of Heritage's Diego Reyes.

He then squared off with Lawrence Free State's D'onte Goodman, who is ranked No. 5 in Class 6A, in the semifinals. Bartlett responded with a 6-1 decision and then downed Andover's Colter Rieschick by a 4-1 decision in the championship match.

"Kaven was a man on a mission at BVNW," Louisburg coach Bobby

Bovaird said. "In his semifinal match, he faced a Lawrence Free State wrestler who is ranked #5 in 6A, and Kaven was all about business with him. He got two takedowns and was dominant on top. In the finals, he kept his focus and never let the spotlight of being a major tournament distract him."

In all, the Wildcats finished 11th out of 22 teams with 153 points. Andover won the tournament with 321.5 points, while Maize was second with 299.

The Wildcats weren't even supposed to be in the tournament as they were originally scheduled to compete in Parsons on Friday. It ended up being cancelled due to COVID-19, the Wildcats' second cancellation in as many weeks.

Bovaird said his team was fortunate to compete in the Husky Invitational and learned a lot from their time there.

"We were the only 4A school there and we were the smallest Kansas school (aside from Jayhawk-Linn, which is 3A)," Bovaird said. "The rest of the 22-team field was filled with 5A and 6A schools, as well as two Colorado teams (JK Mullen out of Denver and Heritage out of Littleton), one Iowa team (Marion), and one Missouri team (Lincoln Prep). I loved seeing the competition there.

"The Husky Invitational had a good number of state-ranked kids and returning state medalists. When we see the same faces all season long, it gets to be monotonous. Tournaments like this one help us see new styles and new faces – especially when it's against kids we know nothing about – and it's a great measuring stick for where we are now versus where we want to be.



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker finished fifth at Husky Invitational at 195 pounds.

Bartlett wasn't the only Wildcat to earn a spot on the medal stand. Senior Aiden Barker competed in a tough 195-pound field and took fifth overall.

Barker finished 3-2 on the day and pinned Blue Valley West's Robert Svoboda in his fifth place match. Barker lost his semifinal and consolation semifinals to Matthew Marcum of Lawrence Free State (No. 2 in 6A) and Topeka Seaman's Jaxson Thomas.

Sophomore Colton Blue went on to finish seventh at 113 pounds, while freshman Ashton Moore was eighth at 170 pounds. Mika McKitrick (120) and J'Lee Collins (132) each took 10th, while Noah Cotter was 11th at 106, as was Brayden Yoder at 182.

"One of the tough things about wrestling is when you have a

kid with high hopes for a tournament and he goes out and falls short of his goals,” Bovaird said. “The trick is how to get him to refocus and bounce back – not just after making a mistake in a match or after losing a match, but the next week at practice. Wrestling can be so draining psychologically. The trick is that the coaches need to help these kids realize that a single match or tournament isn’t a defining moment in their season; it’s just a snapshot in time. We have time to fix our mistakes, and at this point in the year, we need to be making mistakes. That’s the only way we can learn and best prepare for the postseason. ‘Beat Yesterday’ is the corporate motto of Garmin, and that’s exactly what our coaching staff has been trying to get our kids to believe.

“We’re a young team, and that puts us at a disadvantage in a lot of ways. But the great things about the BVNW tournament outnumber the negatives. Aiden Barker matched up with the #2 ranked wrestler in 6A and was the only opponent that wasn’t pinned by him. Aiden bounced back and finished 5th. Mika won his first two varsity matches of the season, Colton finished 7th at 113 in a very tough bracket, J’Lee scored a ton of takedowns and is showing huge progress despite his record, and Lucas Swartz, Ashton, and Brayden continue to be competitive as freshmen in the upper weights. We’re still seeing some great things from Noah, Kyle Oram, and Elijah Eslinger as well.”

Louisburg is back in action Thursday when it hosts Ottawa in a dual format and then will take part in the Baldwin Invitational Tournament on Saturday.

Wildcats take down Lawrence in home dual

Louisburg hosted Lawrence High School for a dual last Wednesday and the Wildcats came out on top 51-27.

The dual, which started at 220 pounds, was big for the Wildcats early as a pin by Noah Cotter, at 106 pounds, along with two forfeits, put Louisburg up 18-6.



Louisburg sophomore Noah Cotter works for a pin last week at home during his 106-pound match against Lawrence.

Mika McKitrick won by forfeit at 120 pounds, and after a Kaven Bartlett loss, J'Lee Collins won by pin to put the Wildcats up 30-9.

Despite a Jesse Murphy pin at 152 pounds, Lawrence chipped away at the Wildcat lead and cut it to 36-27 heading into the final three matches.

However, Ashton Moore and Brayden Yoder each won by forfeit and Aiden Barker ended it with a 4-1 decision.

Louisburg picks up dual wins over Olathe South, Labette County



Louisburg senior Aidan Cannon went 1-1 at 145 pounds last Wednesday to help the Wildcats get victories over Olathe South and Labette County.

OLATHE – Louisburg wrestling had to face some adversity prior to its double dual last Wednesday at Olathe South.

The Wildcats found out they were going to be open in three weight classes and had juggle their lineup around for another. It wasn't the best way to enter competition, but Louisburg still came out on top.

Louisburg opened with a 42-30 victory over Labette County and then followed it up with a close win 42-38 win over Olathe South.

“We had some unexpected obstacles pop up, which left us open at 113, 152, and 160 and scrambling at 138 (injuries, illnesses, and weight issues), but the way the team battled was pretty awesome,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “We had several kids go undefeated. We’re still getting lots of great experience and learning as we go.”

Sophomores Noah Cotter (106 pounds), J'Lee Collins (132), junior Kaven Bartlett (126), freshman Ashton Moore (170) and junior Elijah Eslinger (285) each won a pair of matches. Senior Bailey Hallas did the same on the girls side at 109 pounds.

Senior Aidan Cannon also made the move up from junior varsity at 145 pounds, while freshman Jay McCaskill moved down to 138. Cannon got the Wildcats a big victory over Olathe South.

Aiden Barker went 1-1 at 195 pounds and suffered just his second loss of the season. Barker, who is ranked No. 4 in Class 4A, lost to the defending 6A champion, Blake Jouret of Olathe South by technical fall.

It was a night of a lot of positives for the Wildcat program.

"Bartlett was especially focused, and I love where his mindset has been lately," Bovaird said. "Collins and Cannon both won key matches for us too. Barker had a rough second match against the defending 6A state champion, but I'm proud of how he stepped out there and battled. He never gave up against his opponent."

The double dual also provided a unique atmosphere as Olathe South set up the mat on their auditorium stage for the competition.

"I'd seen pictures of wrestling duals held in auditoriums on the stage, but those had mostly been collegiate duals," Bovaird said. "When we got to Olathe South and saw the set-up, I was pretty excited. That was a truly unique experience, and we loved it."

Louisburg is back on the mats tonight as the Wildcats host Lawrence High for a dual. It will also be Alumni Night for Louisburg. Matches are set to begin at 6 p.m.

Wildcat wrestlers finish runner-up at home tournament



Louisburg freshman Brayden Yoder looks to put his opponent on his back during a 182-pound match Saturday at the Louisburg Wildcat Invitational. Yoder finished second overall and was one of five Wildcats to make it to the championship match.

In its first action back from the holiday break, the Louisburg wrestling team had a chance to ease back into the swing of things in front of its home fans.

The Wildcats competed in the Louisburg Wildcat Invitational on Saturday and put together a strong performance in the 10-team field.

Louisburg finished second overall with 200.5 points and finished 19 points behind champion Pittsburg. Blue Valley West was third at 188.

“After the first round and part of the second round, I wasn’t sure how we were going to end up as a team,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Hosting a tournament and having a full line-up makes for a busy day, so I didn’t really think much about it. After lunch, kids kept saying we were bouncing in and out of first place and keeping neck-and-neck with Pittsburg.”

“They’re a team that is made up mostly of juniors and seniors, and our team had 7 freshmen and 2 sophomores in the line-up. Several of our varsity guys are only second year wrestlers. By the end of the day, I was pretty excited to see the team battling for a plaque at our home tournament.”

Louisburg had a successful day as eight wrestlers left with medals and five of them found themselves in the championship match.



Louisburg senior Aiden Barker works for a pin at 195 pounds Saturday during the Wildcats’ home tournament. Barker was first in his weight class.

Senior Aiden Barker dominated his way to a title at 195-pounds as he recorded four pins and never had to go more than one round. He pinned Pittsburg’s Jaquan Augustin in 1:38 in the championship.

“Aiden’s really stepping up,” Bovaird said. “He knows that he’s seen his last couple of seasons fall short of his goals, and I remember how hard it hit him each time. He’s a focused young man who’s taking things seriously this season. He’s giving great leadership to his teammates and setting a high bar.”

Four other Wildcats – Colton Blue (113 pounds), Kaven Bartlett (126), Brayden Yoder (182) and Elijah Eslinger (285) – also earned a spot in the championship match.

Although none of them were able to come out on top in their final match, each of them wrestled strong all day according to Bovaird.

Blue (13-4), a freshman, went 3-0 with three pins to advance to the title match, but was pinned in the second period of the championship by Blue Valley West’s Logan Meinheit despite getting out to a 4-0 lead.

As for Bartlett, the Louisburg junior won four straight matches on his way to a spot in the championship with three pins and a technical fall. He lost a close 4-3 decision to Anderson County’s AJ Schaffer in the first place match.



Louisburg junior Kaven Bartlett finished second overall at 126 pounds Saturday.

“Colton had a great tournament, which included a win over a Shawnee Mission East wrestler who had been ranked at one point this season,” Bovaird said. “In the finals, he got a quick takedown and back points against his opponent, who’s a pretty talented wrestler himself.

“Kaven was on a mission Saturday. Even though he didn’t win in the finals, he was fighting every second of the match. I thought he was doing what he needed to do to score points and keep his opponent on his heels. I’d hoped he would have gotten that second stalling call, which would have tied the match, but it just didn’t go his way.”

Yoder, a freshman, also had a strong home debut with a 3-1 record through pool and bracket play and led up to a matchup with Blue Valley West’s Matt Lancaster, who is undefeated on the season. Lancaster handed Yoder (11-7) his only two losses on the day.

As for Eslinger, he rolled up four straight wins to advance to the heavyweight championship, including a pair of pins. Eslinger (14-4) lost by pin in the championship to Liberal's Hudson Rice.

"Brayden weighed in at just over 170 and he was competing against a bunch of kids who were not only upperclassmen, but also weighing as much as 12 pounds more than Brayden," Bovaird said. "He had a great match in the semifinals, giving a Liberal kid his second loss of the season, and then he faced a brute senior from BV West in the finals.

"Elijah had two great wins by decision Saturday, with one of them being a revenge win over a Royal Valley wrestler from last year. I love how he's been showing that he's got the endurance and mental toughness to wrestle three full periods. That will be a huge asset down the road."

Sophomore Noah Cotter (106 pounds) and freshman Ashton Moore (170) each finished third overall, while junior Jesse Murphy (152) was fourth.

Cotter (13-6) finished the day with a 4-1 record, including a first period pin over Royal Valley's Payton Rivera in the third place match.



Sophomore J'Lee Collins works for a pin at 132 pounds on Saturday in Louisburg.

As for Moore (13-6), he was 3-2 with a close 3-2 decision over Leavenworth's Emory Fedd in the third place match. Murphy (8-6) was 2-3 on the day after getting pinned by Blue Valley West's Veda Gummadipudi in third place match.

"Noah Cotter is wrestling like he's on a mission," Bovaird said. "He was 4-1 with 4 pins Saturday, and his only loss was an overtime decision that really could have gone either way. Jesse had a great come-from-behind win in the second round of the tournament, and that win helped him get to fourth. Ashton finished in third place, but he was perhaps the most aggressive I've seen him so far this season."

Freshman Jay McCaskill (145), sophomore J'Lee Collins (132) and freshman Lucas Swartz (160) each finished fifth overall.

Louisburg is back in action tonight at Olathe South and will face off with Labette County in dual action. The Wildcats will then travel to the Topeka Invitational on Saturday.