

LRC gearing up for baseball, softball season



At this point in the year, it isn't uncommon to see the ballfields at Lewis-Young Park packed full of parents and players creating summer memories on the diamond.

This year, however, is anything but normal.

Like the rest of us, the Louisburg Recreation Commission has found that out first hand as the COVID-19 pandemic forced it to quickly come up with new programs, cancel seasons and try their best to keep others going.

That is what LRC director Diana Moore and the LRC board did as they revamped plans and provided programming while people were stuck at home.

"The crazy thing was the governor closed the schools on March 17 and ironically we had a board meeting that night," Moore said. "It was a very emotional day all-around. The board wanted to see what we could do with virtual stuff and the next day we just got to work. We came up with virtual classes so we had like cooking classes, yoga and other stuff like that.

"Then we did the social distance Easter scavenger hunt. We had to work with the police department, city hall and the health department people, but it was fun. Wine testing and cookie decorating along with a virtual fishing department. We did Bingo and Wheel of Fortune on Friday nights. We just changed how we did things, but we were still getting ready for

sports.”

Baseball and softball were still on the forefront of the LRC’s minds as they waited for guidelines to reopen, which changed on a weekly, and sometimes, daily basis. The rec commission was forced to cancel the spring soccer season and many on the board didn’t want the same thing to happen to baseball and softball.

The only question would be if they would have the time to get it all in. As it turned out, they had just enough to work with.

When Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly shifted powers to each individual county, it gave members of the commission a good feel on what they had to do to get sports going again.

Normally, practice starts in April, but with a tight time schedule, the older baseball and softball teams started practice on June 15, while the T-Ball and coach pitch teams will begin on June 22. Games will then begin for everyone on June 29.

For guidance, Moore attended Zoom meetings with the Kansas Recreation and Park Association to learn what guidelines they would have to adhere to when games started again.

“We had many meetings with the KRPA and they have guidelines for reopening everything from how we open the concession, how we sanitize the restroom and how to socially distance,” Moore said. “A couple of the big changes will be that parents won’t sit in the bleachers and they will have to bring their own chairs. Families will be together but they will have to social distance around the fields. We are going to move the bleachers closer and use them as extended dugouts.

“We bought cleaning stuff, so we have spray down the dugouts, bleachers and restrooms after each practice or game. We are trying to do more doubleheaders and try to eliminate extra

people crossing each other's paths. For t-ball, I think I will have them sit with their parents when they bat since there are no bleachers there."

Although they are limited to what they can sell, the LRC will also be running a concession stand each night with prepackaged items and sealed drinks. That means no nachos, hot dogs or popcorn.

There will also be two umpires in each game, but they will be eliminating the home plate umpire and instead have two out in the field, with one calling balls and strikes from there. Players will also need to make sure they have their own glove and helmet.

"Normally the umpires will get balls from the home team, but the umpires will no longer touch the balls," Moore said. "When your team is out on the field, you will use your balls and vice versa. Trying to eliminate as much of the sharing stuff as we can. We also had to put social distance signs all-around. There just needs to be constant reminders.

"Glove and helmet – anything you wear has to be your own. There will be no catcher for 8-and-under and it also freed up catching gear to where we could have two sets for 10s, 12s and 14s."

In the last couple of months, Moore has been frantically meeting with other towns to try and figure out a schedule. Towns they would normally schedule with, like Paola and Osawatomie, didn't have the numbers to put together teams – while Garnett was able to field two baseball teams.

That left Louisburg teams having to play each other, which Moore was able to make work. Louisburg had more than 300 kids sign up for baseball and softball, which was down from about 400 a year ago.

"Numbers weren't way down," Moore said. "We had some that had

to pull out due to other plans, but we had more on the wait list than more than we had back out and we were able to get everybody in.

“When the rec directors got together early on, we decided we were going to go with the town that had the stricter rules. We have found a lot of people in the smaller towns are out of work and the kids can’t afford to play. So many of the towns we were supposed to play, couldn’t field teams so we are just trying to keep it all Louisburg. Then for softball we only have one 12-and-under softball team, but we have lined up with a couple local traveling teams that play up in the city and they are going to help us get more games as well.”

The LRC also has a new addition to its staff as Louisburg resident Amy Buffington was hired to be the new recreation coordinator and she is looking forward to what lies in store.

“I am very excited to be on board here,” Buffington said. “I already knew that Diana and the rec did a lot, but when I started here I quickly realized it was even more than I originally thought. I am really looking forward to working alongside everyone.”

Moore also knows that Buffington was the right person for job and that she will be a great asset to the LRC.

“It is awesome having Amy because she already knows Louisburg,” Moore said. “She knows the families, knows the kids, the town and the sports. She already knew what we were doing and that was a slam dunk to me. She came in with ideas and she will be a big help for sure. A year from now, I really think we can play off each other’s strengths.”

Wildcat 8-and-under baseball team has big summer



Keegan Cooley slides safely into second base for the Louisburg Wildcat 8-and-under baseball team. The 12-member Wildcat team racked up 16 wins in the Olathe Baseball League this summer.

Playing together for the first time, head coach Joel LaJoie wasn't sure what to expect from his group of 8-and-under baseball players.

The team made up of 12 players, all from Louisburg, decided to go out on their own and join a kid pitch league that was a part of Olathe Youth Baseball. The Wildcat team more than held their own as they finished with a 16-2 league record as they learned to pitch for the first time.

Members of the Wildcat team are Max Amren, Grant Bloustine, Logan Buset, Lance Callahan, Casey Carpenter-Ross, Keegan Cooley, Cody Courtney, Jack LaJoie, Beau Lanz, Cole Lanz, Spencer Mattison and Cavan O'Brien.



Head coach Joel LaJoie speaks to his team following a contest earlier this summer. The Wildcats finished with a 16-2 record in the Olathe Baseball League.

“That was our biggest struggle, but also our biggest success,” coach LaJoie said of the team’s first year of pitching. “All of these young men are natural ball players and I’m truly excited about developing this team so I can drop them at the front door of the high school their freshman year ready to play at a very high level. My dream for this team is to see them help Louisburg High School field a state championship team.”

After having a lot of success in their league, the Wildcats also ventured out to play in USSSA tournaments, where they finished with a 2-4 mark.



Beau Lanz winds up for pitch for the Louisburg Wildcat 8-and-under baseball team this summer.

If your summer team had a lot of success, and you would like them featured on Louisburg Sports Zone, please email me at louisburgsportszone@gmail.com for more information.

Wildcats win Olathe baseball league



The Louisburg Wildcats won the Olathe Recreation League 9-and-under baseball title Sunday at Black Bob Park in Olathe.

Members of the team are (front row, from left) are Luke Hill, Blake Amren, Wyatt Holland, Cole Mynsted, Emmett Perrenoud-Moore; (middle row) Brady Hickey, Caden Caplinger, Jack Anderson, Declan Battle, Easton Harlan, Brock McEwen, Brock Vohs; (back row) coaches Kraig Hickey, Gabe Anderson, head coach Aaron Battle, John McEwen and Rob Vohs.

OLATHE – The Louisburg Wildcats, a 9-and-under baseball team, spent most of the summer playing against some of the best the Olathe Recreation League had to offer.

As it turned out, the Wildcats were at the top of that group.

Louisburg won the league crown Sunday at Black Bob Park in Olathe as it finished the league tournament with a 3-0 record, including a 12-7 win over the Olathe Eagles to complete what was a successful season. The Wildcats finished the season with a 16-6 record.

"I'm extremely proud of this group of young men," head coach Aaron Battle said. "It was their first year of live pitching and their first year playing together in a competitive league. The way these boys gelled together and improved each and every day was amazing. They were a lot of fun to coach and watch play. They had an outstanding baseball season together."

The Wildcats faced off with the Eagles twice in the tournament, including a back and forth championship game. The Eagles held a one run lead in the third inning of the title game, but the Wildcats answered with four runs in their half of the third and three more in the fifth to pull away.

Luke Hill started the game for Louisburg and pitched four innings to hold the Eagles offense in check. In those four innings, Hill gave up seven hits, but struck out six batters.

Teammate Declan Battle came in for relief and pitched the final two frames and gave up just one run on one hit and also struck out a batter.

Offensively, Hill helped himself as he recorded three hits to go along with 2 RBIs. Brock Vohs had a pair of hits at crucial situations as he finished with a single, a double and also drove home four runs.

Caden Caplinger and Wyatt Holland also finished with a pair of hits and 2 RBIs each. Jack Anderson also added 2 RBIs of his own.

The Wildcat also flashed some leather and made plays on defense, including a couple of big stops from shortstop Brady Hickey and first baseman Easton Harlan.

To get to the championship game, Louisburg had to defeat the Eagles on Saturday and the Wildcats didn't have much of a problem. The Wildcats won going away, 10-4.

Louisburg opened the game with five runs in the first inning

and three in the third to help put the game away.

Hickey started the game for Louisburg and pitched four of the five innings. Hickey gave up just two runs on five hits and struck out eight batters.

Holland led the Wildcat bats with a double and also recorded 4 RBIs in the win. Caplinger finished with two hits and an RBI, while Hickey finished with a single and two RBIs.

Blake Amren, Emmett Perrenoud-Moore and Harlan also finished with an RBI each in the win.

Louisburg opened the tournament with an easy 13-1 victory as it scored five runs in each of the first two innings to all but seal the win.

Battle pitched a complete game for the Wildcats as he allowed only one run on three hits and struck out eight batters.

Hill and Anderson had big days offensively as each finished with 3 RBIs, while Hill was 3-for-3 at the plate. Vohs added two hits and a pair of RBIs for the Wildcats.

Caplinger, Holland, Harlan, Hickey and Cole Mynsted recorded and RBI each, while Battle and Hill scored three times. Brock McEwen and Caplinger also scored twice.

LARA baseball recaps from

June 12-24



Gavin Lohse fires a ball to first base for Team Hovey during a game earlier this season in the LARA 8-and-under machine pitch league. Team Hovey has picked up three wins in the last week.

Here are LARA baseball recaps from June 12 through June 24. If you would like to submit information on your team, please email louisburgsportszone@gmail.com to get them included.

8-and-under machine pitch

June 24

Team Hovey 16, Wea Eagles (Team Myers) 6

Team Hovey put together a strong performance against the Wea Eagles as it scored nine runs in the first two innings to get a 16-6 win.

Hovey scored two more runs in the third and five more in the fourth to seal the win. The Eagles scored two runs each in the second, third and fourth innings.

Danny Johnson and Scott Wallace each led the Eagle bats with a pair of hits, while Blaise Vohs smacked a third-inning double into the outfield.

On defense, Cooper Riley ran down a pop fly at shortstop in

the third inning to help hold Hovey to just two runs.

June 23

Team Hovey 10, Wea Eagles 2

Team Hovey scored three runs in the first inning and four more in the third to take a 10-2 win over the Wea Eagles coached by Jeff Myers.

Eight different players had hits for the Eagles, who scored a run in the third and fifth innings.

Cooper Riley, Roy Bauer, Harry Krafft, Bobby Johnson, Wyatt Guetterman, Michael Foote, Scott Wallace and Danny Johnson each had a single in the loss.

June 19

Team Carlson 9, Wea Eagles 8

Down by five runs to Team Carlson after the first two innings, the Eagles nearly made a big comeback, but fell one run short in a 9-8 loss.

Cooper Riley and Blaise Vohs each had a pair of hits that included a double a single. Keegan Rogers and Trevor Myers also finished with a pair of singles.

Catcher Harry Krafft gave the Eagles a lift on defense as he picked up a bunt attempt, tagged the runner and then tagged out a runner trying to score from third to get an unassisted double play.

June 17

Team Hovey 16, Wea Eagles 2

Hovey scored five runs in first, second and fourth innings to pull away from the Wea Eagles in the 16-2 win.

Trevor Myers and Keegan Rogers each finished with a pair of hits to lead the Eagles' bats. Cooper Riley hit a 2-run double in the fourth inning to prevent the shutout.

Roy Bauer also provided some good defense for the Eagles as he tagged out runners on back-to-back plays at second base.

June 12

Team Willey 17, Eagles 11

Ten players had two more hits from Team Willey who used a five-run third and fourth innings to pull away from the Wea Eagles in a 17-11 victory.

Willey had 26 hits in its 32 at-bats. Will Showalter led Willey with four hits and Evan Moreland had three hits, which included a double.

Logan Henry, Carter Willey and Matt Stohs also finished with three singles. Erik Liens, Cameron Jenkins, Aden Spradling, Bryce Bicknell and Conner Millbern each had a pair of hits for Willey and Spradling also added a double.

Trevor Myers and Michael Foote had big games for the Eagles, who are sponsored by Alpha Mortgage. Myers and Foote each finished the game with three singles each.

Wyatt Guetterman, Keegan Rogers, Cooper Riley, Harry Krafft and Scott Wallace all had a pair of hits as well for the Eagles. Blaise Vohs provided some strong defense as he ran down a high fly ball at shortstop.

10-and-under

June 24

Louisburg Fireballs (Team Crooks) 13, Osawatomie-Miller 7

The Louisburg Fireballs, coached by Joe Crooks, used a five-run first and third inning to pull away for a 13-7 victory over Osawatomie-Miller at Lewis-Young Park.

Alex Foxworth and Drake Crooks gave the Fireballs a boost with the bats as they hit back-to-back triples. Dawson Rizzo also made a big catch on the infield to lead the Fireball defense.

June 17

Louisburg Fireballs 8, Osawatomie Trojans 7

The Fireballs got a mixture of good hitting, pitching and defense in its 8-7 win over the Osawatomie Trojans in Osawatomie.

Colin McManigal pitched a complete game for the Fireballs as he struck out eight Trojans batters to lead the way. Outfielder Alex Foxworth backed him up on defense as he made two catches in centerfield and catcher Dagan Klugman caught two runners stealing.

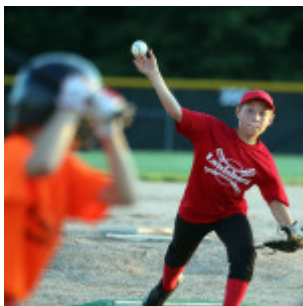
Offensively, Colton Mungle hit an inside-the-park home run for the Fireballs and Jordan Brown added a triple in the win.

Louisburg Fireballs 6, Osawatomie-Wendt 2

The Fireballs used a 3-run third and a 2-run fourth inning to break open a close game and win 6-2 over Osawatomie-Wendt that completed a doubleheader for Louisburg.

Drake Crooks got his first hit of the season and the rest of the Fireball batters reached base by either hit or walk.

LARA baseball recaps from June 1-12



Louisburg Fireball pitcher Brecon Klugman releases a pitch during a 10-and-under baseball game at Lewis-Young Park earlier this season. The Fireballs are 2-2 in their last four games, including wins against an Osawatomie and Paola team.

Here are LARA baseball recaps from June 1 through June 12. If you would like to submit information on your team, please email louisburgsportszone@gmail.com to get them included.

8-and-under machine pitch

June 12

Team Willey 12, Wea Eagles 11

Team Willey used two big innings to edge out the Wea Eagles

12-11. Team Willey scored five runs in the third and fourth innings and took a six-run lead into the bottom of the fourth.

No team can score more than five runs in an inning, so the game was called due to a run-rule.

Trevor Myers and Michael Foote had big games for the Eagles, who are sponsored by Alpha Mortgage. Myers and Foote each finished the game with three singles each.

Wyatt Guetterman, Keegan Rogers, Cooper Riley, Harry Krafft and Scott Wallace all had a pair of hits as well for the Eagles. Blaise Vohs provided some strong defense as he ran down a high fly ball at shortstop.

June 10

Wea Eagles 4, Team Swartz 3

The Eagles were down to their final out and trailed by a run against Team Swartz, but they got a big hit from Trevor Myers to put them over the top.

Myers hit a two-run double in the bottom of the fourth inning to score teammates Cooper Riley and Keegan Rogers as they rallied from what was a three-run deficit at one time.

Along with his double, Myers finished the game with three hits to lead the Eagles. Wyatt Guetterman, Rogers and Riley also added a pair of singles each.

June 3

Team Blancarte 13, Wea Eagles 12

Blancarte scored four runs in the bottom of the fourth inning to defeat the Eagles, 13-12.

Keegan Rogers led the Eagles' bats with a four-hit game. Trevor Myers, Harry Krafft and Bobby Johnson each had three hits.

The Eagles held a 12-9 lead going into the bottom of the fourth inning, but Blancarte rallied to get the win.

June 1

Team Carlson 17, Wea Eagles 1

Bobby Johnson, Wyatt Guetterman and Blaise Vohs each had two hits for the Eagles against Team Carlson but it wasn't enough in the 17-1 loss.

The Eagles trailed just 3-1 in the third inning, but Carlson scored five in the third, four in the fourth and five in the fifth to pull away.

10-and-under baseball

June 12

Paola Orioles 6, Louisburg Fireballs (Team Crooks) 3

The Louisburg Fireballs took an early one run lead into the second inning, but Paola responded with two in the second, two in the third and runs in the fourth and fifth to get a 6-3 win.

The Fireballs got some good defense, however, from catcher Colin McManigal as he caught two pop ups, including a foul ball to help stop a scoring threat. Matthew Shields also picked up his first hit of the season.

Trey Myers also started his first game of the season for the Fireballs and pitched three innings.

June 11

Paola 12, Louisburg Fireballs 8

The Louisburg Fireballs lost its first game of a doubleheader in Paola on Thursday, 12-8, despite being able to get on base.

Louisburg had 14 total baserunners in the contest and eight of those scored, but Paola countered with several big hits of its own that led to five runs in the second and third innings. The Fireballs had an 8-7 lead in the third inning, but couldn't hold on.

Louisburg Fireballs 10, Paola Rangers 4

The second part of the Fireballs' doubleheader went a lot better as they scored eight runs in the first two innings to beat the Paola Rangers 10-4.

The Fireballs got doubles from Dagon Klugman and Colin McManigal to help put the game out of reach early.

June 9

Louisburg Fireballs 9, Osawatomie 6

The Fireballs used a five-run third inning to pull away from the Osawatomie Trojans 9-6 at Lewis-Young Park.

Louisburg trailed 5-4 going into the third, but used their half of the frame to take a four-run lead that it wouldn't give up.

LARA baseball, softball recaps from May 26-27



Louisburg's Erin Apple makes contact with a pitch for the Lucky Charms during their May 26 game against Team Van Tyle at Lewis-Young Park. The Lucky Charms won the game 7-2.

Here are LARA baseball and softball recaps from May 26 and 27 out at Lewis-Young Park.

8-and-under Girls Machine Pitch

May 26

Lucky Charms (Team Waite) 7, Van Tyle 2

The Lucky Charms used a big second inning to propel them to a 7-2 win over Team Van Tyle on May 26 at Lewis-Young Park.

The Lucky Charms scored five runs in the second, one in the third and another in the fifth to help put the game away. Van Tyle scored a run in the fifth and another in the sixth to get on the scoreboard.

Macie Baima, Madison Hill and Isabella Moreland each had three hits to lead the Lucky Charms bats. They also had four other

players with a multiple hit game.

Erin Apple, Bronwynn Williams, Ally Brown and Claire Railsback each added a pair of hits for the Lucky Charms. Moreland led the third inning off with double for the Lucky Charms' lone extra-base hit and Apple drove her home with an RBI single.

8-and-under Boys Machine Pitch

May 27

Wea Eagles 6, Team Swartz 1

The Wea Eagles, sponsored by Alpha Mortgage, broke open a tie game with a four-run third inning on its way to a 6-1 victory over Team Swartz.

The Eagles scored a run in the first inning, but Swartz tied the game with a run in the second. The Eagles scored five runs in the final two innings to pull away for the win.

Scott Wallace and Keegan Rogers led the Wea bats with a 3-for-3 performance and Rogers also made the defensive play of the game. Rogers fielded a sharply hit ball at shortstop and tagged the runner for the third out to prevent Swartz from taking the lead in the second inning.

Three other Eagles players had multiple hits. Trevor Myers, Roy Bauer and Michael Foote each finished with two singles to help the Eagles to a win.

May 26

Team Willey 9, Wea Eagles 6

The Wea Eagles lost its first game of the season to Team Willey despite a late rally in the fifth inning. The Eagles scored four runs in the frame but couldn't come back in the 9-6 loss.

Willey scored two runs in the first, one in the second, four in the third and two in the fourth to get the victory.

Scott Wallace led the Eagle bats as he finished with three hits, including a double. Bobby Johnson also finished the game with three singles.

Roy Bauer and Cooper Riley also had multiple hits for Louisburg with two singles each.

Eagles catcher Harry Kraft had the defensive play of the game as he fielded a bunt and made diving tag to get the runner out at home.

LARA recaps from May 18



Here are LARA softball and baseball results from May 18.

8-and-under machine pitch

GIRLS

Team Hickey 8, Team Waite 5

Team Hickey used a big first inning to give them a win in their season opener. They scored five runs in the first inning and two more in the second to take an early 7-run lead.

Team Waite, which is sponsored by White's Automotive, was able to climb back into the game with a run in the third, three in the fifth and another run in the sixth, but they ran out of time.

Ella Lancaster led Waite with four hits, including a double in the 3-run fifth inning. McKenna Lohse and Bronwynn Williams each had three hits as well.

Madison Hill finished with two hits, including a 2-run single in the fifth for Waite. Shyloh Waite and Erin Apple also had a pair of hits.

BOYS

Wea Eagles 7, Team Blancarte 5

The Wea Eagles scored seven runs in its first three innings on its way to a 2-run victory over Team Blancarte.

The Eagles, sponsored by Alpha Mortgage, scored a run in the first, four in the second and two more in the third to pull away. Blancarte kept the game close with four runs in its half of the third and another in the fourth.

Roy Bauer led the Eagles at the plate three hits, including a pair of doubles. The Eagles also had five players with a multi-hit game.

Scott Wallace finished with three hits, including two singles and a double. Keegan Rogers and Blaise Vohs each had a double and a single. Bobby Johnson and Harry Kraft also had two

singles for the Eagles.