

Lady Cats lose lead, game to Baldwin



Louisburg sophomore Paige Buffington drives between two Baldwin defender Tuesday during the Lady Cats' home 44-28 loss to the Bulldogs.

For the second time in a month, the Louisburg girls basketball team had its sights set on upsetting the No. 1 team in Class 4A, Division II.

The Lady Cats hosted Baldwin on Tuesday, and for three quarters, positioned themselves for what could have been their biggest win of the season. The fourth quarter, however, was a different story.

Baldwin held Louisburg to just two fourth-quarter points and ended up pulling away for a 44-28 victory. It was a little bit of déjà vu, as earlier in the year the Lady Cats had a 17-point halftime lead at Baldwin and couldn't hold on.

"I know the girls aren't satisfied with playing some the best teams in the league and state like Paola and Baldwin close, but for some reason we have a hard time closing out games," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "For whatever reason, we are just not a good second half team right now and I don't think it is a lack of effort, but we just aren't playing smart and

executing like we need to.”

The execution was good early as the Lady Cats (9-8) jumped out to a 10-0 lead in the first quarter, including six points from Natalie Moore. The Bulldogs hit a 3-pointer with 45 seconds left to make it 10-3, but the Lady Cats still had control.

A pair of Kallie O’Keefe free throws made it 12-3 in the second quarter, but Baldwin went on a 10-0 run to take the lead back. A 3-pointer from Madisen Simpson gave the Lady Cats the lead back and Moore hit a runner to make it 19-16 at halftime.

“We have had good first half efforts, and we did again in this one, but we just aren’t finishing strong,” coach Lowry said. “The girls have to be able to dig down and finish when they don’t have a lot left. They are capable of doing that and have seen them do that.”

Baldwin eventually took a six-point lead in the third quarter, but the Lady Cats cut it to two with under a minute left after a basket from O’Keefe. However, Baldwin hit a 3-pointer to end the quarter and then hit another to start the fourth to build a 10-point lead and eventually pulled away.

The Bulldogs outscored the Lady Cats 13-2 in the final period.



Louisburg's Kallie O'Keefe (left) dives on the floor for a loose ball Tuesday in Louisburg. O'Keefe finished with seven points and seven rebounds.

"I am not sure what was different about the second half because I don't think Baldwin did anything different than they did in the first half, we just didn't execute," coach Lowry said. "We got sloppy in the fourth quarter and did things that aren't like us."

Moore led the Lady Cats in scoring with 16 points, while O'Keefe finished with seven points and a team-high seven rebounds.

"I thought Kallie played really aggressive out there and played smart," coach Lowry said. "She was diving after loose balls and that sort of stuff is contagious and I think the rest of the team feeds off that."

Before the game, the Lady Cats came out dressed in pink for

the 'Pink Out Night' in honor of breast cancer awareness. Players also wore pink head bands during the game.

Louisburg will try and snap its two-game losing skid Friday when it travels to Spring Hill. Tipoff is set for approximately 6 p.m.

LOUISBURG	10	9	7	2	-
28					
BALDWIN	3	13	15	13	
- 44					

LOUISBURG (9-8): Natalie Moore 5-13 6-6 16; Kallie O'Keefe 1-9 5-6 7; Madisen Simpson 1-5 0-0 3; Kirstin Lowry 1-4 0-0 2. Totals: 8-36 11-12 28. 3-point field goals: 1, (Simpson)