

Second half Ottawa run sinks Wildcats



Louisburg sophomore T.J. Dover goes up for two of his team-high nine points Friday against Ottawa. The Wildcats fell 64-31.

It wasn't exactly the showing the Louisburg boys basketball team wanted to put together on homecoming.

The Wildcats faced a big obstacle against Ottawa, which is ranked No. 4 in Class 4A-Division I. After a back-and-forth first half, Louisburg couldn't keep up with the Cyclones as it fell 64-31.

Louisburg took the Cyclones to overtime a month ago, but it was a little different this time around and the Wildcats' offense went cold as they scored just 13 points in the second half.

"They hit their open shots and we didn't hit early," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said. "We had really good looks, but missed too many shots that we need to hit. As they gained confidence from hitting their contested shots, we got frustrated and that frustration snowballed."

Ottawa jumped out to a 9-2 lead to get started, but the Wildcats were able to cut it to one after a bucket from Corbin Wertz, along with a basket and two free throws from T.J.

Dover.

The Cyclones tried to pull away again in the second quarter and built an 11-point lead halfway through the period. Again, a basket from Wertz and five straight points from Dover cut the lead to just 21-17.

Louisburg trailed 27-18 at halftime but was still in the game.

“The effort was there most of the night,” Nelson said. “Our staff was a little disappointed in the fourth quarter, but for the majority of the game, our defense was solid, communication was good and rebounding was a plus.”



Seniors Natalie and Nathan Moore were crowned homecoming king and queen at halftime of the boys contest Friday.

The Wildcats' offense went silent in the third quarter as it recorded just four points and Ottawa came out of the locker room on a 13-1 run. Ottawa sophomore Isaac McCullough led all scorers with 18 points.

Dover, a sophomore, provided the Wildcats with some good

scoring in the post as he finished with a team-high nine points. Another sophomore, Sam Guetterman, came off the bench and finished with five points.

Wertz, the team's leading scorer, made his first appearance in almost a month after sustaining an injury and finished with four points in limited minutes. One positive is it gives the Wildcat underclassmen an opportunity to grow at the varsity level.

"Corbin still isn't 100 percent so it will take him a while, but we feel he's moving in the right direction," Nelson said. "Injuries really have hampered us, but the benefits that all our sophomores will see from having to step up in what should be their 'learning' year will be huge moving forward. I'd think even as we progress this year that we'll see the tangible benefits of our younger guys being forced into action."

Louisburg will try to get back on the winning track tonight when it hosts Baldwin. The Wildcats have defeated the Bulldogs twice this season. Tipoff is set for approximately 7:30 p.m.

LOUISBURG	8	10
4	9 - 31	
OTTAWA	12	15
16	21 - 64	

LOUISBURG (4-12): T.J. Dover 9; Sam Guetterman 5; Brady Lambeth 4; Corbin Wertz 4; Grant Harding 4, Korbin Hankinson 3; Nathan Moore 2. 3-point field goals: 2, (Guetterman, Hankinson)