Eighth-graders show big improvement

Louisburg eighth-grader Dylan DeShazer goes up for a shot during a game earlier this season at Louisburg Middle School. The Wildcats won three of their last four games to finish their season with an 8-8 record.

The Louisburg Middle School eighth-grade boys basketball team has improved a lot in a year's time and all one has to do is look as its record.

Last season, the Wildcats finished with a 3-10 record, but they took a big step forward this year. Louisburg improved by five wins as it finished its season 8-8 after splitting its final two games on Feb. 28. The Wildcats three of their last four games to close out the season.

During a triangular, the Wildcats opened with a strong performance as it downed Eudora 35-19 before losing a tough game to Baldwin to end the year, 30-27.

Against Eudora, Noah Hill led Louisburg in scoring with 10 points and Dylan DeShazer just missed double figures with nine points. Kohl Vogel added six points and Logan McClellan finished with four points.

"This was perhaps our best effort of the year," Louisburg

coach John Ozier said. “On the defensive end we rebounded and matched up well against a very good Eudora team. I was very proud of how the boys ran all of our offensive sets. It was a great win.”

As good as that win was, the Wildcats followed it up with a tough loss as they struggled from the free-throw line. Hill once again led Louisburg In scoring with eight points and Noah Larson added six. Grant Macoubrie and Vogel scored four points each.

“We followed one of our best performances of the season with one of worst,” Ozier said. “We could not generate any offense and failed to convert our free throws. I know the boys were terribly disappointed, but I told them not to have one bad game define our season. They worked really hard all season and improved tremendously.”

It was a tough loss as the Wildcats had defeated Baldwin two days prior on Feb. 26, 32-21. The game was tied at 3-all after the first quarter, but Louisburg got some momentum late in the second quarter and went on an 8-0 run to start the third quarter to pull away.

Hill scored eight points to lead Louisburg and Brayden Gage finished with seven points. DeShazer scored five points, while Macoubrie and Eli Minster added four points each.

On Feb. 23, Louisburg had no problem with Wheatridge Middle School out of Gardner as it won 37-17. Hill finished in double figures with 11 points and DeShazer scored six. McClellan and Vogel added five points.

The eighth-grade junior varsity also had a strong season as it finished with a 10-6 record.

“Coach (Gary) Griffin did a fantastic job,” Ozier said. “The boys improved dramatically from last season.”