

Lady Cats remain positive despite inexperience



Louisburg senior Megan Lemke (10) is one of two seniors on the Lady Cats basketball team this season as they will take the floor with a young roster.

Advancing to the substate championship game and finishing the season with 11 wins a year ago, the Louisburg girls basketball team had its fair share of success.

The Lady Cats had a lot of that success due to strong senior leadership and those seniors also provided a bulk of the scoring and rebounding. With that, Louisburg now has to replace an all-state point guard in Natalie Moore, an all-league shooting guard in Kirstin Lowry and the team's leading rebounder in Kallie O'Keefe.

It isn't an easy task for this year's version of the Lady Cats, and they will have to do some things differently on both ends of the floor, but they are looking forward to the challenge.

"We have made changes to some of the things we will do offensively and defensively based on our personnel," Louisburg coach Shawn Lowry said. "I expect there will be a learning curve with these changes and with some of our inexperience."

However, the upside growth and development of this group can be very good.”

This group includes just two seniors, one of which is new to the team this season. Senior Megan Lemke, a returning starter, brings a veteran presence to the team underneath the basket as she saw a lot of playing time a season ago. New to the team is senior Megan Roy, who also hopes to give the team a lift at forward.



Junior Paige Buffington (right) is one of five Lady Cats who saw significant varsity time a season ago.

Louisburg also returns a pair of junior guards in Madisen Simpson and Paige Buffington, who each started at different times a season ago and are both threats to score from the outside.

Fellow junior Emalee Overbay, who saw time at both the varsity and junior varsity level last year, hopes to give the Lady Cats some depth at the forward spot.

“It’s great to see the continuing evolution of the program’s

culture,” coach Lowry said. “The upperclassmen have learned from the previous year’s captains how to lead through encouragement and motivation, how to be great teammates, how to be unselfish and the work ethic they must have. “

The Lady Cats will also ask sophomores Isabelle Holtzen and Sarah Wilson to contribute from the guard and forward spot, respectively. Louisburg might also have some freshmen see varsity time this season as its numbers are down.

Louisburg has 19 players out for basketball this season, six of those players are in the junior and senior class, combined. The Lady Cats have seven freshmen and six sophomores on the roster.

“The girls have worked hard in preparing for the upcoming season,” coach Lowry said. “Our team leaders have helped foster an environment that is competitive and positive with their work ethic and attitudes.

“As with each year, we stress the importance of competing hard on every play and every rep. The development of our mentality to always out-work and out-hustle will be key for our team this year. Many of the younger players will have the opportunity to gain valuable game experience this season.”

The Lady Cats will also play a difficult schedule in the Frontier League. Louisburg will face league favorites Paola and Baldwin a combined four times, if not more.

Paola is ranked No. 9 in the preseason in Class 4A Division I, while Baldwin is No. 1 in Class 4A Division II.

Louisburg will also no longer hold its annual tournament in January and will instead participate in the Top Gun Tournament in Wellsville. One bonus, however, is the Lady Cats will host the substate tournament.

“The Frontier League is always very strong and has some of the

best coaches in the state,” coach Lowry said. “The girls understand what they must all give in order to be successful. Most important for me is the way in which we play – with great effort, unselfish play and with character.”

The Lady Cats will get their season started Friday when they host Pittsburg. Tipoff is set for 6 p.m.

Next week, Louisburg will host the Wildcat-Bulldog Classic and will play Iola and Burlington on Tuesday and Thursday, respectively.

2015-16 LOUISBURG GIRLS BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Dec. 4
Pittsburg
6 p.m.

Dec. 8 Iola (Wildcat-Bulldog
Classic) 5 p.m.

Dec. 10 Burlington (Wildcat-Bulldog
Classic) 5 p.m.

Dec. 11 Wildcat-Bulldog
Classic TBA

Dec. 15 at
Eudora
6 p.m

Jan. 5
Ottawa
6 p.m.

Jan. 8 at
Baldwin
6 p.m.

Jan. 12 at
Frontenac 6
p.m.

Jan. 15 at De Soto
6 p.m.

Jan. 20 at Spring
Hill 7:30
p.m.

Jan. 26 at Wellsville Top
Gun TBA

Jan. 28 at Wellsville Top
Gun TBA

Jan. 30 at Wellsville Top
Gun TBA

Feb. 2
Paola
6 p.m.

Feb. 5
Eudora
6 p.m.

Feb. 12 at
Ottawa
6 p.m.

Feb. 16 Baldwin
6 p.m.

Feb. 19 Spring
Hill 6
p.m.

Feb. 23 De

Soto

6 p.m.