

Geiman, Minster spark 'Cats against De Soto



Senior guard Jacob Welsh goes up for a reverse layup during Friday's road contest in De Soto. Louisburg rallied in the second half to get past De Soto 53-48 and picked up its third consecutive win in the process.

DE SOTO – It was late in the third quarter and Jayce Geiman hadn't even attempted a shot.

Geiman, one of Louisburg's starting guards, wanted to let the game come to him. So when the ball came his way behind the arch, he was open and took the open 3-pointer.

His shot found the bottom of the net and it was the spark the Wildcats needed the most Friday in De Soto. The made basket cut De Soto's lead one point.

Louisburg's offense, which was sluggish up until that point, awoke to get a big 53-48 Frontier League win on the road. Missed close shots turned into makes and the Wildcats hit their free throws down the stretch to pull it out.

"It was huge," Louisburg coach Jason Nelson said of Geiman's shot. "The kids that can shoot the three know who they are and they know how I feel about threes. But Jayce's shot there was monumental and it was at that point that everyone settled in

and calmed down offensively.”

The victory was also noteworthy as the Wildcats have already matched their season total from a season ago. The win improved Louisburg to a 6-3 record on the season and have now won three consecutive games.

“It was much needed,” Geiman said of the win. “We matched our season total on wins last year so it was a big win for us, plus it was a league win so it was definitely nice to get this one. This is the high point of the season so far for sure.”

Louisburg also got another spark in the third quarter – but this one was off the bench. Sophomore Ben Minster scored all of his seven points in the third to push the Wildcats in front.



Sophomore Ben Minster lays the ball up for two points during the third quarter of the Wildcats’ game Friday in De Soto.

Following Geiman’s 3-pointer that cut the De Soto lead to 30-29 with 2 minutes and 33 seconds left in the third, Minster

drove the lane twice for two baskets and junior Grant Harding added another to push the Louisburg lead to 35-30.

“Ben was fantastic off the bench,” Nelson said. “He is so athletic. A lot of times, and part of it is my fault, I expect too much of him sometimes instead of just letting the game come to him. He is just a fantastic athlete and he gave us some big minutes. He and Grant are just so fast with that dribble.”

The lead didn't last long as De Soto responded with a mini 5-0 run to tie the game going into the fourth quarter.

Harding, who scored 13 points and pulled down 10 rebounds to finish with a double-double, opened the final quarter with a basket and the Wildcats never lost their lead. Senior Mitchell McLellan scored six of his eight points in the quarter, and Geiman hit another 3-pointer to push the lead to eight.

De Soto would hit back-to-back 3-pointers to cut the lead to two, but junior T.J. Dover pushed it back to four when he hit a shot and was fouled.



Louisburg coach Jason Nelson gets excited on the Wildcat bench with players Korbin Hankinson (30) and Jake Hill after a late basket from T.J. Dover.

Geiman, senior Jacob Welsh and junior Sam Guetterman each hit free throws down the stretch to seal the win for Louisburg.

“Mentally they are so tough,” Nelson said of his team. “I ask a lot of them and to be able to battle through adversity when our bunnies aren’t falling was great to see. Our execution on offense was fantastic up until the shot, which is maddening sometimes.

“They are in position and doing everything right, but it is what it is and it will come. We are still young and a lot of these guys are just in their ninth varsity game. I couldn’t ask for a better group of guys right now.”

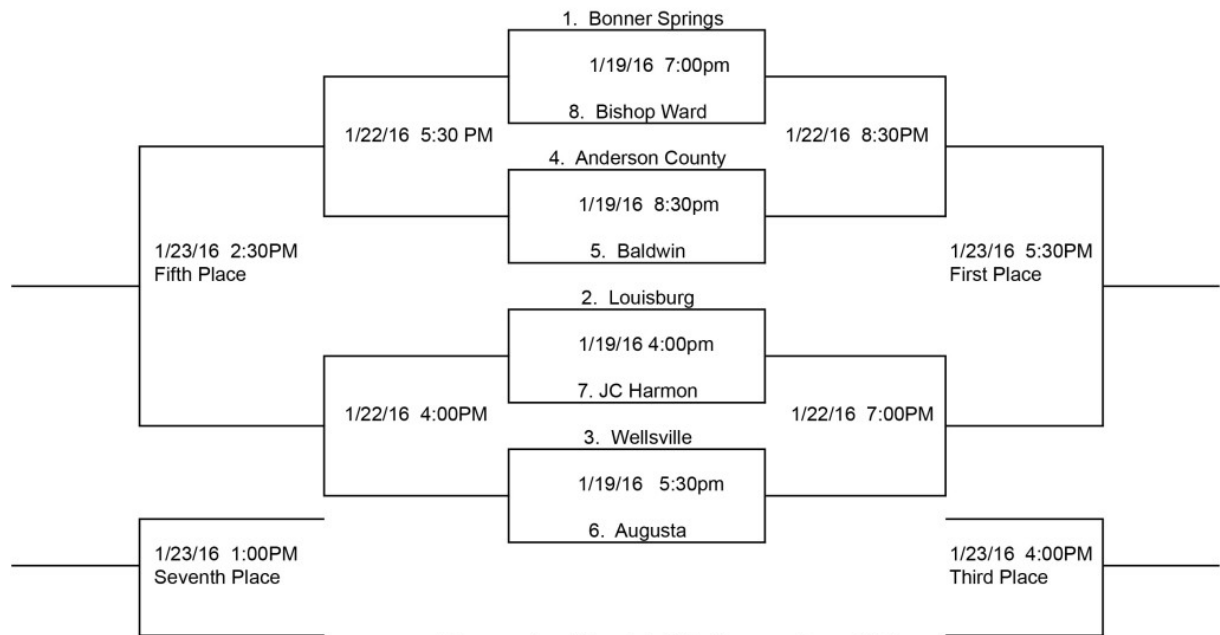
It wasn’t an easy win as the Wildcats had to play catch up for most of the game. De Soto decided to slow the game down and made each possession difficult on the Louisburg defense.

De Soto worked the ball around the floor and took close to 30 seconds off the clock with each possession before getting the shot it wanted.

“De Soto moved the ball really well,” Nelson said. “We had a couple really good defensive series when we were in man and zone, but they were just so methodical, patient and found the open man. It was a little frustrating at times, but I thought we played pretty well defensively for the most part.”

Louisburg returns to action Tuesday when it begins play in the Baldwin Invitational. The No. 2 seed Wildcats open against Harmon at 4 p.m.

2016 BALDWIN INVITATIONAL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



* Team on top of bracket will be Home and wear White
 ** Please bring both uniform colors to each game

Baldwin Invitational Tournament Bracket

LOUISBURG		13	8
14	18 - 53		
DE SOTO		16	6
13	13 - 48		

LOUISBURG (6-3): Grant Harding 6-14 1-2 13; Jayce Geiman 2-2 2-3 8; Mitchell McLellan 4-4 0-0 8; Ben Minster 3-4 1-2 7; Dalton Ribordy 3-7 0-0 6; Jacob Welsh 0-2 5-6 5; T.J. Dover 2-8 0-1 4; Sam Guetterman 0-1 2-2 2. Totals: 20-42 11-16 53. 3-point field goals: 2, (Geiman 2)